

## **RATIONALE GUIDING THE STANDARDS OF THE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY FOR RECOMMENDATION OF APPLICANTS FOR ORDERS AND MEMBERSHIP**

The standards used as the basis for an applicant's recommendation include:

### **A Clear Call to Ordained Ministry**

While it is true that all Christians are called to ministry, scripture and tradition teach that God calls and the Church sets apart individuals for specialized ministry of service, word, sacrament, and order. The Board of Ordained Ministry assumes that an applicant for ordination will be able to articulate your calling in a clear and specific manner.

### **Gifts and Graces for Ordained Ministry**

Those whom God calls, God also equips. The apostle Paul said, "God gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors, and teachers...to the building up of the body of Christ." We believe that those who have been called and equipped by God for ministry will display evidence of those gifts and graces in their lives. The Board of Ordained Ministry examines such information as autobiographical statements, personal references, evaluations, criminal background checks, and psychological assessments as part of the recommendation process.

### **Academic Preparation**

Paul exhorted Timothy to "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." We believe that adequate academic preparation is the foundation for "handling accurately the word of truth." The Board of Ordained Ministry uses academic records and evaluations, submitted written work, and the interview process to determine the level of academic preparation of an applicant. The applicant should be able to communicate the Christian faith in an articulate and consistent manner.

### **Suitability for Ministry in the United Methodist Tradition**

While we recognize and rejoice in the pluralistic nature of our particular community of faith, we also recognize the strength and unity that is provided by our great tradition and polity. The Board of Ordained Ministry expects applicants to be well-read and conversant in Wesleyan thought and tradition, as well as supportive of our unique system of organization and

governance. In our evaluation, the Board examines closely such things as doctrinal statements, sermons, attitudes about connectionalism and itinerancy, and collegiality.

The goal of the entire process is to recommend those who are truly called, gifted, and prepared for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church.

### **Written Work Requirement**

The Board of Ordained Ministry gives careful attention to the applicant's written work. Although this is not the only criteria by which evaluations and recommendations are made, the written work is a significant part.

Applicants, therefore are strongly advised to take the written work very seriously, giving careful attention to preparation, presentation, form, content, grammar, and inclusive language.

Written work that is hastily and shoddily prepared merely to meet a requirement is a poor representation of the applicant. Attention to form and style, proper footnoting, and neatness will not only make a good first impression, but will also facilitate a better presentation of qualifications. All applicants are required to consult and use the suggested format of Kate Turabian's A Manual of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations for work submitted that is more than 10 pages. For shorter work, you may use The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Third Edition.

Each candidate has the responsibility to ensure that all required paper work is in their file. You are welcome to look at the contents of your file by contacting the Registrar.

# Assignments for Elder's Orders And Full Membership

## Documentation

Your file in the Registrar's Office must include the following documents by **December 1st**.

1. An official transcript from the seminary from which the applicant graduated, indicating that the Master of Divinity Degree (or its equivalent) has been satisfactorily completed. *Copies are not acceptable.*
  - a. The transcript must show that a minimum of two semester of three quarter hours have been satisfactorily completed in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity.
  - b. If the applicant has not taken such courses in her/his seminary experience, she/he must have certification that a special course of study and/or examination in these fields has been satisfactorily completed under the direction of the Division of Ordained Ministry in Nashville.
2. A medical form completed by licensed physician indicating satisfactory health of the applicant.
3. A recommendation form completed by the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Chairperson and the District Superintendent of the charge where the applicant is serving.
4. A report from the applicant's probationary cluster group mentor. **Please obtain from your mentor.**
5. Self Disclosure Form w/notarized signature.

**NOTE:** Most of these documents are sent to the Registrar by someone other than the applicant. However, the applicant is ultimately responsible to see that these required forms have been returned by the deadline.

**SEND ALL MATERIAL TO:**  
**Rev. Marilyn E. Coney, Registrar of Elders**  
22420 Lorain Road  
Fairview Park, Ohio 44126

# Assignments for Elder's Orders And Full Membership

## Written Work

1. **Autobiographical Statement.** The applicant must submit a concisely written autobiographical statement which includes the age and family relationships of the applicant, the applicant's Christian experience, call to ministry, formative growth experiences in the faith, and plans for service to Christ in the church. This is to be in narrative form.

