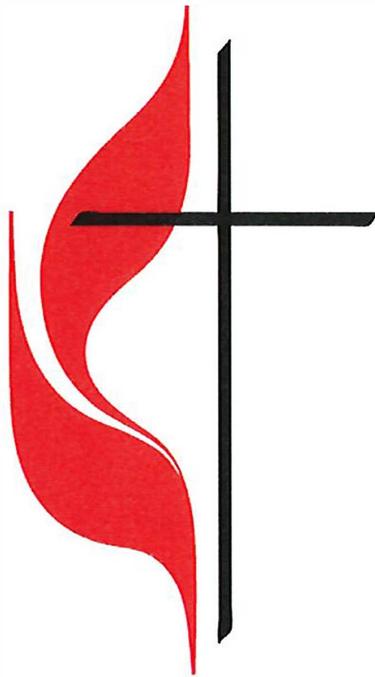


District Committee  
On Ordained Ministry  
**HANDBOOK**



**Alabama-West Florida  
Conference  
The United Methodist  
Church  
2021-2024**

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## **One Year in the Life of a District Committee on Ordained Ministry**

### July – Getting Organized

Who is on the district committee?  
 List and review clergy and candidates  
 Match local pastors with clergy mentors (give names to OMS)  
 Review important dates and set schedule for year  
 Discuss recruiting/enlistment strategies – Ministry Sunday  
 Schedule Introductory Interviews, if needed

### August – Provisional and Associate Preparation

Interviews – Conference Board is looking for **readiness for ministry** Readiness is evaluated in four areas: call, theology, personal growth and practice Review educational requirements with candidate carefully  
 Ask questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry Does the candidate understand the difference between Deacon and Elder tracks? Letter from the district chair is a critical part of the candidate's files

**\*DCOM Fall Report due to Office of Ministerial Services by October 1st.**

**\*\* Provisional and Associate Member Recommendations are due by September 15th.**

Action Required: Written ballot; 3/4 majority vote.

Criteria: Areas of developing competencies; academic background; consider field education experiences, internships, other practice of ministry experience; review how theological understanding has evolved since certification; carefully review educational requirements.

### November/December - Candidacy Certification

Looking for **fitness for ministry**  
 Review the candidacy checklist to make sure all requirements are complete Candidacy mentor letter should be included  
 Look for evidence of a clear call to ministry  
 Explore leadership experiences  
 Educational requirements should be carefully reviewed and discussed  
 Member of a UM church for two years with at least one year in leadership Psychological Assessment report completed and discussed  
 Background and Credit Checks completed  
 Recommended by candidate's home church  
 Registered for local licensing school (if needed and projected and appointment)

Action Required: Individual written ballot; 3/4 majority required to certify.

Criteria: Spiritual fitness, psychological fitness, physical fitness, and potential for effectiveness.

## **January/February - Local Pastor Approval, Continuance & Continuing Certified Candidacy Interviews.**

Looking for **satisfactory progress** in studies and performance

\*Local Pastor Mentor letter should be included

\*Course of Study transcripts should be brought.

Look for areas of strength and areas of growth during interviews

How did you empower the laity over the past year?

What are the plans for the candidate's future?

Action Required: 3/4 majority vote with recommendation required to specify full time local pastor, part time local pastor, or student local pastor (note that student local pastor is only for those students from other annual conferences not in the candidacy studies in the AWF Conference). Once voted on and approved for the first time, the candidate must register for and complete Licensing school. **Remember that licensing is dependent upon the person receiving an appointment in the AWF Conference.**

Criteria: Spiritual fitness, readiness for ministry, psychological fitness, physical fitness, potential for effectiveness.

## **March and ongoing – Candidacy Certification**

Looking for fitness for ministry

Review the candidacy checklist to make sure all requirements are complete Candidacy mentor letter should be included

Look for evidence of a clear call to ministry

Explore leadership experiences

Educational requirements should be carefully reviewed and discussed

Member of a UM church for two years with at least one year in leadership Psychological Assessment report completed and discussed

Background and Credit Checks completed

Recommended by candidate's home church

Registered for local licensing school (if needed and projected and appointment)

**\*DCOM Spring Report due to Office of Ministerial Services by April 1.**

Action Required: Individual written ballot; 3/4 majority required to certify.

Criteria: Spiritual fitness, psychological fitness, physical fitness, and potential for effectiveness.

## Christmas Break/ Summer Break

Interview candidates home from school if not already interviewed during other meetings. These may be done via Zoom to accommodate those living far away and reduce the number of meetings.

## **The District Committee on Ordained Ministry**

Alabama-West Florida Conference

### **Amenability**

The district committee on ordained ministry shall be amenable to the annual conference through the Board of Ordained Ministry (il666). All actions are *recollllllendarlols* to the Board of Ordained Ministry and shall be reported to the Board through the "Action Report Form" by the district committee registrar.

### **Responsibilities**

The DCOM is responsible for the following actions:

1. Recommendation for certification as a candidate for licensed or ordained ministry (Fitness for Ministry)
2. Reconunendation for licensing for pastoral ministty (Fitness for Ministt-y)
3. Recommendation for Associate Membership prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry (Effectiveness in Ministty)
4. Reconunendation for Provisional Membership prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry (Readiness for Ministry)
5. Recommendation for Readmission to Conference Membership prior to interview with the Board of Ordained Ministt-y.
6. Annual review of supply pastors serving in the district.
7. Certify persons as Certified Lay Ministers (CLM)

In addition, the district committee on ordained ministt-y shall aid the local church in the process of enlisting persons for ordained minishy as deacon or elder or for service as a local pastor, encourage persons to enter the candidacy program, and maintain a list of all candidates under its care.

