

**Handbook for the
Board of Ordained
Ministry
Florida Annual
Conference of
The United
Methodist Church
2009-2012**

Florida Conference Process Chart

Key Words

6-09-2009

Florida Conference Candidacy Process for Deacon, Elder, and Local Pastor

Inquiring Candidate: Book of Discipline ¶311.1

Read and discuss with your minister *The Christian as Minister*. Participate in *Ministry Inquiry Process* with your minister.

Phase One: ¶311 Apply and enroll

1. Member of The United Methodist Church for one year immediately preceding application for candidacy, including a year of service in some form of congregational leadership.
2. Apply to District Superintendent, in writing, for admission to candidacy program. Arrange for background check.
3. Be assigned a mentor by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
4. With your mentor, apply to GBHEM for *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*, using Form 101 (send \$75 to GBHEM) and the Psychological Assessment Packet, and complete all other accompanying forms. Send a check for \$375 made out to the Florida Conference Treasurer to the Board of Ordained Ministry Registrar for cost of psychological assessment.
5. Complete exploration of candidacy with your mentor (through section 3 in the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*).

Phase Two: Preparation for and interview with District Committee on Ordained Ministry

1. Complete and prepare these items for your District Committee on Ordained Ministry prior to applying for certification: high school graduate; written statement of call; written response to ministry; psychological assessment report; financial report; health certificate.
Agree to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life.
Consult with your minister and be interviewed by Pastor/Staff Relations Committee.
Recommended by charge conference's written ballot.
2. Examination and approval (3/4 vote) by District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

Certified Candidate and Continuation of Candidacy: Book of Discipline ¶312

1. Annual recommendation by charge conference
2. Annual approval by District Committee on Ordained Ministry (interview and written report).
3. Annual report of satisfactory progress of studies and copy of transcripts from university or seminary.

Local Pastor - Completed candidacy certification, recommended by District Committee on Ordained Ministry, recommended by Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, attend licensing school, voted approval at clergy session of Annual Conference. Assigned a clergy mentor ¶361.4. Complete Course of Study.

Completion of Candidacy: Book of Discipline ¶324

1. Certified candidate for minimum of one (1) year, maximum twelve (12) years.
2. One (1) year in service ministry.
3. Completion of academic requirements.
4. Completion of health certificate, financial report and Criminal and Legal Records Release and Disclosure Form
5. Written and oral doctrinal exam and written autobiographical statement.
6. Interview and recommendation by ¾ vote of District Committee on Ordained Ministry and Board of Ordained Ministry.

7. Election to provisional membership by clergy session at Annual Conference.

Key Words to Know

1. Associate Member (§321 - §323)

Conference relationship available to persons who have reached forty years of age, have served as full-time local pastors at least four years, completed the five-year Course of Study, studies for license as a local pastor, completed a minimum of sixty semester hours toward the Bachelor of Arts or an equivalent degree in a college or university listed by the University Senate. They must also be recommended by the dCOM and the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, declared their willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment and satisfied the conference regarding their physical, mental, and emotional health.

Associate members who meet all of the provisions of §322.4 and §324.6 may apply to the Conference Board for Full Membership.

2. Candidacy Mentor

A deacon or elder in full connection or local pastor who has completed the Course of Study assigned by the dCOM to an Exploring Candidate to support and guide them through the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy* and candidacy process and until the candidate is approved for local pastor or elected to provisional membership.

3. Professional Certification (certified)

The church's recognition that an individual has met the required standards for academic training, experience, and continuing study necessary to achieve and maintain professional excellence in a particular area of ministry such as Christian education, music, youth ministry, evangelism, camp/retreat ministry, spiritual formation, older adult ministry, or church business administrator. Information and details about this process and these careers can be found at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry website: www.gbhem.org/certification/index.html. Information about the church business administrator process can be found at www.umacba.org.

4. Candidacy Certification (certified candidate) (§310- 314)

Candidacy phase when requirements for Inquiring and Exploring Candidate have been met.

5. Commissioning (commissioned minister) (§325)

The credentialing of provisional deacons and elders. The act of the church that publicly acknowledges God's call and response, talents, gifts and training of the candidate. The church invokes the Holy Spirit as the candidate is commissioned to be a faithful servant leader among the people, to lead the church in service, to proclaim the Word of God and to equip others for ministry.

6. Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM)

The body responsible for credentialing provisional/commissioned ministers, local pastors, and full connection deacons and elders.

7. Course of Study

The basic theological education program of the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors who are unable to attend an approved seminary. Participants in the program should have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, and have been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

8. Deacon (§328 - 331)

Persons called by God, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word and Service to both the community and the congregation.

9. Diaconal Minister

Persons called to specialized ministries of service, justice, and love within local congregations and in the wider world. Their focus of service is through a variety of ministries, such as administration, education, evangelism, music, health ministries and community development - to the local congregation and the wider community. Diaconal Ministers are lay persons. No new candidates have been accepted since 1/1/97. This category has been superseded by the ordained deacon.

10. District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM)

The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the Inquiry, Exploring and Certified Candidate phases, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors.

11. Elder (§332 - 336)

Persons who are ordained to a lifetime ministry of Service, Word, Sacrament, and Order; authorized to preach and teach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and to order the life of the Church for mission and ministry.

12. Exploring Candidate

In the second step or phase in the candidacy process for ordained deacon, elder, or local pastor, a mentor is assigned. The candidate and mentor work through the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy* and the candidate's continued discernment of their call to ministry.

13. Full Connection

The relationship of ordained deacons and elders to the Annual Conference. They have completed the process for ordination, including educational requirements, and have been elected to full membership in the annual conference.

14. Inquiring Candidate

The first step in the candidacy process for ordained deacon, elder, or local pastor. The candidate's home church minister works with the candidate in reading and discussing *The Christian as Minister* and *The Ministry Inquiry Process*.

15. License for Pastoral Ministry (§315 - 320)

Credential given to a local pastor when he or she is appointed as pastor of a local church.

16. Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry

The studies are the first exposure for most candidates to the practice of ministry. Public worship, pastoral care for spiritual formation, organization of a parish for nurture and mission, and educational ministries in the church are the major areas of concern covered in the eighty-hour school. The candidate must be approved by the dCOM for licensing as a local pastor before attending Licensing School. The candidate must attend the school before being approved by the clergy session of the annual conference and being appointed as a local pastor.

17. Local Pastor (§315)

Persons who are licensed and appointed to preach, conduct divine worship, and perform the duties of a pastor but are not ordained as elders.

18. Ordination (ordained)

The church affirms and continues the apostolic ministry through persons empowered by the Holy Spirit.

19. Provisional Membership (§324 - 327)

Conference relationship of commissioned ministers (deacons and elders) who are on trial in preparation for membership in full connection in the annual conference as deacons and elders. During that three-year period, they are Residents in Ministry under the care of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and participants in the RIM program. Provisional members may vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of General/Jurisdictional delegates, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.

20. Residents in Ministry (RIM)

The Florida Conference three-year program for provisional/commissioned ministers.

Organization of the Board of Ordained Ministry

Purpose

The Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall function according to the purposes outlined in ¶634 of the 2008 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.

Organization

The membership of the Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall be in accordance with the Standing Rules of the Florida Annual Conference, ¶404.

The Board shall have the following committees:

- Executive Committee
- Conference Relations Committee
- Residents in Ministry Committee
- Clergy Evaluation Committee
- Clergy Sexual Ethics Training Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Candidacy Mentor Training Committee
- Residents in Ministry Committee

In order to meet their respective objectives some committees of the Board may have members that are from beyond the membership of the Board.

The Board shall have the following officers:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Registrar/Executive Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence
- Cabinet Representative
- Chair of the Division of Elders
- Chair of the Division of Deacons
- Chair of the Order of Elders
- Chair of the Order of Deacons
- Liaison to the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members
- Chairs of the Reviewing Teams – Personal Growth, Proclamation, Theology and Leadership
- Coordinator of Training
- Coordinator of the Residents in Ministry Process

Meetings

The board meets a minimum of three times in the course of the Annual Conference year. Typically the board will meet in November for the reviewing of applications, in January for interviews with candidates, and in May immediately preceding Annual Conference.

In between meetings of the board of ordained ministry the Executive Committee is empowered to act on behalf of the board.

Responsibilities of Board Members

Attendance

Because of the extensive agenda of the board of ordained ministry it is important to have full participation. If a board member is unable to attend a meeting she/he should notify the chairperson of the board as far in advance as possible. If repeated absences occur, or if there are unexcused absences, the chairperson of the board may ask the board member to resign from the board.

Attire

During meetings in which the board is interviewing candidates the attire should be business casual. No shorts or jeans should be worn at meetings involving interviews.

More casual attire may be worn at meetings that are comprised only of board members. This is especially true of meetings that take place at the Life Enrichment Center in Leesburg.

Committees

In order for the board to fulfill all of its responsibilities the members of the board are needed to serve on various committees of the board. It is hoped that if a board member is asked by the chairperson of the board to serve on a committee that the member will agree to do so and to faithfully fulfill that responsibility.

Reviewing Teams

As a part of the application process the board is divided into four reviewing teams for the purpose of reviewing specific sections of each application. All members of the board serve on a reviewing team except for the chairperson, the secretary, the registrar and the cabinet liaison.

The chairperson of the board selects the chairperson for each reviewing team and assigns the members of the board to respective reviewing teams. The assignment process attempts to take into account the strengths of each board member while also trying to keep a balance of elders and deacons, clergy and lay, male and female, ethnic minority and ethnic majority.

Members of reviewing teams are expected to complete the review of all application materials previous to arrival at the board meeting.