**Twelve double-spaced typed copies are to be submitted. Binding should be a single staple in the upper left-hand corner. The applicant's name should appear on the cover page.**

2. **Personal Position Paper.** The applicant must submit a paper answering the questions in *The Book of Discipline 2004*, Paragraph 335 (a) through (c). The paper should demonstrate thorough and critical reflection. If other sources are used, please footnote according to Kate Turabian's A Manual of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.

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3. **Sermon.** The applicant must submit a sermon on one of the following biblical passages:

Topic: "The Great Commission"	Matthew 28:16-20
Topic: "Priesthood of All Believers"	I Peter 2:4-10
Topic: "World Communion Sunday"	Lectionary readings – current year

This sermon is to have been prepared for and preached to the congregation the applicant is currently serving. A manuscript or transcript, DVD cassette, and bulletin are required.

**Twelve double-spaced typed transcripts and one digital DVD cassette recording of ONLY the text and sermon are to be submitted.**

- The digital DVD cassette recording should be clear and must reveal that it was taped before the congregation. The camera should pan the room to show the congregation, then zoom in on the pastor so that facial expressions are visible on the tape.
- The applicant's name should appear on the cover page and the tape. Twelve bulletins from the service when the sermon was preached should also be submitted.

4. **Case Study.** The case study is an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate her/his ability to integrate the practice of ministry and theological reflection. The Board of Ordained Ministry is highly interested in how the applicant will practically integrate theological reflection into every day ministry.

The case study must include the following:

- a. A description of an event or experience from the applicant's probationary period.
- b. Theological reflection, focusing on this event or experience. Areas to consider are: Biblical tradition, church history, church history, doctrinal implications, and Wesleyan tradition.
- c. Interpretation. The case study must show how the applicant understands this event or experience in relation to her/his total professional orientation; that she/he is able to integrate the academic training with the tasks required in a local church setting.

**Both the applicant's theological reflection and interpretation of the event or experience must demonstrate consultation and dialogue with historical and contemporary literature relevant to the event or experience. Proper case study and research style is required. Applicants may want to consult *Shared Wisdom: A Guide to Case Study Reflection in Ministry* by Jeffrey H. Mahan (Abingdon Press, 1993).**

- d. Suggested events or experiences:
  - Age-level ministries
  - Budgeting process (preparation and underwriting)
  - Conflict management within the congregation
  - Confirmation
  - Goal-setting
  - Grief process and funerals
  - Pastoral visitation
  - Premarital counseling (including marriage service)
  - Sacraments (theology and practice)
  - Social issues (preaching, teaching, and pastoral care)
  - Staff-congregation relationships
  - Worship

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5. **Bible Study Teaching Plan.** In accordance with Paragraph 335.6, in *The Discipline*, the BOM is requiring a complete lesson and teaching plan for Bible Study.
- a. Select a book or books of the Bible you wish to lead or facilitate.
  - b. State chapter(s) and verse(s) you will be covering in your specific lesson plan and include that plan in the papers you submit
  - c. Identify the group with whom you will be leading in the Study.
  - d. Outline the way in which you will present the Study with the desired goals and outcomes. Remember to use a variety of experiences for the study. Two resources you might wish to consult are Barbara Bruce's Seven Ways of Teaching the Bible to Adults and Delia Halverson's, Leading the Adult Learner, and The UMC Guidelines for Leading Small Groups. Understanding the seven ways of knowing will enhance your study.
    - a. Offer these key areas for understanding as you plan:
      - i. What does the Bible say in this section?
      - ii. What does the Bible mean?
      - iii. What does the Bible mean to and for you and the learners today?
      - iv. What does the Bible seem to imply in terms of a response to God's Word to us (to me) in this particular Scripture.
    - b. Lesson Plan: Include a specific lesson plan that includes additional Bible resources that you plan to use along with maps, commentaries, historical data, video clips, websites or any other material that would be of interest or enrich the learning experience.

*(We understand that people learn by a variety of methods, and expect to see a variety of learning experiences within the lesson plan.)*

Include in your lesson plan, additional Bible resources that you plan to use such as: maps, commentaries, historical data, video clips, websites or any other material that would be of interest or enrich the learning experience.

**Twelve double-spaced typed copies are to be submitted. Binding should be a single staple in the upper left-hand corner. The applicant's name should appear on the cover page.**

**NOTE:**

- **In keeping with our covenant relationship and the norms of academic honesty, the East Ohio Conference Board of Ordained Ministry assumes that all written work submitted is exclusively the applicant's own work.**
- **Written work must be according to Kate Turabian's A Manual of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.**

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