### **Membership**

- A representative f'om the Board of Ordained Minishy, named by the board after consultation with the district superintendent, who may be named chairperson.
- The district superintendent, who shall not be the chairperson
- At least three professing members of local churches
- At least six other clergy in the district. The clergy shall include elders and deacons, and where possible, women and ethnic clergy, a deacon or elder who is age 35 or younger, an associate member, and may include one local pastor who has completed the Course of Study.
- These persons shall be nominated annually by the district superintendent in consultation with the chairperson or executive conmlittee of the Board of Ordained Ministry and approved by the ammal conference.
- All persons named to the district committee on ordained ministty shall be members with vote.
- Interim vacancies are filled by the district superintendent.

## OVERVIEW: ROLE OF THE DCOM

Enlistment

Interviews

A. Candidacy Certification: Fitness for Ministry

- Spiritual fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness
- Potential for effectiveness

**Interviews are required at these points:**

1. *Certification Interview* following completion of all steps for certification
2. Annual interview renewal of certified candidacy

B. Licensed Local Pastor: Annual License for Pastoral Ministry

- Fitness issues
- Readiness issues

1. Recommendation for licensing and conference relationship (full-time local pastor, part-time local pastor, and students appointed as local pastors)
2. Annual renewal of the license for pastoral ministry

C. Associate Membership: Effectiveness in Ministry

- Assess areas of developing competency
- Review academic background
- Consider current practice of ministry
- How has theological understanding evolved since licensing?

D. Provisional Membership: Readiness for Ministry

- Assess areas of developing competency
- Review academic background
- Consider field education experiences, internships, other practice of ministry experiences
- How has theological understanding evolved since certification?

E. Readmission to Conference Membership

- Be in touch immediately upon such a request with the Office of Ministerial Services prior to any of these interviews.
1. From honorable location
  2. From administrative location
  3. From those who previously withdrew from the ministerial office
  4. From discontinuance as a certified candidate or local pastor

F. Supply Pastors

- Annual interview with supply pastors

G. Certified Lay Ministers

- Certify persons who are qualified and trained

## DCOM LEADERSHIP JOB DESCRIPTIONS

### District Superintendent

- Receives letter from potential candidate with a statement of call and request for admission to the candidacy program. (Copy also goes to DCOM chair)
- District Superintendent recommends potential candidate attend the candidacy retreat. DS notifies by email the Office of Ministerial Services with the candidates' name, address, cell phone number, and email address.
- Presides at Charge Conference where candidates are voted on.
- Nominates District Committee on Ordained Ministry members and leaders.
- Obtains from former district the files of candidates and local pastors moving to the district.
- Reviews the Business of the Annual Conference Questions to make sure all certified candidates and licensed local pastors are listed.

### Chairperson

- Sets date and place for meetings.
- Receives copies of letters to District Superintendent from potential candidates
- Schedules *Certification Interviews* with candidates who have completed the candidacy retreat and group mentoring successfully and submitted all required documents. These interviews should be scheduled in a timely fashion. All documents are due prior to the interview.
- Writes letter to each candidate regarding the results of the interview and recommended action with a copy in the candidate's file.
- Sets the agenda and presides at the meetings.
- Makes sure that all DCOM leaders are following through on their responsibilities.
- Makes sure that the DCOM interviews candidates at the appropriate time with the appropriate documents in hand.

### Secretary

- Sends meeting notices, if not done by the chair.
- Records and sends minutes of the meetings to the DCOM members and to the Office of Ministerial Services.
- Keeps a file of all DCOM minutes (in the district office).

### Registrar

- Tracks all candidates.
- Maintains the official file for each candidate. Original files are to be scanned into eBridge. A "Candidacy File Checklist" or "Local Pastor's File Checklist" shall be

used to keep a record of documents in each candidate's file. Record keeping procedures shall be governed by the "guidelines for Keeping Ordained Clergy and Diaconal Ministry Personnel Records in the United Methodist Church", prepared by GCFA.

- Uses the DCOM Action Report Form to record and report to the Board of Ordained Ministry all actions of the DCOM. Keeps a copy of this Action Report Form in the candidate's file.
- Makes sure that all paperwork is in the file prior to a candidate's interview.
- Makes sure that the candidate's and local pastor's file is complete (see file contents checklist).
- Works with the district superintendent to review the Business of the Annual Conference Questions.

#### **Board of Ordained Ministry Representative**

- Receives the psychological assessment report on candidates from the Office of Ministerial Services and assists the DCOM in reviewing the psychological assessments (see guidelines) prior to the interview for candidacy certification.
- Receives the expanded background check report on candidates and assists the DCOM in reviewing prior to the interview for candidacy certification.
- Receives the medical report on candidates and assists the DCOM in reviewing prior to the interview for candidacy certification.
- Exchanges questions and information between the District Committee and the Board of Ordained Ministry.
- Leads the DCOM in enlistment strategies.

## DCOM INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

### Guidelines for preparing for an interview

- Allow thirty minutes ahead of each interview to review the file, the written documents, and the psychological assessment. Discuss concerns and issues that need to be addressed in the interview.
- Decide on the most important questions and who will ask each question (do not have the chair or one person ask all the questions).
- Decide on the size of the interview group. DCOM can subdivide for most interviews and then report back a recommendation to total committee for final decision.
- Make sure all items are in the file prior to the interview.
- Decide how long the interview will be.