Interview Teams

As a part of the interview process the board is divided into five interview teams. All board members that serve on a reviewing team will serve on an interview team. The chairpersons of the interview teams are selected by the chairperson of the board. The makeup of the interview teams is determined by the chairperson of the board. Each interview team has at least two members from each of the reviewing teams.

Executive Committee

Responsibilities

The executive committee of the board shall assist the chairperson of the board in determining policies and directions to be recommended to the board.

Between meetings of the board the executive committee is empowered to meet and make necessary decisions on behalf of the board. Any decisions regarding a change in or the creation of a new policy shall be submitted to the full board for its consideration previous to implementation.

In conjunction with the Bishop and the district superintendents, the executive committee meets to hear specified decisions that are appealed by a clergy person.

Membership

Chairperson of the Board

Vice Chairperson

Secretary

Cabinet Liaison

Registrar

Chair of the Division of Elders

Chair of the Division of Deacons

Chair of the Order of Elders

Chair of the Order of Deacons

Liaison to the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members

Lay Representative

Chairs of the Reviewing Teams

Coordinator of Training

Coordinator of Residents in Ministry Process

Conference Relations Committee

Responsibilities

When a clergy person requests a change in relationship the Conference Relations Committee shall hear such requests and make recommendations regarding such requests. This process may include an interview with the person requesting a change in relationship. (See ¶'s 353 - 361). The following requests for relationship change shall be considered by the committee:

- Leave of Absence
- Sabbatical Leave
- Family Leave
- Maternity or Paternity Leave
- Honorable Location
- Retirement
- Return to effective relationship

Under ¶ 362 of the 2008 Book of Discipline the Bishop may refer an Administrative Complaint to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. In order to maintain Fair Process in the hearing of such referrals the Conference Relations Committee shall be the body to hear such complaints and shall make recommendations as are required.

Membership

- Chairperson of the Board
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Registrar
- Chair of the Division of Elders
- Chair of the Division of Deacons
- Lay Representative

Due to Judicial Council Ruling #917, the Cabinet Liaison to the Board shall not serve on the Conference Relations Committee.

Residents in Ministry Committee

Responsibilities

The RIM Committee shall develop and implement a thorough program of supervision, mentoring, covenant groups and continuing theological education for provisional members of the conference. The committee shall interpret this program to the board and the cabinet.

Membership

One board member designated by the chair of the board to serve as chair of the committee
Registrar
Additional Board members as determined by the chair of the board
Additional persons from beyond the board may be appointed by the chair of the board

The Program

The Residents in Ministry program corresponds with the provisional membership period. The program is designed to assist the provisional member in his/her progress toward full connection. It is the goal of the program to enable the provisional member to develop a foundation of continuing self-development that will serve him/her for a lifetime of ministry.

Clergy Evaluation Committee

Responsibilities

The Clergy Evaluation Committee shall develop a plan by which the clergy of the conference will be involved in an ongoing program of evaluation as it relates to effectiveness in ministry. The committee shall interpret this program to the cabinet, the board and the clergy of the conference, and shall continually evaluate the program.

Membership

This committee shall be a joint committee of the board and the cabinet. The chairperson of the board shall name those persons who shall serve on the committee, and the Bishop shall name those persons of the cabinet who shall serve on the committee. The committee shall be chaired by a member of the board.

Clergy Sexual Ethics Training Committee

Responsibilities

The committee shall develop and implement a comprehensive ongoing program to train clergy of the Florida Conference regarding appropriate sexual ethics.

Membership

The committee shall be made up of members of the board named by the chair of the board. It may also include members from beyond the membership of the board. Such committee members shall be invited by the chair of the board. The committee shall also include members of the cabinet who shall be named by the Bishop.

The Application Process

1. Applications are available from the registrar's office after December 1 of each year.
2. Applications are due (postmarked by) October 1 of each year. This includes all supporting materials such as contingency reports, medical exam report, financial disclosure form, criminal and legal disclosure form, etc. References are due by September 15.
3. If the individual is applying for one of the following classifications, the district committee on ordained ministry (dCOM) must provide a recommendation to the conference board before the board can review his/her materials. Check with your district committee to determine the deadline for submitting the application material to them.

Classifications requiring dCOM recommendation:

- Transfers from other denominations
- Local Pastor
- Associate Membership
- Provisional Membership

The Board's Process

Application materials are received by October 1. They are scanned into the person's file as a part of that personnel file.

The application materials are divided according to the four reviewing teams of the board – proclamation, leadership, theology, and personal growth. The materials are sent out to the individuals within each reviewing team who are assigned to especially read the applicants material in the specific content area.

In November the board gathers to collectively review the applications. First, the reviewing teams meet to review the specific content area to which they are assigned. The reviewing teams make a decision on each application to either Recommend, Continuance, or Discontinuance.

The executive committee meets to receive the reports of the reviewing teams on each applicant. If a person receives a Recommend from each team, the applicant will be interviewed in January/February. If a person has a mix of Recommend and Continuance, the Executive Committee will decide if an interview should be granted or if the person receives a Discontinuance immediately with contingencies assigned. If there are serious concerns the Executive Committee will interview with the applicant at a special time.

The results of the board's November review process are communicated to the candidates in two forms. First, an attempt is made to reach every applicant by phone to tell them of the results of the review process. Second, each candidate receives a letter conveying that same information.

Those persons who are to be interviewed by the board in January/February are expected to receive the status for which they are applying. The interview process is to confirm in person what the reviewing teams have seen as a part of the application process. However, there are occasions when the interview results in a delaying of candidates for the status for which they are applying.

The candidate will be interviewed in two settings. The first is a small group with around eight people. These are the individuals who have specifically reviewed the candidate's materials. This interview is usually around forty-five minutes in length.

The second setting is the interview with the full board. This interview follows up on areas that the small group highlights for the board. In this setting the interview is usually about fifteen minutes.

The candidate receives the results of the interview process in two forms. First, before he/she leaves the interview location, a part of the Executive Committee meets with the candidate to review the results. Second, a letter confirming that information is sent to each individual candidate.

Application Decision Process

In the course of the review of applications the board of ordained ministry has three options for each applicant – Recommend, Continuance, or Discontinuance.

Recommend

When an applicant is recommended for the status that is sought it means that the board has determined that the applicant meets the standard for the desired relationship. This requires a majority vote of the board, except for provisional membership which requires a two-thirds majority vote (see ¶324.14, *2008 Book of Discipline*).

When an applicant for full connection is recommended by the board there are no further requirements for the applicant.

Applicants for other relationships may receive contingencies even if they are being recommended. The fulfillment of the assigned contingencies must be completed before applying for any further relationship.

Continuance

If the applicant receives a Continuance, the board does not believe that the applicant currently meets the standard for the desired status, but that the applicant should be able to meet the standard after some additional work in areas of determined weaknesses. The board will define these areas for the applicant and will assign contingencies to assist the applicant in strengthening these areas.

Discontinuance

Occasionally the board determines that an applicant does not articulate a call to ministry that matches with the board's understanding of the call to ministry in the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church. When such occurs the board will vote "Discontinuance." This requires a two-thirds majority vote of the board.

When a candidate receives a "Discontinuance" it concludes his/her process with the board. The candidate is not eligible to apply for a relationship until a period of two years is completed. At that time the individual is eligible to begin the candidacy process again.

THE ETIQUETTE AND ETHICS OF ASKING QUESTIONS OF CANDIDATES/PROVISIONALS IN MINISTRY IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Belief: As DCOM and BOM members, we are privileged to sit with our peers and with those newly called to ministry, all of us on a ‘journey to perfection.’

Prayer: We ask that where God may be at work in each person’s life, that we might with great sensitivity and integrity, join in. We ask prayerfully that our questions and comments might encourage the candidate to own their part of the journey and that our offering of contingencies (extra assignments) might reflect the need we best can articulate for each person to move forward in this process.

The following reflective questions and comments are meant to remind us of our responsibility in this process:

1 .HOSPITALITY. In whatever way we can our greetings, our prayers, our attempt to invite comfort and reduce stress, needs to be foremost in our minds and in our actions. Our first questions, therefore, should be easy to answer.

2. THE SURROUNDINGS. The interview room needs to be comfortably arranged so that we might be as professional as possible. Computer screens, books, phones, etc. should be closed and off. We need to give the person our undivided attention. *Active listening is a profound act of love!*

3. AFFIRMATION. As we spend our designated time with the candidate, we need to affirm growth where we see it and say it in ‘I’ language. “I thank you for sharing how you felt about doing that assignment and now how have you grown in the process?”

4. ASKING QUESTIONS.

- a. We need to ask questions that elicit more than a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. “Could you tell us in what ways you are a better preacher after fulfilling the contingency (extra assignment) you were asked to complete?” If the answer does not reflect an area in which the candidate has been asked to grow, we might follow up with one or two more questions.
- b. We need to ask questions that are appropriate to the order in which the person is called. We must not overlook the differences in call of our candidates.
- c. We need to ask questions that provide consistency of content for all candidates in each order (Theology; Call, Service, Disciplines used; Worship and Sacraments; Proclamation; Effective Practices of Ministry) yet allow for individual expression.

- d. We need to ask questions related to candidates' effectiveness in Leadership. These questions need to be based on the following identified, research-based, effective leadership traits: visioning, learning, the building of relationships, risk-taking, and integrity.

5. KNOWLEDGE and SELF AWARENESS. We need to ask only enough questions to tell us whether the person knows the information and only enough questions to tell us whether they are self aware of their issues. We need NOT go on and on when we have enough data to tell us whether they 'got it' or not. On the other hand, we must NOT just ask 'fluff' questions that avoid the pertinent issues.

6. THE KINDS OF QUESTIONS – TOO NICE/TOO TOUGH. This interview is not about being too nice or too tough. It is about asking appropriate questions with kindness and respect so that we can know how far along the person is on their journey. We are there to ask what we do not know about their journey, to note what might be missing (so that we can frame helpful contingencies/extra assignments) and to affirm God's work already going on in their life.

7. CORRECTIONS/RESCUE EFFORTS. If the person does not answer the way we think they 'should,' our job is NOT to correct them or rescue them. Again, our job is to respond with helpful contingencies/extra assignments.

8. THAT DAZED LOOK. If the person looks 'dazed' when we ask a question, we can ask if they would like it phrased another way. Our job is NOT to 'trick' them or set up a situation in which they are likely to fail.

9. THE CANDIDATE'S QUESTIONS. The candidate, if time allows, may need to ask us questions, but ONLY questions that have to do with the process, not questions about how well they are doing, if they made a mistake, how we voted, etc. Those questions put us in an 'evaluative position' that is NOT appropriate.

10. NOT ABOUT US!! The interview is about the candidate; it is NOT ABOUT US and our thoughts, feelings, or beliefs. We must put our passion about an issue or about a person aside. If we cannot do that in regard to a candidate, we should sit silent and prayerful during the interview or should ask to be excused before the interview.

11. TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS. Both the DCOM and the BOM needs to on occasion evaluate their own process. We might do that prayerfully about ourselves and/or we might invite an independent source to observe us and respond with comments. Such questions as the following might be used:

- a. Are our questions and concerns prayerfully asked?
- b. Are we asking the kinds of questions that will help the candidate own their part of the process?
- c. Are we asking questions that will help us shape our decisions on the candidate's behalf?

- d. Are we doing most of the talking or is the candidate? Are we allowing one member of the committee or board to dominate the talking or are we sharing the responsibility?
- e. While the candidate is being interviewed, are we debating among ourselves, inserting humor inappropriately, interrupting, and/or sidetracking the purpose for the conversation?
- f. Are we honoring confidentiality?

12. FEEDBACK FROM THE CANDIDATES. Perhaps, after a period of time in ministry, we could ask for the candidates to reflect on our process as a way to say that we are open to reflective assessment also and that we are open to our own personal growth. Such questions as the following might we asked:

- a. How did you experience your time with the committee/Board?
- b. How might we make the interview process even more focused on the candidate's journey in ministry as opposed to the 'committee/Board is here to judge you, so prove yourself?'
- c. What did you experience as judgment as opposed to what you experienced as grace...realizing that the assigning of extra work is often an act of grace but may not be realized as such at the time?

What an awesome responsibility we have! Let us pray that we do not take it lightly. Jesus called people, confronted them and complimented them as they grew (or chose not to grow) in His invitation to discipleship. So must we live by His call in our own lives and model that process as participants on the DCOM and on the BOM.

Compiled by the Personal Growth Team of the BOM of the Florida Conference. 11/07
Adapted by the Ministry Preparation Resource Team of the General Board. 1/09

Finance-Related Guidelines and Questions
 Florida Annual Conference
 January, 2009

Candidates' Financial Disclosure Form:

Benchmarks - \$30,000 educational debt and \$5,000 unsecured debt (credit card)

A Working Plan - We need to know that the candidate is aware of his/her debt, has a plan for reducing it, and is working that plan.

Contingencies – Consumer Credit Counseling, the Florida Conference Foundation (John Peterson and Christian Burns), and Crown Ministry or Financial Peace University Workshops.

Candidacy Questions:

See *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*, p. 139. Questions center upon how the candidate's socioeconomic background and present experience reflect their spirituality.

BOOM packet: "One of the historic questions asked of Wesley to candidates is: 'Are you in debt as to embarrass yourself?' What is your total debt? How does this affect your theology of stewardship?"

Biblical References: (not limited to the following)

Pr 13:11, Ecc 5:10, Isa 55:1, Mt 6:24, 27:5, Lk 3:14, 9:3, 16:13, Ac 5:2, 1 Co 16:2, 1 Ti 3:3, 6:10, 2 Ti 3:2, Heb 13:5, 1 Pe 5:2

Theological Understanding:

Questions such as the following may be helpful to ask candidates –

1. Our theological questions regarding money have to do with how we perceive and live in a secular economy. How is a Christian to live in such a society? What measure do you use to determine spending, giving and saving habits? How do your practices regarding money reflect your expectations of your parishioners and your expectations for the budget of the church?
2. Because the Bible does not speak with a single voice about the use of money, what Biblical references do you use as a basis for how you live out your faith?
3. All Biblical traditions agree that in one way or another, money is linked to the reality of God's gifts and demands. What are God's gifts and demands regarding money, wealth, and the use of material goods as you interpret them?
4. Do we live in a world of scarcity or abundance? Explain your answer theologically. How is your answer to that question reflected in how you live?
5. When does the use/misuse of money become an issue of idolatry?
6. Matthew 10:39 says "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Talk about this paradox in relation to the issues of money and possessions.
7. Why is there often laughter at Annual Conference when we hear the historical

question asked of candidates regarding debt? How is a UM minister to live with education and living costs what they are and salaries often not able to help? Can John Wesley's practices inform our UM practices today?

Interviewing

The interview process is an important element of the decision making process of the board when considering an applicant's request. Because of the importance in the total process the board follows some guidelines in order to maintain the integrity of the interview.

1. Board members should construct questions so that the question will be clear to the applicant. If the applicant does not understand the question, the board member should be prepared to re-word the question to provide clarity.
2. Board members are encouraged not to use role play as an interview technique. Direct questions are found to be less confusing for applicants.
3. Board members will be called upon by the chair of the board before asking a question of an applicant.
4. Under certain circumstances a board member will be expected to excuse him/herself from the interview process including the discussion and vote following the interview. The board member should notify the chair of the board that s/he will not be present during an interview. The conditions that warrant an absence are as follows:
 - a. The applicant is a relative.
 - b. The applicant is a current staff member.
 - c. The applicant is a close personal friend.
 - d. The applicant is a member of the board member's local church.

Transfers from Other Denominations

1. The process begins with a conversation between a district superintendent and the interested minister from another denomination. The process may also begin by direct contact with the Bishop's Office by the interested minister, in which case, procedure #3 is initiated.
2. If the superintendent believes this is a person who might serve well in the Florida Conference the superintendent will contact the Bishop's Office to initiate the remaining process.
3. The transfer candidate will interview with two superintendents who must then concur that the conference should continue the process.
4. Psychological assessments and background checks are then to be initiated. The psychological assessments are initiated in the same manner as a new candidate. A candidacy mentor sends the Request for Assessment Packet form and \$20.00 (paid by the transfer applicant) to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The mentor then administers the assessments. Three hundred seventy-five dollars (\$375.00) is collected from the transfer candidate and sent to the board of ordained ministry registrar made payable to the Florida Conference Treasurer. The remaining cost is paid through the Bishop's Office. When the assessments are scored by GBHEM and sent to the Ministerial Assessment Specialist, the transfer candidate will be notified to make an appointment with the MAS for interpretation of the assessments. A report of these assessments will be forwarded to the board of ordained ministry registrar, who will then forward copies to the Bishop's Office, the superintendent and the chair of the district committee on ordained ministry.
5. The transfer candidate may obtain an Application for Transfer from the boom registrar.
6. The application and all supporting materials must be received in the board of ordained ministry office by the stated deadline. Upon review of transcripts and ordination materials the boom registrar will determine for what status the person may be considered (local pastor or provisional member).
7. The application is to be reviewed by the district committee on ordained ministry and the candidate is to be interviewed by the dCOM. If the dCOM recommends the transfer candidate then the conference board of ordained ministry continues with its normal process of review and interview.

8. If the boom recommends the transfer candidate for provisional membership and the clergy session ratifies the recommendation, the candidate then must serve two years as a provisional member. Our Standing Rules (§414.5e, 2008 Journal) indicate that this provisional period must be in a full-time appointment within the bounds of the Florida Conference and under the supervision of a district superintendent. If the candidate has not completed the required courses of United Methodist history, doctrine and polity previous to admission to provisional membership, the courses must be completed before being considered for full-connection.
9. If the transfer candidate does not meet the requirements for consideration of provisional membership, she/he would then be considered for local pastor status. The same process as above applies. After interviewing with the board of ordained ministry the candidate may be recommended for local pastor status. After that, if the individual wants to pursue provisional membership and full connection, she/he would follow the normal process of the 2008 Book of Discipline beginning with meeting all educational requirements.

Transfer of a Provisional Member

¶ 347.1 of the 2008 Book of Discipline provides the Bishop with the responsibility for deciding if a provisional member of another annual conference will be transferred. While the Bishop may consult with the chair of the board or with the board's executive committee, it is still the Bishop's decision.

When a provisional member of another annual conference is transferred into the Florida Conference, the provisional member shall interview with the board or its executive committee as soon as is reasonably possible after arriving. It is the board's responsibility to initiate the interview.

Previous to the interview the provisional member shall have the sending annual conference forward his/her personnel file to the boom registrar.

The purposes of the interview are as follows:

1. For the board and the provisional member to familiarize themselves with each other.
2. For the provisional member to become familiar with the Florida Conference's application process.
3. To determine what, if any, contingencies had been assigned by the previous annual conference's board, and what progress had been made on those contingencies.
4. To determine if there are any differing or additional contingencies that need to be assigned.
5. To introduce the provisional member to the Residents in Ministry program.

Ministerial Education Funds

The General Conference determines the formula by which apportionments are made to local churches for the Ministerial Education Fund. Of the apportionments collected the annual conference is required to forward 75% for use by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The remaining 25% is retained by the Florida Conference.