### Role of the Chair

- Make sure that prior to scheduling an interview, the necessary papers have been submitted and the psychological assessment is in the file.
- Welcome the candidate to the interview and introduce by name and church to the DCOM. State the purpose of the interview (Certification Interview, for recommendation for probationary or associate membership, etc.)
- Ask members of the DCOM to introduce themselves.
- Ask someone to begin with a prayer.
- State the time available for the interview and be the timekeeper.
- The chair may want to ask the first question. A possible first question might be: "Tell us about yourself, your sense of call, and where God is leading you."
- Be careful to involve the members of your committee in asking the questions. After the first question, the chair should focus on process and time keeping rather than asking questions.
- Ask someone to close with prayer.

### Things to remember

- Decide how to begin the interview. Do not begin with the psychological assessment.
- Remember that the mentor, if present, may not speak in the interview.
- The candidate does most of the talking.
- Do not allow other committee members to answer questions or to engage in an argument or discussion with the candidate. This is not a therapy session.
- Recommendations should be determined by the whole committee after the interview, rather than individual committee members offering advice during the interview, and must be put in writing.
- Decide how the decision of the DCOM will be communicated: having the candidate wait in the hall vs. a phone call. A letter must be sent following the DCOM meeting stating the decision of the DCOM.
- Evaluate the interview. What was effective in the interview? What would we do differently next time? Were any questions asked that were inappropriate? Remember the distinctions between candidates on the elder track and the deacon track. Ask appropriate questions.

## Interview for: Candidacy Certification for Ordained or Licensed Ministry

### Requirements prior to interview

1. Form 102 in file (Biographical Information Form)
2. TRAK-1 Background and Credit Check in file and reviewed by BOM Representative
3. Form 103 Medical Report completed (both sides) in file
4. Form 114, Candidate's Disclosure Form (notarized)
5. Form 104 in file, indicating recommendation by the candidate's home church charge conference equivalent body as specified by the district committee on ordained ministry, receiving a 2/3 vote.
6. Written report from the mentor indicating completion of the candidacy studies
7. Written response to statements in 3 10.1(d)
8. Psychological Assessment report completed.
9. If a concern about reading and writing skills, could require the TABE test.

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

f1 from above: Form 102 (Biographical Information Form)

#6 from above: Mentor Report

f7 from above: Written response to statements in 10.1 (d)

### Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans, ... personally, ... for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths ... your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- What did you learn about yourself in the psychological assessment process?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

### Action Required

Individual written ballot, 3/4 majority required to certify criteria:

- Spiritual fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness
- Potential for effectiveness



# HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Candidates District File Content Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date file started: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate invited to set up account in UMCARES (Date: \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_) Biographical Information Form (Form 102)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Declaration of Candidacy and Charge Conference Recommendation (Form 104)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Written statement of call (§310.1d)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Written information based on §310.2a
- \_\_\_\_\_ Candidacy mentor assigned (Mentor's name: \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_) Candidacy mentor's report
- \_\_\_\_\_ Psychological assessment report
- \_\_\_\_\_ Credit check
- \_\_\_\_\_ Criminal background check
- \_\_\_\_\_ Notarized statement regarding sexual misconduct and child abuse
- \_\_\_\_\_ Academic progress documents
- \_\_\_\_\_ Candidacy vote recorded in UMCARES                      Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certification renewed    Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_    Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_    Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_    Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Letter of recommendation to Board of Ordained Ministry for provisional membership toward deacon's or elder's orders
- \_\_\_\_\_ File sent to BOM registrar    Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Interview for: Licensing for Pastoral Ministry (Local Pastor)

### Requirements prior to interview (documents must be submitted one month prior to interview)

1. Certification as a candidate for ministry (see requirements for Candidacy Certification).
2. Submit two copies of one sermon on DVD along with two copies of the sermon manuscript for that sermon.
  - a. When establishing a setting for preaching your sermon, it is not necessary for it to be in a Sunday morning worship service. For example, you can gather friends in a chapel, speak at a mid-week service or a nursing home. But you must preach/speak before an audience.
  - b. Length of the sermon shall be 10 to 15 minutes only.
  - c. Candidate may choose any Scripture.
  - d. On a separate sheet of paper respond to the following:
    1. What is the sermon title?
    2. What is the sermon text?
    3. When and where was the sermon preached?
    4. Write a one-sentence purpose statement for this message.
    5. What do you want the hearers to do as a result of this message?
    6. After viewing the video, what is your personal evaluation of the sermon?
3. Submit written responses to the following questions (minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 pages total for all questions, typed and double spaced):
  1. What is the meaning and significance of the Sacraments?
  2. Talk about the nature of the Kingdom of God and then use a Biblical parable to illustrate one aspect of the Kingdom.
  3. What is your understanding of the Wesleyan concept of divine grace?
  4. How will you discern and implement God's vision for your ministry setting?

### Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

#2 from above - two members of the DCOM should view the sermon and report to the DCOM

#3 from above - copy for all members of the DCOM

#4 from above - copy for all members of the DCOM

### Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- Share about a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

### Action Required

¾ majority vote with recommendation required to specify full time local pastor, part time local pastor, or student local pastor (note that "student local pastor" is for only those students from other annual conference not in the candidacy studies in A/WF Conference). Once voted, the candidate must register for and complete Licensing School.

Remember that licensing is dependent upon the person receiving an appointment in the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

### Criteria:

- Spiritual fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness
- Readiness for ministry
- Potential for effectiveness

## Interview for: Renewal of Certified Candidacy (annual interview required)

### Requirements prior to interview

Note: The district committee must let the candidate know what is required. The candidate has the responsibility for requesting these reports be sent to the district committee.

1. Annual recommendation of the candidate's home church charge conference in file
2. A written report from the candidacy mentor in file
3. An official transcript from the school, college, or seminary
4. A written report from the candidate on service and leadership in the church with reference to 313 (i.e. growth in these areas since certification)
5. If the candidate is in a field education program in seminary, a copy of the field education report (called by various titles at different schools) or a written report from the supervisor in that setting
6. If the candidate is in college, seminary, or a ministry setting, a letter from the local church pastor as to the candidate's involvement in the local church.

### Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

#2 from above, Mentor Report

#4 from above, written report from candidate

#5 or #6 if applicable, written report from supervisor or from local church pastor

### Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ... personally, ... for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths ... your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- What did you learn about yourself in the psychological assessment process?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

### Action Required

Individual written ballot, 3/4 majority required to renew.

Interview for: Local Pastor Continuance (annual interview required)

Requirements prior to interview

**Note: The district committee must let the local pastor know what is required. The local pastor has the responsibility for requesting these reports be sent to the district committee.**

1. Pastor's Report to the Charge Conference
2. Report of annual evaluation by P/SPRC
3. Written evaluation by district superintendent or supervisor
4. Official transcripts from undergraduate school, Course of Study or Seminary
5. Written Mentor Report
6. Written responses to the questions below (minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 pages, typed and double spaced, for all questions per year):

Year 1 - Leadership

- What are the local church committees required by the *Book of Discipline* and what is the function of each? How is your church structured for mission and ministry?
- How are you using the distinctive Wesleyan emphases and characteristics of The United Methodist Church to lead your church in making disciples of Jesus Christ?
- Describe leadership qualities that you demonstrate in your ministry and the strengths and weaknesses of those qualities?

Year 2 - Theology

- How do you apply United Methodist theology in your teaching?
- Describe ways your congregation lives out the theology of grace.
- In what ways has your theology of grace shaped your understanding of the Sacraments?

Year 3 - Practice of Ministry

- How has your preaching improved since you were licensed?
- In what ways have your spiritual disciplines affected your practice of leadership in ministry?
- Describe ways you lead your congregation in offering pastoral care?
- Bring a recent worship bulletin and be prepared to talk about your order of worship.
- Describe ways that, in partnership with laity, you make disciples of Jesus Christ, and train and empower these disciples to produce tangible fruits of love of God and love of neighbor.

Year 4 and beyond

- In years 4 and 5, talk with the local pastor about how they apply their education to their ministry setting.
- For those who have completed COS or M.Div., track continuing education requirements and review progress.

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

#1, #2, #3, #5, and #6 from above

### Suggested Questions

- Review the responses to the questions above.
- Focus on the candidate's areas of strength and areas for growth rather than spending a lot of time on what is going on or not going on in their church. Be careful to not spend the time evaluating the church/charge but keep the focus on the local pastor and his/her role.
- What/where are your support systems?
- Did you establish any goals or objectives for personal or professional growth last year (in consultation with your mentor)? What were they? What did you do toward accomplishing these goals and how well did it work?
- What were your points of growth over the past year?
- How do you equip laity in your church? Share some specific examples.
- What are your plans for the future? Continuing education plans? Plans for ordination?
- What was your Course of Study focus last year? Did you find it helpful/useful? What changes or improvements to your practice of ministry can you identify as a result of the Course of Study?
- In what ways have you grown the most in the past year, both personally and as a pastor? What do you feel were the causes of this growth?
- What was the most difficult challenge you faced as pastor this past year and how did you meet it? What did you learn from it? How do you feel you have grown as a result of it?
- Talk about your pastoral appointment? Has it been what you expected when you felt called to become a local pastor? In what ways have you been surprised? In what ways have you been affirmed that you are properly responding to God's call in your life.
- What is the single most important thing you need now to become a better pastor?
- What was the greatest joy you experienced in the past year? Why do you feel this was so?
- How do you integrate your personal and professional responsibilities? Do you experience tensions between family and church expectations of you?

### Action Required

3/4 majority vote of the committee, specifying annually full time, part time or silent local pastor.

**Guidelines for Accepting a Certified Candidate  
From Another Annual Conference**

**,B13.4**

*B 13.4, The 2016 Book of Discipline states that "a person who is a certified candidate or who is in the candidacy process may have her or his status or studies accepted by another district conference in the same or another annual conference. "*

- I. Contact the Office of Ministerial Services immediately upon receipt of a request.
2. The candidate requests that his/her file be sent to the Office of Ministerial Services, 4719 Woodmere Boulevard, Montgomery, AL 36106.
3. The file must include all the items required by the AWF Conference for certification as a candidate, listed as follows:
  - Statement of call (Form D1)
  - Biographical information form (Form I02)
  - TRAK-1 background and credit check
  - Medical report (Form 103)
  - Declaration of candidacy charge conference recommendation (Form 104)
  - Application for clergy relationship (Form I05)
  - Theological school recommendation for ordination (Form I09)
  - DCOM approval report for certified candidate (Form 113)
  - Candidate's disclosure form (Form 114)
  - The psychological assessment
  - The written response to ministry
  - Mentor report
  - Verification of certification as a candidate
  - Annual renewal of candidacy, if applicable

For a licensed local pastor, all preceding items plus

  - Documentation of licensing (copy of the license)
  - Annual renewal of the license for pastoral ministry
  - Official transcripts (seminary or Course of Study) if applicable
  - Official transcripts of undergraduate education if applicable
  - Recommendation from the current district superintendent.
4. The District Committee on Ordained Ministry reviews the candidate's file and has a required interview prior to acceptance of candidacy.
5. **If the candidate is certified and is requesting local pastor status, the District Committee makes a recommendation regarding licensing by the AWF Conference. Licensing is dependent upon the person receiving an appointment in the AWF Conference.**
6. The action is reported to the registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry (Office of Ministerial Services) for approval by the Board.