Of the amount that is retained by the Florida Conference 90% is allocated for use as grants for ministerial students and 10% is allocated for continuing education grants for members in full connection.

Ministerial Students

There are four categories of students who benefit from grants or service loans from Ministerial Education Funds:

1. Certified candidates attending the Licensing School
2. Licensed local pastors attending Course of Study or the Advanced Course of Study
3. Certified candidates for provisional membership on the deacon track enrolled in courses required under ¶324.5c (basic graduate theological studies).
4. Certified candidates for provisional membership on either the deacon or elder track who are enrolled in qualified graduate theological programs.

Licensing School – Certified candidates attending the Licensing School will receive \$200 toward the total cost of the school.

Course of Study – Local pastors attending the Course of Study will receive \$300 per course enrolled. Local pastors and associate members attending the Advanced Course of Study will receive \$500 per course enrolled. These funds are forwarded directly to the seminary to be applied against the student's account.

Basic Graduate Theological Studies – Candidates for the deacon track enrolled in basic graduate theological study courses will receive a proportional amount based on the formula for full-time enrolled students, not to exceed \$2,000 in any given semester.

Full-time Graduate Theological Students – Candidates enrolled in a University Senate approved theological program may receive financial assistance based upon an application for a Florida Conference Service Loan. The amount received is determined by financial need but will not exceed \$2,500 per semester, \$1,000 for summer semesters, and a total of \$17,000. The student repays the service loan through service in the Florida Conference

or another annual conference with which Florida has a reciprocal agreement (conferences of the Southeastern Jurisdiction). One year of service is required for each year of receiving assistance. If a candidate does not serve within the Florida Conference or the Southeastern Jurisdiction, the candidate will be required to repay the loan including a reasonable interest rate. Another annual conference can repay the loan for the candidate.

Continuing Education

Clergy in full connection may apply for Ministerial Education Funds to supplement continuing education funds available through their appointments and their own funds. The MEF continuing education fund application must have the approval of the district superintendent and the chair of the staff parish relations committee or other appropriate supervisor in the case of extension ministry appointments. A total of \$750 may be received in a given quadrennium. The check for the funds must be made out to an institution or to the individual upon the submission of receipts for reimbursement. Otherwise the funds will be reported as taxable income.

Psychological Assessment

All candidates for ministry and clergy transferring from other denominations must complete the psychological assessments of the Florida Conference before they can be interviewed by the board of ordained ministry. Clergy on Leave of Absence (voluntary or involuntary) may be required to retake psychological assessments before being interviewed for a return to the effective relationship.

The assessment process involves the following elements:

1. Taking the assessment packet administered by an authorized mentor.
2. Submitting four references on specified forms.
3. Meeting with the Ministerial Assessment Specialist for the interpretation of the assessment and reference materials.
4. A written report is prepared by the Ministerial Assessment Specialist and forwarded to the board of ordained ministry registrar. This report is the property of the Florida Conference.

The assessment packet includes the following tools:

The Minnesota Multi-phasic Personality Inventory – 2 (MMPI-2)
Sentence Completion
16 PF (administered online)
Personal Data Inventory

The administration and interpretation of the assessment packet costs in excess of \$700. It is the responsibility of the applicant to pay for \$375 of that cost. A check should be made out to the Florida Conference Treasurer and forwarded to the office of the board of ordained ministry registrar. The results of the interpretation will not be released for interview purposes until the receipt of the cost.

The Florida Conference has contracted with two sources to serve as Ministerial Assessment Specialists:

Dr. Mel Jacob, Lutheran Counseling Services, Winter Park
Dr. Deborah Leporowski, Juno Beach

The psychological assessments are the property of the Florida Annual Conference and are held and maintained by the registrar of the conference board of ordained ministry. The assessments are kept strictly confidential and are used only for the purposes of the board of ordained ministry and its representative committees.

Sometimes a candidate for ministry is required by the board of ordained ministry or its representative committees to be involved in one to one counseling. Under such a

requirement, the candidate may choose to release a copy of his/her assessments to the assigned counselor. To do so the candidate must send a notarized letter of release to the registrar of the board of ordained ministry. The letter must contain the name and address of the counselor to whom the assessments are to be released.

There may also be occasions when a person may be involved in one to one counseling on a voluntary basis and may wish for the counselor to have access to the assessments. The individual would need to send a notarized letter of release to the registrar of the board of ordained ministry and state the name and address of the counselor to whom the assessments may be released. However, it will be the decision of the board of ordained ministry, through its executive officers, whether the assessments will be released to any particular counselor.

**Review
Team
Expectations**

Proclamation Review Team Expectations, Elder Track

Certified Candidate: ability to express oneself clearly both orally and in written material.

Local Pastor: ability to clearly preach a sermon and to convey a simple theological concept in a manner than can be understood by a congregation. Written material must be clear and well presented.

Provisional Member / Associate Member: ability to clearly preach a sermon and to convey more sophisticated theological concepts. The ability to adequately exegete a biblical passage must be evident. Written material must be of a graduate level (the assumption here is that PM's have completed most of seminary and AM's have completed Course of Study).

Full Connection: sermon should be inspirational and evoke a specific response from the congregation. Must have the ability to fully exegete a biblical passage using a variety of source material. Written material must be of a graduate level.

Reviewers will be viewing a DVD of a sermon including a manuscript and exegetical notes.

Look for:

1. Connection with the text
2. Content - depth and appropriateness of illustrations
3. Delivery - use of voice, mannerisms, body language.
4. Effectiveness - did the sermon educate, inspire, convict.
5. Congruence between message and style of delivery
6. Connection of exegetical notes to the actual preaching event

For Full Connection Elder reviewers will also be reviewing a teaching plan for a book or books of the Bible.

Look for a Purpose Statement and enough details in the plan to show how the candidate will proceed with teaching this book/books.

Proclamation Review Team Expectations, Deacon Track

Certified Candidate: ability to express oneself clearly both orally and in written material.

Provisional Member: understands her/his gifts for ministry and can clearly articulate ways in which his/her present service setting allows living out the ministry of the deacon. The candidate shows evidence of readiness for leadership in connecting the gathered community and service in the world.

Full Connection: shows effectiveness for servant leadership in connecting worship in the gathered community and service in the world.

Candidates on the deacon track present a DVD giving evidence of how they are “proclaiming the Word” in their current ministry setting.

Look for:

one or more activities demonstrating the act of proclamation in their ministry setting.
the candidate’s interaction, involvement, and participation with persons.

For **Provisional Member** the proclamation DVD should be well designed and show how she/he connects the church and the world.

For **Full Connection** the proclamation DVD should show the candidate proclaiming the word in a way that intentionally links the church and the world. It should be well designed and have theological and practical integrity. The candidate should show evidence of being able to communicate effectively and persuasively with clarity and conviction.

Candidates for Full Connection will also submit a teaching plan for a book or books of the Bible. Look for a Purpose Statement and enough details in the plan to show how the candidate will proceed with teaching this book/books.

Deacons are not required to submit a sermon. If they choose to submit one then the expectations for the sermon are the same as candidates on the elder track. See the Proclamation Review Team Expectations, Elder Track. They are still expected to submit a DVD showing their work as a deacon.

Proclamation Resources

Bailey, E. K. Bailey and Wiersbe, Warren W.	<u>Preaching in Black & White</u>
Bond, L. Susan	<u>Contemporary African American Preaching</u>
Cannon, Katie Geneva	<u>Teaching Preaching</u>
Craddock, Fred	<u>Preaching</u>
Dawn, Marva	<u>Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down</u>
Delnay, Robert G.	<u>Fire in Your Pulpit</u>
Florence, Anna Carter	<u>Preaching as Testimony</u>
Gonzalez, Justo	<u>Pulpito: An Introduction to Hispanic Preaching</u>
Hamilton, Adam	<u>Unleashing the Word</u>
Hayes, John and Holladay, Carl	<u>Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook</u>
Kimball, Dan	<u>The Emerging Church</u>
Langford, Andy	<u>Transitions in Worship</u>
LaRue, Cleophus J.	<u>Power in the Pulpit</u>
Lischer, Richard	<u>A Theology of Preaching</u>
Long, Thomas	<u>The Witness of Preaching</u>
Lowry, Eugene	<u>The Homiletical Plot</u>
Massey, James Earl	<u>Designing the Sermon</u>
McKinney, Lora-Ellen	<u>View from the Pew</u>
Mitchell, Henry H.	<u>The Recovery of Preaching</u>

Neville, Robert C.

**Preaching the Gospel: Without Easy
Answers**

Proctor, Samuel D.

The Certain Sound of the Trumpet

Willimon, William

**Proclamation and Theology
Worship as Pastoral Care**

Other Resources

Festival of Homiletics <http://www.goodpreacher.com/festival/>

Leadership Review Team Scope of Work

- I. Each team member receives a copy of this section of the candidate's paper work.
- II. Reviewers look for:
 1. Status the Candidate is applying for. (Your expectations should vary from Lay Pastor, Provisional Elder, or Deacon)
 2. Are they aware of various leadership styles?
 3. Do they show any awareness or knowledge of the books on the bibliography list?
Have they gained anything from their reading?
 4. Have they given any thought to their own leadership style and how their style aids their leadership and also hinders their leadership?
 5. Have they answered the questions asked on the application?
 6. Is this their best work? (Writing skills, spelling, etc).
- III. Reviewers will be paired with another reader of the same candidates in the November meeting. To facilitate your work together, the reviewer should:
 1. Write down comments or questions, with the reference from the candidate's material, so that you can point your partner to the question or comment that you have.
 2. Have at least three questions or comments that you would like to make to the candidate in the small group interview.
 3. The Leadership Team will usually follow the recommendation each pair of readers brings for any given candidate. So along with the questions that you have for the candidate, you must also make a recommendation to the team about whether the candidate should receive an interview in January or not.
- IV. After reviewing materials and discussion with your team what will your review team recommend to the Board?
 - A. Recommend - to go to Conference Board for interview
 - B. Continuance - what contingencies will you suggest?
Recommend resource people to assist with the contingency.
 - C. Discontinuance – this will end the process for the candidate.
Why not?

Did anything happen in the interview with the large group to change your recommendation?

Leadership Books and Ideas

Leaders' Theological Perspective:

- Bilezikian, Gilbert. **Community 101** – Biblical understanding of church.
- Borden, Paul D. **Direct Hit: Aiming Real Leaders at the Mission Field.**
- Cordeiro, Wayne. **Doing Church as a Team.** – Gift-based ministry.
- Clark, Lewis A. & Birch, Bruce. **Ducking Spears, Dancing Madly: A Biblical Model of Church Leadership.**
- Collins, Kenneth J. **The Scripture Way to Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology.**
- Dunnam, Maxie. **Going on to Salvation.** – Wesleyan view of salvation.
- Frank, Thomas E. **Polity, Practice and the Mission of the United Methodist Church.**
- Gunter, Jones, Campbell, Miles, and Maddox. **Wesley and the Quadrilateral, Renewing the Conversation.**
- Hauerwas, Stanley & Willimon, Will. **Resident Aliens.** – The church and the changing values of the world are addressed. How to be the church.
- Mead, Loren. **The Once and Future Church.** – Future of organized denominations.
- Mittelberg, Mark. **Building a Contagious Church** – Organizing the church's evangelism.
- Oden, Thomas. **Pastoral Theology.**
- Ogden, Greg. **The New Reformation.** – argues for defining ministry not as pastor-focused or lay-focused, but that all are ministers. Pastor's role is to equip the minister, player/coach image. (Chapter 6 looks at Role of Minister/Pastor.)
- Runyon, Theodore. **The New Creation.** – Wesley theology for today.
- Russell, Bob. **When God Builds a Church.**
- Warren, Rick. **The Purpose Driven Church.** – How and why to organize your church.
- Weems, Lovett H. Jr. **Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit.** – Enumerates the practices of the Wesleyan Leadership.
- Wesley, John. **The Nature of Salvation.** – Wesley's sermon on the topic. (Edited by Clare George Wesley, Jr.)
- White, James Emery. **Rethinking the Church.** – A challenge to creative redesign in an Age of Transition.

Leading Change

- Appel, Gene & Nelson, Alan. **How to Change Your Church.** – How to change it without killing it
- Bandy, Thomas G. **Kicking Habits.** – Look at change and systems.
- Barna, George. **The Second Coming of the Church.** – 21st century look at the church.
- Blanchard, Hybels & Hodges. **Leadership by the Book.** – Bible used as a leadership manual.
- Collins, Jim. **Good to Great.**
- Collins & Porra. **Built to Last.** – Study of lasting companies.
- Easum, William M. **Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers.** – Permission-giving change.
- Foster, Charles. **Embracing Diversity.**
- Freedman, Samuel G. **Upon This Rock: The Miracles of a Black Church.**
- George, Carl. **How to Break Growth Barriers.** – Understanding the size of the church.
- Kraus, James & Pozner, Barry. **The Leadership Challenge.** – How to get extraordinary things done in organizations.
- Regele, Mike. **Death of a Church.** – Realizing where the population is.

Leadership Books and Ideas – (cont'd)

- Rotter, John P. **Leading Change.** – 8 stage process
- Schaefer & Fassel. **The Addictive Organization.** – Understanding the culture.
- Shawchuck & Heuser. **Managing the Congregation.** – System approach to leadership.
- Southerland, Dan. **Transitioning: Leading Your Church through Change.**
- Steinke, Peter. **Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times**
- Weems, Lovett H. Jr. **Church Leadership** – General overview of leadership in the church.
- Weems, Lovett H. Jr. **Take the Next Step: Leading Lasting Change in the Church.**

Leading (Managing and Organizing):

- Katzenbach & Smith. **The Wisdom of Teams.** – What teams are.
-

Leading Yourself and Others:

- Arbinger Institute. **Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box.**
- Blanchard, K. Hodges. **Lead Like Jesus.**
- Bugbee, Bruce, Cousins, Don & Hybels, Bill. **Network.** - Spiritual Gifts Inventory
- Clinton, J. Robert. **The Making of a Leader.** – Stages of a leader.
- Covey, Steven. **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.** – Time management.
- Ferguson, David. **Intimacy Needs.** – Needs assessment.
- Friedman, Edwin H. **Generation to Generation.** – System theory.
- Hettinga, Jan David. **Follow Me.** – Experience the loving leadership of Jesus.
- Jaworski, Joseph. **Synchronicity.** – Secular story of leading one's life in a new direction.
- Jinkins, Michael. **Letters to New Pastors.**
- Lischer, Richard. **Open Secrets: A Spiritual Journey through a Country Church.**
- McIntosh & Rima. **Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership.** – Self-awareness, keys to leadership.
- McNeal, Reggie. **Practicing Greatness: 7 Disciplines of Extraordinary Spiritual Leaders.**
- McNeal, Reggie. **A Work of Heart.** – Understanding how God shapes spiritual leaders.
- Miller, Herb. **Leadership Is the Key.** – Unlocking your ministry effectiveness.
- Neumark, Heidi. **Breathing Space: A Spiritual Journey in the South Bronx.**
- Niebuhr, Reinhold. **Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic.**
- Norris, Kathleen. **Dakota: A Spiritual Geography.**
- Pappas, Anthony. **Entering the World of the Small Church.**
- Shawchuck, Norman & Heuser, Roger. **Leading the Congregation, Caring for Yourself While Serving the People.**
- Thompson, George B. Jr. **How to Get Along with Your Church.**
- Thrall, McNichol & McElrath. **The Ascent of a Leader.** – How ordinary relationships develop extraordinary character and influence.
- Willard, Dallas. **The Spirit of the Disciplines.** – Developing your spiritual life.
- Wills, Dick. **Waking to God's Dream.** – Story of a pastor's awakening.
- **MBTI** – Personality Inventory

Leadership, General Topics:

- Slaughter, Michael. **Spiritual Entrepreneurs.**
- Wills, Gary. **Certain Trumpets.** – The nature of leadership.

Updated 12/07

Additonal Resources

- Church of the Resurrection Leadership Institute, www.cor.org/catalyst
- Willow Creek Leadership Summit, www.wall.willowcreek.com/leaders
- North Port Ministries, Drive Conference, www.driveconference.org

Personal Growth

GOAL: To determine at what level a candidate is self-aware of their healthy and unhealthy life patterns, their willingness to learn and practice new skills, and their humbleness in acknowledging a commitment to continue to grow in a psychologically healthy manner throughout their ministry.

Based upon that goal, those individuals on the DCOM and the BOOM who have been assigned oversight of Personal Growth procedures for candidates of ministry will proceed with the following information:

1. **PDI (Personal Data Inventory)**, including the Financial Summary – Check to see if all the PDI is filled out and how the information compares with information from the Psychological Packet.
Ask someone with knowledge regarding financial planning if the candidate is proceeding in a healthy way to reduce debt. See other pages in this Handbook regarding financial parameters.
2. **Psychological Packet** – this includes important feedback from the Ministerial Assessment Specialist on test results and their personal interview with the candidate
 - a. **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2)**. This Inventory must be valid for candidate to proceed. Multi-cultural issues are most important to consider and resolve. Questions related to elevated sub-scores are crucial to address.
 - b. **Incomplete Sentence Test**
 - c. **16 Personality Factor Inventory** (Helpful information for leadership issues.)
 - d. **References** – note how strengths and weaknesses perceived by others relate to test results
3. **Interview** – ask candidate ALL questions for which you have concerns in order to determine the contingencies that will be most helpful
4. **Contingencies.** – may include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. One-on-one counseling - Ask the counselor to give written feedback on the issues designated.
 - b. Spiritual Director – Most Spiritual Directors will not give feedback on their work with a candidate.
 - c. Mentoring – One-on-one or small group
 - d. Credit management programs
 - e. Work with a specific person or program on health-related and stress-related issues
 - f. Active participation in a 12 step program
 - g. CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education)– clarify issues for candidate to deal with in the program
 - h. Book studies and reflections

THE INTERVIEW

Persons serving on Personal Growth for the District and the Board need to remind and coach District and Board members about issues of Ethics and Etiquette during the interview process. Please refer to the reference page in this manual.