Interview for: Recommendation for Associate Membership

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual renewal of license for pastoral ministry with service as a full-time local pastor for four years.
2. Reached the age of 40.
3. Completed the five- year Course of Study (with no more than one year by correspondence or online/distance learning courses).
4. Completed a minimum of sixty semester hours toward the Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree in an accredited college or university.
5. Declared their willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment.
6. If this is also the interview for local pastor continuance, see the requirements on that page.

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

None, unless this is also the interview for local pastor continuance, then see that page.

Suggested Questions

- Candidate will write papers and be interviewed in four areas: Call, Theology, Personal Growth and Development, and Practice of Ministry (including worship/proclamation and teaching).
- All of us are called by God. Share about your specific call to associate membership?
- Why are you seeking associate membership?
- Questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- For associate membership, the Board is looking for **effectiveness in ministry**. Effectiveness will be evaluated in four areas: call, theology, personal growth and development, and practice of ministry.
- Questions that make the connection between their Course of Study education and their practice of ministry.
- How has your theology changed since you have been here?
- Where/what are your support systems?
- What did you learn about yourself and about ministry through the CPE experience (if completed)?

Action Required

$\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote, recorded on the Action Report Form with a written narrative by the chair of the DCOM attached to the form describing the candidate's areas of strength and areas of growth submitted directly to the Office of Ministerial Services.

Criteria:

- Areas of competencies
- Academic background
- Consider current practice of ministry
- Review how theological understanding has evolved since licensing
- Effectiveness will be evaluated in four areas: call, theology, personal growth and development, and practice of ministry.

Interview for: **Recommendation for Provisional Membership**

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual renewal of certified candidacy or license for pastoral ministry
2. Certified candidate or licensed local pastor for at least one year
3. Service requirement- demonstrated gifts for ministries of service and leadership to the satisfaction of the DCOM
4. Met the educational requirements of the AWF Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (which include the educational requirements in iJ324) which include an undergraduate degree
5. Or for those applying under iJ324.6, completed four years of full-time service or the equivalent; completed the 5-year Course of Study or completed an equivalent program of study embedded in an undergraduate degree at a UM-related college or university; completed 32 semester hours of graduate theological study; and met the educational requirements of the AWF Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Advanced Course of Study must include completion of the Basic Graduate Theological Studies.
6. If this is also the interview for candidacy renewal or local pastor continuance, see the requirements on those pages.

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

None, unless this is also the interview for candidacy renewal or local pastor continuance, then see those pages.

Suggested Questions

- Candidate will write papers and be interviewed in four areas: Call, Theology, Personal Growth and Development, and Practice of Ministry (including worship/proclamation and teaching).
- All of us are called by God. Share about your specific call to ordained ministry?
- Questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- At this point, the Board is looking for **readiness for ministry**. Readiness will be evaluated in four areas: call, theology, personal growth and development, and practice of ministry.
- Questions that make the connection between their seminary/Course of Study education and their practice of ministry.
- How has your theology changed since you have been in seminary/Course of Study?
- Where/what are your support systems?
- What did you learn about yourself and about ministry through the CPE experience?

Action Required

Written ballot with 3/4 majority vote, recorded on the Action Report Form with a written narrative by the chair of the DCOM attached to the form describing the candidate's areas of strength and areas of growth submitted directly to the Office of Ministerial Services.

Criteria:

- Areas of developing competencies
- Academic background
- Consider field education experiences, internships, other practice of ministry experiences
- Review how theological understanding has evolved since certification.
- Review carefully educational requirements. Contact the Office of Ministerial Services with any questions
- Readiness will be evaluated in four areas: call, theology, personal growth and development, and practice of ministry.

**Interview for: Recommendation for Reinstatement (Local Pastor or certified candidate) or Readmission:**

- To Provisional Membership or Associate Membership
- After leaving the ministerial office to full membership as elder or deacon
- After honorable location or administrative location
- After termination by action of the annual conference

**Requirements prior to interview**

1. Immediately contact the Office of Ministerial Services for detailed instructions
2. Depending on the circumstances, most of the following will be required:
  - a. Biographical Information Form (Form 102)
  - b. TRAK-1 Background and Credit Check
  - c. Disclosure Form
  - d. Work Authorization Form
  - e. File documents related to the reasons for discontinuance or withdrawal
  - f. A written request by the candidate on his/her reasons and qualifications for readmission and a statement on the circumstances relating to their discontinuance or withdrawal
  - g. A satisfactory report and recommendation by their charge conference and pastor
  - h. Other letters of recommendation, if needed
  - i. Report of career counseling, if applicable
  - j. Completed Medical Report (Form 103)
  - k. Psychological Assessment
  - l. Pastor Profile
  - m. Additional information or report on requirements set by the Board or annual conference when discontinued or withdrawal.

**Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members**

- #2a from above, Biographical Information Form (Form 102)
- #2f from above, reasons for discontinuance or withdrawal
- #2g from above, written statement by the candidate
- #2i from above, career counseling, if applicable

**Suggested Questions**

Questions would be determined based on the nature of the discontinuance or withdrawal.