Personal Growth Recommended Book List

BOOKS FOR SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND SELF-CARE:

- SHATTERED DREAMS, and THE SAFEST PLACE ON EARTH by Larry Crabb (or any books by Larry Crabb)
- GO PUT YOUR STRENGTHS TO WORK by Marcus Buckingham
- THE DNA OF RELATIONS by Dr. Greg Smalley
- THE SEARCH FOR SIGNIFICANCE by Robert McGee
- A WORK OF HEART by Reggie McNeal
- PRAYER by Phillip Yancey (or any books by Philipp Yancey)
- LET YOUR LIFE SPEAK – Parker J. Palmer
- BIOGRAPHIES AND AUTO-BIOGRAPHIES of people of character
- The many books of Henri J. M. Nouwen such as THE WOUNDED HEALER
- The materials in the COMPANIONS IN CHRIST series
- FIT TO BE A PASTOR – G. Lloyd Rediger (and other books by Rediger)
- CALLING AND CHARACTER – William H. Willimon
- RESURRECTING EXCELLENCE – L. Gregory Jones & Kevin R. Armstrong

BOOKS TO HELP UNDERSTAND OTHER GENERATIONS AND CULTURES:

- MEETING GOD AT THE BOUNDARIES (Cross-Cultural-Cross-Racial Clergy Appointments) – Lucia Ann McSpadden
- JOURNEY TO THE WELL – Vasti M. McKenzie
- GENERATION ME (Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled - and More Miserable Than Ever Before) - Jean M. Twenge
- COMING OF AGE (Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Younger Men) - David Anderson, Paul Hill, and Roland Martinson
- BIG QUESTIONS (Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith) - Sharon Daloz Parks
- POST-MODERN PILGRIMS (First Century Passion for the 21st Century World) - Leonard Sweet

BOOKS TO HELP INTEGRATE SELF ISSUES AND THEOLOGY, PROCLAMATION AND/OR LEADERSHIP:

- CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ANXIOUS TIMES – Peter L. Steinke
- (or other books on family systems)
- Fred B. Craddock ON PREACHING (DVD set or book) – assumes preaching/teaching as autobiographical
- IN THE NAME OF JESUS (Reflections on Christian Leadership) – Henri J.M. Nouwen
- THE CHALLENGE OF THE DISCIPLINED LIFE (Christian reflections on money, sex & power) - Richard J. Foster. Also CELEBRATING THE DISCIPLINES
- Several books by Frederick Buechner, including TELLING SECRETS, THE SACRED JOURNEY, SPEAK WHAT YOU FEEL
- THE COURAGE TO TEACH – Parker J. Palmer

Theology Review Team Expectations

Certified Candidates and Candidates Seeking Licensing as Local Pastors: should demonstrate, through written and oral examination, at least a basic confirmation level (7th/8th grade) understanding and ability to articulate theology and their Christian faith.

Candidates Seeking Provisional Membership: should demonstrate theological readiness for ministry. Candidates for provisional membership are expected to demonstrate, through written and oral examination, a level of understanding and articulating theology that reflects their rigorous formal education and training. They should be able to communicate an orthodox understanding of theological doctrines in a clear and professional manner, and be familiar with a wide range of theological dialogue (such as liberation, feminist, womanist, process, et al.). They should show some ability to integrate their life experience and any ministerial experience into their theological reflection.

Provisional Members Seeking Full Conference Membership: should demonstrate theological effectiveness in ministry; that is, that articulation of theology has borne fruit in their ministry. Integration of orthodox theological doctrines with life and ministerial experience should come naturally in both oral and written work.

Theology Reviewers look for the following (the level of scrutiny depends upon whether one is seeking certification as a candidate, licensing, provisional membership, or full conference membership):

1. Does the work demonstrate a level of theological understanding that goes beyond superficial “book” answers? Can the candidate integrate his or her theology into his or her own experience?
2. Does the work show a balance of theological perspectives?
3. Does the candidate grasp the uniqueness of Wesleyan theology? Is there a clear understanding of Wesley’s Way of Salvation and how grace is operative along that Way? Is personal piety linked with social holiness?
4. Does the candidate describe and understand a Wesleyan view of the Sacraments?
5. Candidates should describe how the kingdom of God is both now and yet to come. Do they include the personal, social, and cosmic aspects of the kingdom?
6. Do they understand the tension between the primacy of Scripture and the complexity of biblical authority?

7. Does the candidate grapple with issues and thoughtfully reflect on that struggle, or merely provide simplistic answers?
8. Is the candidate serious about the nurture of his or her spirit?
9. Can the candidate describe the relationship between his or her spiritual work and his or her faith in Jesus Christ?
10. Is the candidate offering God his or her best?
11. Is this work representative of someone you would depend upon for theological interpretation and guidance?

Theology Suggested Reading List (2009-2010)

- Bohler, Carolyn Jane. *God the What?: What Our Metaphors for God Reveal About Our Beliefs in God*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2008.
- Borg, Marcus. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith*. New York: HarperCollins, 1994.
- . *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time: Taking the Bible Seriously but Not Literally*. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.
- Chun Hyun Kyung. *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990.
- Cobb, John B., Jr. *Grace and Responsibility: A Wesleyan Theology for Today*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1995.
- . *Christ in a Pluralistic Age*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999.
- Coll, Regina. *Christianity and Feminism in Conversation*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1994.
- Collins, Kenneth J. *John Wesley: A Theological Journey*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
- . *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2007.
- Cone, James H. *A Black Theology of Liberation (Ethics and Society)*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1986.
- . *God of the Oppressed*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997.
- Dulles, Avery Robert. *Models of the Church*. New York: Doubleday, 2002.
- Gomes, Peter. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Gonzalez, Justo. *The Story of Christianity, Volume 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*. New York: HarperCollins, 1984.
- . *The Story of Christianity, Volume 2: The Reformation to the Present Day*. New York: HarperCollins, 1985.
- Grant, Jacquelyn. *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*. American Academy of Religion, 1989.
- Guthrie, Shirley C. *Christian Doctrine*. Louisville: John Knox/Westminster, 1994.
- Harper, Steve. *The Way to Heaven: The Gospel According to John Wesley*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Hart, David B. *The Doors of the Sea: Where Was God in the Tsunami?* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005.

- Heim, S. Mark. *Saved from Sacrifice: A Theology of the Cross*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2006.
- Inbody, Tyron L. *The Faith of the Christian Church: An Introduction to Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005.
- . *The Many Faces of Christology*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.
- . *The Transforming God: An Interpretation of Suffering and Evil*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Creed: What Christians Believe and Why it Matters*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.
- . *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.
- Jones, Scott J. *United Methodist Doctrine: The Extreme Center*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.
- Jones, Scott J., et al. *Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.
- Jones, W. Paul. *Theological Worlds: Understanding the Alternative Rhythms of Christian Belief*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1989.
- Kalas, J. Ellsworth, et al. *Christian Believer: Knowing God with Heart and Mind*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1999.
- Kinast, Robert L. *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996.
- Kinghorn, Kenneth Cain. *John Wesley on the Sermon on the Mount: The Standard Sermons in Modern English*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2002.
- Langford, Thomas A. *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1983.
- Levenson, Jon. D. *Creation and the Persistence of Evil*. Princeton Univ. Press, 1994.
- Maddox, Randy L. *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology*. Nashville: Kingswood, 1994.
- Maddox, Randy L. and Theodore Runyon. *Rethinking Wesley's Theology for Contemporary Methodism*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.
- McFague, Sally. *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1982.
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Contingency

The Local Pastor

I Feel

God Calling Me

Role of the SPRC

Role of the Minister

Contingency

A contingency is additional work or an experience assigned to a candidate by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry or the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. The contingency may be assigned to strengthen the work of the candidate or help them prepare for the next step in this ministry process. Contingencies will also be assigned when the quality of the work presented to the dCOM or conference board does not meet the expectations of those bodies.

The candidate will receive a letter from the body assigning the contingency. There will be details about the kind of contingency, areas of concern and issues to be focused on, and number of sessions or meetings. In most cases the assigning body will also assign a contingency mentor. In some cases a contingency may not require a mentor but will require a self-report written by the candidate.

When a contingency mentor is assigned, the mentor will direct the work as assigned by the body requiring the work. The contingency may require a one-on-one directed study or a meeting with several folks. Other kinds of contingencies may include Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), Interpersonal Relations (IPR) group, theology weekend, toastmasters, Preaching with Presence, previewing a video (or series), speech class, assignment of a particular class before graduation from seminary, counseling either one-on-one or in a group setting, AA, ACOA, or any number of other options. Instructions for an IPR group follow this page.

Completed contingencies will require either a written report from the contingency mentor or written self-report from the candidate directed to the body that assigned the report. Instructions for the contents of the report follow this page.

If a contingency is assigned by the dCOM, the contingency mentor's report or self-report and copies of it should be sent to the BOOM registrar's office as well as the candidate, registrar, and chairperson of the dCOM making the assignment. The contingency should be completed before appearing before the dCOM again, unless the committee has given a different deadline (i.e., before completing seminary). All contingencies must be complete before applying to the conference board for local pastor or provisional membership.

If a contingency is assigned by the conference board, copies of the contingency mentor's report or self-report should go to the BOOM registrar's office and to the candidate. All contingencies must be complete before the deadline of the conference board for receiving applications in the year the candidate is submitting an application to the conference board.

Report of the Contingency Mentor

Here is some of the kind of information that the dCOM or conference board will be looking for in a report from the contingency mentor:

1. How was the candidate fully engaged in the process?
2. How did the candidate claim ownership of the issues outlined?
3. What evidence was there that the candidate made progress in the areas of concern?
Why or why not?
4. What issues are left to be addressed?
Are these unfinished or new issues uncovered in this process?
5. How (what methods) were the issues addressed? Describe the content/structure/reading/video.

Self-Report of the Candidate

When a candidate is assigned a self-report of contingency work, it should contain the following information:

1. How and when did you do the work?
2. Reflect on how that experience at the time and now relates to the areas of concern noted by the dCOM or conference board.
3. What is different now? Where have you grown in relation to the areas of concern lifted up? What has been the result of having done this work?

Guidelines for Inter-Personal Relations Groups (I.P.R.)