**Action Required**

- For reinstatement as a certified candidate, 3/4 majority vote which is a reconunendation to the Board of Ordained Ministry.
- For readmission to local pastor status, associate, provisional, or full membership, 3/4 majority vote which is a reconunendation to the Board of Ordained Ministry (which will require an interview with the Conference Relations Committee) and Cabinet.

**Board of Ordained Ministry**  
**Alabama-West Florida Conference, The United Methodist Church**

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP

**The *Discipline* lists the following specific course requirements that must be included in graduate theological education for ordination in the United Methodist Church (see ¶324.4). In order to apply for provisional membership and commissioning, a candidate shall have completed ½ of the basic graduate theological studies from a seminary listed by the University Senate. Note that the Alabama-West Florida Conference requires completion of all educational requirements prior to beginning the two-year residency required for ordination and full membership. The minimum number of semester hours required is 27.**

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Theology
- Church history
- Mission of the church in the world
- Evangelism
- Worship/liturgy
- United Methodist Studies: Doctrine, Polity and History
- For candidates on the elder track, these are the additional Alabama-West Florida Conference requirements: two courses in homiletics and one quarter (unit) of clinical pastoral education (CPE).
- For candidates on the deacon track, these are the additional Alabama-West Florida Conference requirements: one seminary-level course in missions or servant leadership and one quarter (unit) of clinical pastoral education (CPE).

Although each seminary has the responsibility to designate which basic course meets the core requirements and advise students of these courses, the conference Board of Ordained Ministry will have the final authority to approve academic studies.

The Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry requires that all educational requirements (both disciplinary and conference requirements, including one unit of CPE) be completed successfully prior to ordination and full membership.

The Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry follows the direction from the University Senate rulings on distance learning. The University Senate set these policies:

1. All 13 UMC seminaries and Asbury Theological Seminary are allowed to offer 2/3 of the Master of Divinity degree online. 1/3 of the degree must be done on campus.
2. The only online courses allowed to count toward a degree for a person seeking UMC ordination must come from one of the 13 UMC seminaries and Asbury Theological Seminary.
3. At their June 2010 meeting, the University Senate made the decision to require that all official transcripts of University Senate approved schools must identify the courses that are taken online. The University Senate reconfirmed this decision in January 2011. The term "online courses" includes those that offer some instruction on campus.
4. As of January 2011, few if any additional seminaries will be invited to join the list of non-UMC schools approved for the education of those seeking ordination in the UMC.
5. All non-UMC schools currently approved to educate UMC candidates for ordination must continue to meet University Senate criteria. It is necessary that a non-UMC school either (a) have at least one full-time UMC faculty member with a Ph.D. or Th.D. on a long-term contract teaching the courses in UM history, doctrine and polity (b) or partner with a UMC seminary to offer the required courses in history, doctrine, and polity. This policy takes effect in August 2012.

**Four Tracks to Conference  
Membership  
(Book of Discipline, Par. 324)**

Course of Study Track for Elder  
**Par. 324.6**

- High School Education
- ' Bachelor's Degree
- Basic COS (5 year)
- ' Must be 40 years of age
- Advanced COS (32 hours)
- ' Provisional Membership (2 years full time)
- <sup>6</sup> Full Membership and Ordination as Elder

Semiuary Track  
**Par. 324.4**

- High School Education
- ' Bachelor's Degree
- <sup>6</sup> M.Div. Degree for elder or deacon track  
OR for deacon track, other graduate theological degree/or graduate degree and basic graduate theological studies (24 semester hours)
- <sup>0</sup> Provisional Membership (2 years full time)
- <sup>0</sup> Full Membership and Ordination as Elder or Deacon
- ' Provisional Membership (2 years full time)

Professional Certification Track for  
Deacon  
**Par. 324.5**

- <sup>0</sup> High School Education
- ' Must be 35 years of age at time of certified candidacy
- ' Bachelor's Degree
- Professional Certification (10 semester hours)
- Basic graduate theological studies (24 semester hours)

Master's Degree in Area of Specialization for Deacon  
**Par. 324.5**

- \* High School Graduation <sup>0</sup>
- Bachelor's Degree
- <sup>8</sup> Master's Degree in area of Specialization
- <sup>0</sup> Basic graduate theological studies (24 semester hours)
- <sup>6</sup> Provisional Membership (2 years full time)
- Full Membership and Ordination as Deacon

For Course of Study Course listing, go to the following web site:  
<http://www.fibhem.org/ls-cos/pdfs/Cumculum.pdf>

Curriculum outline and other information are also available in Spanish.

<b>Focus</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>	<b>Year Four</b>	<b>Year Five</b>
<i>Bible</i>	121 Bible I Introduction	221 Bible II: Torah & Israel's History	321 Bible III: Gospels	421 Bible IV: Prophets, Psalms,	521 Bible V: Acts, Epistles, Revelation
<i>Theology</i>	122 Theological Heritage I Introduction	222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church	322 Theo. Heritage III: Medieval- Reformation	422 Theo. Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement	522 Theology in the Contemporary Church
<i>Congregational</i>	123 Formation & Discipleship	223 Worship & Sacraments	323 Congregational Care	423 Mission	523 Evangelism
<i>Pastoral Identity</i>	124 Transformative Leadership	224 Administration & Polity	324 Preaching	424 Ethics	524 Practice of Ministry

•• Provisional Membership  
(2 years full time)

•• Full Membership and  
Ordination as Deacon

\*\*\*In the above Course of Study classwork diagram, courses 121 and 122 must be taken first before any other courses. It is strongly recommended that the remaining 'Bible' and 'Theology' courses be taken in order.