The BOOM or dCOM sometimes assigns an Inter-Personal Relations Group as a contingency for candidates for ministry. These are guidelines for those groups:

1. The District superintendent, and dCOM chair or the Board of Ordained Ministry representative to the candidate's district shall jointly appoint a facilitator of the I.P.R. group.
2. The group facilitator shall consult with the candidate, and the candidate and facilitator shall mutually agree on the other persons who will be invited to participate in the group. These participants may be clergy (elders or deacons in full connection) or combination of clergy and lay (including diaconal ministers, local pastors, provisional members and associate members).
3. The facilitator, candidate, and board representative shall meet to share the "areas of concern" which relate to the IPR group and to consult on choosing the group. The facilitator and the candidate shall contact the participants. The candidate should take initiative in contacting participants. It is suggested that the candidate and the facilitator write a letter inviting the selected individuals to participate and that the candidate follow-up by phone.
4. In addition to the facilitator and the candidate, there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of ten group participants.
5. There shall be a minimum of six sessions of one hour or more with the group meeting in person (not via telephone).
6. The "areas of concern" pertaining to the IPR shall be shared with the facilitator. The facilitator and the candidate will meet briefly (15-30 minutes) before each session to structure the conversation and afterwards (15-30 minutes) for evaluation and learning. The candidate shall take an active role in writing the "learning agenda," choosing topics for discussion, and evaluating each session. The group shall covenant with the candidate that areas of concern shared with the group are confidential and shall not be shared outside the group session or with non-group members.
7. At the first group meeting, the candidate shall share a written "learning agenda" incorporating the "areas of concern" assigned to the IPR and shall discuss with the group a need for confidentiality.
8. The last group session shall be a group evaluation of the group process and the candidate's learning.
9. The facilitator shall write a report to the Board of Ordained Ministry including the following:
 - A. A copy of the learning agenda
 - B. A description of the candidate's role in putting the group together
 - C. Names of group members, and relationship to the candidate if not clergy or diaconal
 - D. The number of sessions, beginning and ending dates
 - E. A description of the candidate's participation in group discussion
 - F. How the candidate processed and evaluated the discussions
 - G. A description of the group interaction, group response to the candidate

The Local Pastor

Local pastors are persons not ordained as elders who are appointed to preach and conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor.

Because of the licensing, appointive process, and three categories of local pastor there are some key understandings we often stumble over.

A certified candidate for ordained ministry may apply at anytime for the local pastor status. The candidate requests the application for local pastor from the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM) registrar. There are four areas of work/competence to be demonstrated: theology, leadership, personal growth, and proclamation. The district committee should look for an actively growing Christian who participates in the life of the church attending Bible study opportunities and other study settings that give them exposure to new ideas and groups with whom to talk and articulate their faith. Most will lack any experience in preaching.

When the dCOM votes to recommend these folks for local pastor status there are several other issues related to this status. The next step for candidates applying for full-time local pastor will be to submit their materials to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry. If the conference board votes to recommend them to the clergy session of the annual conference they are eligible to attend Licensing School. The candidate approved for local pastor must attend the Licensing School before the clergy session of the annual conference can vote to approve their status as local pastor. There are a limited number of openings for the Licensing School which is held for two weeks in May at Florida Southern College. The Southeastern Jurisdiction also offers a licensing school in Spanish through Candler School of Theology. The district superintendents name local pastors to attend the school with first places going to persons who will receive an appointment at annual conference.

Candidates applying for part-time local pastor are interviewed only by the district committee. They are not seen by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Part-time local pastors who decide at a later time to serve full-time will have to fill out a new application for local pastor and be interviewed by the dCOM and by the conference board.

When the candidate has attended the Licensing School, been approved by the clergy session of the annual conference, and has an appointment, they will be licensed for pastoral ministry. When there is no appointment for the local pastor they do not have a license. Without the license/appointment local pastors are not able to attend Course of Study.

Local pastors who have an appointment are eligible to enroll in and attend the Course of Study. There is a time limit for completing the Course of Study (eight years for local pastors in a full-time appointment and twelve years for local pastors in a part-time appointment). The time constraints do not begin until the local pastor has an active license serving in an appointment.

Local pastors will be assigned a mentor by the dCOM that they will work with until they complete the Course of Study. They will be asked to fill out a *Local Pastor Annual Continuance Form* and have a yearly interview with the dCOM to continue their status as local pastor. They may be assigned contingencies.

Local pastors who have completed the Course of study will fill out *Local Pastor Annual Continuance Form* and meet annually with dCOM (probably as a group) for fellowship and to see if there are concerns. The local pastor may request an interview with the dCOM. The dCOM chair and district superintendent may require an interview with the dCOM if they deem it necessary.

Course of Study

The basic theological education program of the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors who are unable to attend an approved seminary. Participants in the program should have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, and have been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry

The studies are the first exposure for most candidates to the practice of ministry. Public worship, pastoral care for spiritual formation, organization of a parish for nurture and mission, and educational ministries in the church are the major areas of concern covered in the eighty-hour school. The candidate must be approved by the dCOM for licensing as a local pastor. The candidate must attend the school before being approved by the clergy session of the annual conference and being appointed as a local pastor.

I Feel God Calling Me To Do Church Work

When someone in your congregation comes to you with this statement it is great news and a great opportunity. You may be wondering how to proceed from here. Sometimes all this person means is that I want to continue to be a volunteer by giving more time, taking on more responsibility. He/she is real clear about this and very comfortable with it. Your role here is pretty straight forward -- help him/her find appropriate places to serve within the life of your congregation.

But suppose the maker of this statement is not so clear about what this means for his/her life? Then you have a great opportunity to work with him/her in discerning just what God has in store for him/her.

So your question is: How do I help this person discern just what God is calling him/her to do? The good news is that there is a plan and a process for doing this.

I. *The Christian as Minister*

A. Read and work through together chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the book, *The Christian as Minister* (available from Cokesbury). The purpose of this reading and study together is to begin to see what possibilities there are for ministry in addition to being a local church minister or a lay person who volunteers in the church. The study opens up many possibilities, some leading to and requiring ordination, some requiring certification as a lay professional in a particular field, and also the possibility to be the best lay person/volunteer they can be in their local church.

This is an important beginning point in what may turn out to be a long process or a very short process. It is your role to help them with this struggle. It also may be a struggle for you. The hardest part may be in lovingly redirecting this person from an ordination route to a place as a very productive lay person. This is very important. If you have questions about his person's call, gifts, or ability to eventually serve in ministry, now is the time to explore those issues and make a decision about continuing in this exploration. It is not helpful to them to continue in this process when you know that they are not suited for ordained ministry. The further in the process they move the more difficult it becomes for them when they are finally told that ordination is not an appropriate place for them.

B. Chapters 4 and 5 are important for you but not for study or discussion with your lay person -- yet. Chapter 4 is for your personal use. Chapter 5 is very important but is not dealt with unless or until he/she completes work with a mentor and comes for certification. Helpful information is there for the interview with the Staff Parish Relations Committee that is required to become a Certified Candidate.

At the conclusion of this discussion you will be choosing one of several options:

1. He/she is really happy with a calling as a volunteer and lay person in the congregation.
2. He/she is considering further training as a lay professional. Help that person obtain information from the conference office, from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry or go to the GBHEM website (www.gbhem.org) for information about certification in any number of fields of service and ministry.
3. This person needs to be redirected into service as a lay person/volunteer.
4. This person is still feeling a call to ordained ministry. At this point you and your church member may need to move to a deeper understanding and discerning process using the book titled *Ministry Inquiry Process*, also available from Cokesbury.

II. *Ministry Inquiry Process*

- A. The *Ministry Inquiry Process* book is an opportunity for you and the person to dig into their personal spiritual life, to seek and discern what their call to ministry may be. Plan to spend several months to a year working with this material. Don't think of this time together as a chore but an opportunity to enable someone else's spiritual journey and a time to revisit and refresh your own commitment and call to ministry.
- B. Once again this is a time when you will need to be aware of their gifts and potential for ministry. Explore those gifts and potential and what they offer for ministry. If you feel that there are problem areas or issues that may make this person unsuitable for ordained ministry, begin to talk about them now and explore what they might mean for effective ministry. Once again now is an appropriate and less painful time to redirect their commitment.

III. What next?

At the Conclusion of the reading and discussion of *The Christian as Minister* and the *Ministry Inquiry Process* one of several things will happen.

- A. The person may discern that their calling is to be the best lay person they can be, either as a volunteer or a professional. Pages 198 and 199 give some suggestions for continuing growth/study. If there is an interest in being a certified professional, direct their interest to the conference office or the website for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (www.gbhem.org) for information about how to pursue that interest.
This is the end of a formal process with you for discerning a call and direction.
- B. If there is an interest in pursuing ordained ministry you are also coming to an end to your formal relationship in the discernment process with this lay person. You are preparing to turn this person over to the care and direction of the district superintendent, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, and a mentor assigned by the committee.

Ignore the instructions on page 181, *Next Steps in Ministry*. No written material is submitted either by you or the candidate to the conference office.

1. The candidate writes a letter to the district superintendent indicating his/her interest in ministry and requests an interview.
2. The district superintendent will arrange an appointment with the person which includes a discussion of the person's call, instructions about fingerprints/background check, and discussion about what follows.
3. A candidacy mentor is assigned by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry chairperson.
4. Arrangements for obtaining the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy* and Psychological Assessment materials are made with the mentor and include a fee of \$75 for the *Guidebook* and \$375 for the assessment materials.