## Advanced Course of Study Description - per the General Board of Higher Education & Ministry

The Advanced Course of Study is a curriculum that enables a local pastor to meet the educational requirements for provisional membership, full conference membership, and ordination as an elder in The United Methodist Church. Advanced Course of Study must include completion of the Basic Graduate Theological Studies.

It consists of 32 semester hours of graduate theological study or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. These shall include the areas of evangelism, and United Methodist history, doctrine and polity.

Local pastors who complete the requirements of the Course of Study may continue their preparation for conference membership and ordination as an elder through an Advanced Course of Study program. The *2016 Discipline* requires that local pastors who seek ordination through advanced studies:

1. Complete 4 years of full-time service or the equivalent;
2. complete a bachelor's degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate, or in some instances, for missional purposes, a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours of Bachelor of Arts credit (see ¶324.3 for complete information);
3. complete the five-year Course of Study, of which no more than ½ of the courses may be taken by correspondence or Internet; up to ½ of COS may be online courses; OR complete an equivalent program of study embedded in an undergraduate degree at a UM-related college or university;
4. complete thirty-two semester hours of graduate theological study offered by a seminary recognized by the University Senate or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. These shall include the areas of evangelism and United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity (¶324.6).

A candidate may request that work completed at a recognized school of theology be evaluated by the Division of Ordained Ministry for transfer to the Course of Study curriculum. The request for this evaluation should come from the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and grade reports or transcripts must be supplied. Contact the Director of Ministerial Services for more information.

No credit is recognized in the Course of Study for work completed on the undergraduate level. However, some graduate studies in counseling, business, and education may be applied to the Course of Study. Graduate transcripts must be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry for evaluation before such credit may be granted. Contact the Director of Ministerial Services for more information.

Seminary courses in United Methodist doctrine, polity, and history must be included in the thirty-two semester hours of graduate theological study required for conference membership and ordination as an elder. These courses may be taken at an approved school of theology or through the independent study program of the Division of Ordained Ministry.

## Is God Calling me to Licensed/Ordained Ministry?

The process to become a Certified Candidate will help you and the Church discern how God is calling you. Whether you are pursuing Licensed or Ordained Ministry, the first step is to become a Certified Candidate.

Prior to attending the Candidacy Retreat, you will have to complete your online work at [umcares.org](http://umcares.org), all forms and pay required fees.

You will find all forms and information mentioned below in the Candidacy Retreat Welcome Packet that Erika Glawson at the Ministerial Office will send you about 8 weeks prior to the retreat.

### Beginning your Call

-Read and discuss The Christian as Minister and Ministry Inquiry Process with your Minister. You can order these books at [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com)

- Must have been a member of UMC church (or another recognized United Methodist ministry setting, such as a campus ministry) for one year immediately preceding candidacy application, including a year of service in some form of leadership.

-Send an email/letter to your District Superintendent, including a statement about your call, stating that you would like to begin the candidacy process. Often, your DS will arrange to meet with you in person as well. Once you have met with your DS and He/She has approved you, Erika Glawson will get notified and you will be added to the approved candidate list and will receive by email a Candidacy Welcome Packet with all information regarding work and fees required.

### Paperwork

Complete the following forms included in your Candidacy Phase of Passage UMC:

- Candidacy Retreat Application Form
- Background Check Authorization Form- \$80 Fee for FL residents and \$50 Fee for AL residents
- UMC Form 114-Disclosure Form (This form requires Notarization)
- Psychological Test Contact Information Form
- Candidate Personal History and Biographical Form- This form is part of your Psychological Assessment. After your (MAS) receives this information and the results of the assessments you have already completed, He/She will contact you to schedule your interview. **Respond immediately to their phone calls.**

## Online Work

You will receive an email invitation from Passage UMC to create a log in in order to access your candidacy phase where you will need to complete your online work. The last step is the EM360 and this step requires references from other people on your behalf. Please make sure to work on this at your earliest convenience to avoid delays on your track.

You will be assigned to Rev. Jenni Hendrix as your advisor while you move through this process prior to the retreat. Later you will be assigned a mentor/mentors as part of a candidacy mentoring group. You will receive your group mentor's name and contact information at the retreat.

## Fees

- \$250 Psychological Assessment, Background Check and Credit Check Fee
- \$100 Administrative Guidebook Fee (paid at Passage UMC to GBHEM in Nashville)

You can now pay your fees using your debit/credit card in the link included below:

<https://www.shelbygiving.com/App/Form/648ceb8a-eb2a-4f72-966f-75c50366ae2a>

You can also mail a check payable to the AWF Conference marked "Psychological Assessment" to the Office of Ministerial Services, 4719 Woodmere Blvd. Montgomery, AL 36106. If finances are a concern and you will not be able to pay this amount by the deadline, please contact us to work out a payment plan.