Some helpful notes and information for using the Candidacy Process Chart:

1. Any full-connection deacon, elder, or local pastor who has completed the Course of Study may serve as a guide in the first two steps (Inquiring Candidate), reading/discussion of *The Christian as Minister* and *Ministry Inquiry Process*. It will probably take several months to work through these books. Both are available from Cokesbury and in Spanish.
2. It would be helpful if the seeker's minister served as the guide. You already have a relationship with the seeker and some insight into the gifts/potential/character of the seeker.
3. Goal for the reading/discussion of these two books is exploration of the field of ministry and discernment of call by God either to laity or ordained clergy.
4. The goal is not to send everyone on the road to ordained ministry. It is always appropriate to guide and direct persons into being the best lay person and volunteer that they can be in a local church. There would be no church without these folks.
5. Study of both of these books is required before proceeding to the Exploring Candidate phase. At the conclusion of these studies the formal relationship between guide and seeker ends (you will certainly want to maintain contact and continue to encourage the seeker in whatever they decide to do).
6. At the completion of both of these studies, if there is still the desire to pursue ordained ministry, the Inquiring Candidate makes contact with the district superintendent by writing a letter indicating his or her interest in pursuing the call to ministry and requests an interview. All further work with the seeker (now Exploring Candidate) is the responsibility of the district superintendent and the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
 - No contact is made with the conference office (ignore instructions on page 181 in the *Ministry Inquiry Process* book).
 - No application is sent to the GBHEM seeking to obtain the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*.
7. At the interview with the district superintendent, the DS will talk with the seeker about his/her call and reading of the two books. The seeker will receive instructions about the fingerprint/background check.
8. A mentor will be assigned by the chairperson of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
9. When the candidate is assigned a mentor, he/she will be notified by the dCOM chairperson. It becomes the responsibility of the candidate to make contact with the mentor.
10. At a first meeting, the candidate and mentor will talk about obtaining the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy* (there is a \$75 charge) and about the psychological assessment (which will require a \$375 fee).
11. The candidate will work with the same mentor through the entire process. It will take several years to complete this process.

Resources

Both of these books are available from Cokesbury and are available in Spanish:

The Christian as Minister

Ministry Inquiry Process

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry maintains an excellent website (www.gbhem.org) that contains information about all kinds of options/fields for ministry. You may also want to check the web pages for the Center for Clergy Excellence on the Florida Conference website ([www.flumc.org/Center for Clergy Excellence](http://www.flumc.org/Center%20for%20Clergy%20Excellence))

The Role of the Minister in the Candidacy Process

I. Inquiring Candidate

1. Any deacon, elder, or local pastor who has completed the Course of Study may be the guide for this stage - Inquiring Candidate. However, it would really be helpful for the candidate's minister to be the guide. You know this person best and will best be able to facilitate the study and help with a decision.
2. Work through *The Christian as Minister* book with persons exploring their call to ministry. It may take several months to complete this reading and discussion. The purpose of the reading, discussion, and interviews in this book and time together is to explore all forms of ministry. The purpose is not to convince every person exploring a call to service/ministry that ordained ministry or the elder track is the only option. Chapter four offers guidelines for the minister and chapter five for the staff parish relations committee.
3. To work through the *Ministry Inquiry Process* book with an inquiring candidate. The purpose is to explore the candidate's spiritual life, options for ministry, and how faith and vocation are related. This inquiry will take several months. The purpose is not to convince every person exploring a call to service/ministry that ordained ministry or the elder track is the only option.
4. Both books are required reading and study before moving to the next step. They are available from Cokesbury and in Spanish.
5. Visit and make use of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry web site, www.gbhem.org. Important information and resources are available there.
6. At the conclusion of the study of the *Ministry Inquiry Process* there are instructions for reaching a decision and the next step to take. The purpose is not to convince every person exploring a call to service/ministry that ordained ministry or the elder track is the only option. It's okay if the candidate decides that there are really a lot of great opportunities for me in ministry, that do not call for ordination. We need great, called, committed lay people in the local church to do the work of ministry. If the decision is to pursue the local pastor or ordination track, do not contact the Board of Ordained Ministry Registrar. The next step is for the candidate to write the district superintendent and request an appointment to get acquainted, talk about the candidate's call to ministry, and make arrangements for the background check. At this point your job is finished. A mentor will be assigned by the chair of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. |

II. Exploring Candidate

1. Interview with the Staff Parish Relations Committee.

When the candidate has completed section 3 in the *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*, he/she will be preparing for an interview with the local church staff parish relations committee and a recommendation from the charge conference. The candidate will talk with you about setting up a time for this staff parish relations committee interview.

It would be helpful to work with the staff parish relations committee on chapter five of *The Christian as Minister* book prior to the interview. They need time to digest the questions and prepare for the interview. Chapter five contains questions and the kind of information that the committee should be looking for in interviewing the candidate. This is not a rubber-stamp interview. The time together should be taken seriously. The candidate has spent months preparing for this time and exploring his or her call.

The issue for the committee is **fitness for ministry**. Is this a person that you would welcome as the minister of your church?

This is the first opportunity for the candidate to be examined regarding fitness for ministry. The committee may decide that this person is more suited to be a lay person. That's okay. It is better to reach this decision now. It is not helpful for the candidate to be passed onto the charge conference (and then to the district committee) when your committee clearly has questions about the candidate's fitness for ministry.

At the conclusion of the interview the committee will decide whether to recommend the candidate to the charge conference. If the committee decides not to recommend, someone needs to be ready to share the decision and discussion with the candidate. Information and help for redirecting the candidate's call should be made available.

2. Charge Conference Interview/Recommendation

Make arrangements with the district superintendent to hold a charge conference at a time that is convenient for him or her.

Suggestions for the content of this interview are also found in Chapter five of *The Christian as Minister* and ¶310 of the *2008 Book of Discipline*. The charge conference will vote to recommend or not to recommend this person to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. This recommendation requires a written ballot and approval of 2/3 of those present at the charge conference. (¶311.2b).

Hopefully this will be a time of celebration and recognition for the candidate and the work he or she has done.

III. Paperwork

Following the charge conference meeting and voting you will need to complete *The United Methodist Church Recommendation or Renewal for Candidacy for Ordained Ministry Studies*. The first page must be completed and signed by the presiding elder, district superintendent, or bishop. The candidate completes the second personal information page. The candidate is responsible for sending it to the registrar of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

IV. Renewal

The staff parish relations committee and charge conference must annually recommend renewal of the candidate's status. The form *The United Methodist Church Recommendation or Renewal for Candidacy for Ordained Ministry Studies* is also used for renewal of candidacy. The form is available on the conference web site. **The form as a renewal should be included annually in the charge conference reports.**

The Role of the Staff Parish Relations Committee

The local church staff parish relations committee shares with the minister the responsibility for enlistment, guidance, and support of candidates for ordained ministry as well as other forms of ministry. See the *2008 Book of Discipline* ¶247.8 and ¶259.9. *The Christian as Minister* is another helpful resource for this committee.

“There are some whom God calls for ordained ministry from the people of the church. The SPRC is charged with the responsibility of discerning those whom God has called to represent Christ’s ministry in the name of the church. This discernment is done with prayer and under guidance of the Holy Spirit. The SPRC has responsibility for the recruitment of persons who evidence God’s claim upon them for ordained ministry, the examination of candidates for their calls from God and the evidence of gifts, and the recommendation of these candidates to the charge conference. When the charge conference votes to recommend a candidate for ordained ministry, the congregation assumes the care and support of the candidate through the years of preparation for ministry. The care and support may include continued prayer by individuals and during services of worship, cards and care packages during years of education, opportunities for worship, leadership, financial support, and other forms of encouragement.” (*2000 Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation: Pastor-Parish Relations*, page 33).

When someone presents himself/herself to the minister as seeking certification as a candidate for ordained ministry, this committee has the first opportunity to meet with the candidate and plays a significant role in the furthering of this person’s call to ministry. It is the responsibility of this committee to interview the candidate, examine a call to ministry, and decide whether to recommend the candidate to the charge conference. The candidate has already been meeting with a mentor assigned by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry for at least a year and working through the *Fulfilling God’s Call: Guidelines for Candidacy*.

Chapter five of *The Christian as Minister* gives suggestions for preparing for the interview and the kind of questions and information that the committee should be looking for. This is a crucial first step for the candidate and for the church. This should not be a perfunctory, rubber-stamp interview. The church needs persons for ordained ministry who are truly called by God for ordained ministry. At this stage in the candidate’s journey we are not looking for great theological answers, but for a sense of being called by God and a sense of the person’s fitness/readiness for ministry. Is this a person that I would like to have as the pastor of my church? The committee may consider making this the only item on their agenda or to devote a large block of time to the purpose of interviewing the candidate.

Using the suggestions from *Book of Discipline*, ¶310 and ¶311.2a and *The Christian as Minister*, the committee is seeking to discern the candidate’s fitness/readiness for ministry. The committee

should prepare itself ahead of time by reading and studying the questions. They should also seek responses and recommendations from the congregation regarding the candidate.

At the conclusion of the interview the committee will need to vote either to recommend or not recommend this person to the charge conference. If strong concerns or issues are raised about the candidate's fitness for ministry, seek further clarification or decide that perhaps this person is better suited to be a lay person in the local church. The committee may vote not to recommend this person. If so, there are important issues of confidentiality that need to be observed as well as support to be given to the candidate.

If the committee votes to recommend this person to the charge conference, the minister will make arrangements for that date. The chairperson and minister may want to work together in planning this meeting. Suggestions are found in *The Christian as Minister*. A charge conference that has only this agenda item can be a time of great celebration and focus on the candidate, on God's call, and the ministry, work, and support of the congregation. The form, *The United Methodist Church Recommendation or Renewal for Candidacy for Ordained Ministry Studies* is used to report recommendation.

If the District Committee on Ordained Ministry votes to certify the candidate, there will be an annual renewal of this certification by both the staff parish committee and the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. The staff parish committee is responsible for annual review and recommendation to the charge conference. The form, *The United Methodist Church Recommendation or Renewal for Candidacy for Ordained Ministry Studies*, is used to report recommendation and renewal of recommendation to the district committee and is available on the conference web site. **The form as a renewal should be included annually in the charge conference reports.**