## At the Candidacy Retreat (January-Winter Retreat and July-Summer Retreat)

Complete Psychological Assessments (MMPI, Incomplete Sentences and 16PF)

## Following the Candidacy Retreat (January – April or July – October)

- Meet with your candidacy mentoring group for six sessions (you may make up a missed session individually with your mentor, and you may not miss more than two sessions)
- High School degree or equivalent is required at this point.
- You will be contacted by the Ministerial Assessment Specialist (Dr. Don Winslett/Rev. Allison Posell), to make your appointment to discuss your Psychological Assessment results. Let your mentor know when this appointment has been completed.
- Request interview from your Church's Staff Parish Relations Committee (or equivalent); provide written statement of call and responses to questions in ¶ 310 (Book of Discipline 2016) ahead of time, along with any other information the Committee requests.
- Request approval by your Church's Charge Conference (or equivalent).
- Mentor writes mentor report and sends it to DCOM Registrar

- Continue to mark off tasks on Passage UMC as they are completed.
- Complete and prepare the following for your Certification interview with the District Committee on Ministry. **Bring these items to your interview:**
  - Copy of your Psychological Report**
  - Medical Report**
  - Charge Conference Approval Form**  
(Download from [www.awfumc.org/ministerialservices](http://www.awfumc.org/ministerialservices) if not already completed at Charge Conference)
  - Mentor's report (you do not need a copy, just make sure to confirm with your mentor that this form has been sent in prior to your interview)**
  - Responses to ¶ 311.2 and any other information requested by your DCOM.**

#### **District Committee on Ministry Interview (March-April or October-November)**

- The Committee may vote "Continue," which means that you will not be Certified at this time, and instead continue in your present status as a candidate.
- The Committee may vote "Certify," which means that you will become a Certified Candidate.
- The Committee may vote "Discontinue," which would discontinue you from the process.
- The Committee may assign you contingencies.

Please remember you can always contact the Erika Glawson at the Office of Ministerial Services and your mentor if you have any questions at any time.

Candidacy Process for Licensed or Ordained Ministry  
Alabama-West Florida Conference

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

All forms needed for candidacy are located at [www.awfumc.org/ministrialservices](http://www.awfumc.org/ministrialservices)

Please keep copies of all your candidacy work.

<b>Inquiring Candidate</b>	Date Completed
1. Read and discuss <i>The Christian as Minister</i> with your pastor or respective clergy person. This book is available from Cokesbury.com (§ 310)	

<b>Declaring Candidacy</b>	Date Completed
1. Be a member in good standing of the UMC or a baptized participant of a recognized UM Campus Ministry or other UM ministry setting for at least one year immediately preceding application. (§ 310.1 a)	
2. Candidate shall have graduated from an accredited high school or received a certificate of equivalency. Official HS transcript, GED certificate or college transcript required.	
3. Apply to the DS in writing requesting admission to the candidacy process. Include a statement of call. (§ 310.1 b)	
4. DS will officially 'invite' candidate to begin the candidacy process.	
5. Candidate will complete Candidacy Retreat Application and paperwork on Passage UMC. Candidate will also be assigned Rev. Jenni Hendrix as their Advisor.	

<b>Candidacy Process</b>	Date Completed
1. Candidate receives email via Passage UMC to set up profile. There is a one-time \$100 admin fee payable online through Passage UMC.	
2. Candidate will be assigned Mentors in Passage UMC.	
3. Candidate completes all forms under the Phase of Candidacy by the deadline given prior to the retreat: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidacy Retreat Application Form</li> <li>2. Background and Credit Check Authorization Form</li> <li>3. UMC Form 114- Candidate's Disclosure Form (notarized)</li> <li>4. Psychological Test Contact Information Form</li> <li>5. Candidate Personal History and Biographical Form</li> </ol>	

4. Candidate pays \$250 fee to the Office of Ministerial Services for the Psychological Testing, Background Check and Credit Check at: <a href="https://www.shelbygiving.com/APP/Form/648ceb8a-eb2a-4f72-966f-75c50366ae2a">https://www.shelbygiving.com/APP/Form/648ceb8a-eb2a-4f72-966f-75c50366ae2a</a>	
5. Candidate adds their Written Statement of Call and written response to paragraph 310.2ai-vi	
6. Candidate attends the Candidacy Retreat (January or July). At the Retreat, the psychological assessments will be given. Candidate will be contacted by their Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS) to schedule an interview and discuss the psychological assessment results.	
7. Candidate will meet with Mentoring Group for 6 sessions.	
8. Candidate will request a meeting with their Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee at local church. If coming through a Campus Ministry please contact DS and DCOM to determine alternate interview group. The S/PPRC will consider the Candidate's Written Statement of Call and answers to Wesley's Historical Questions (§ 310.2a.i-vi) and vote on approval of the Candidate (§ 310.1d)	
9. Candidate then requests approval by the Church's Charge Conference. Candidate will meet with the Charge Conference (or other body as determined by your DS and DCOM) and Charge Conference will vote for Candidate's approval by a written ballot. Candidate must have a ¾ approval (§ 310). Form 104 is to be completed and uploaded into Passage UMC.	
10. Mentor completes Mentor Report and uploads to Passage UMC.	
11. Prepare for DCOM interview and complete the Medical Summary Form and upload to Passage UMC if not already done. <b>It is the Candidate's responsibility to make sure that the Registrar of the DCOM has received these materials 2 weeks prior to the interview. You can find the list of Registrars for DCOMs under the Ministerial Services page at AWFUMC.org</b>	

The local church is encouraged to assist candidates with the expenses of candidacy.

Candidates may be asked to provide other information (if requested by the DCOM) for determining gifts, evidence of God's grace, fruit, and demonstration of the call to licensed or ordained ministry.

Candidate will agree for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of their influence as clergy, to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life as set forth in ¶102-104, 160-166 (¶310.2d).

<b>Certification Interview</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
1. Following a successful completion of the Candidacy Retreat and a favorable recommendation by the mentor, the Candidate is ready to meet with the DCOM for certification. <b>Your Passage UMC Candidacy Phase must be complete prior to this meeting.</b>	
2. Candidate notifies their DCOM Chair that he/she requests a meeting with the DCOM for approval as a Certified Candidate.	
3. The Candidacy Mentor may be present as a support and a listening ear in the interview but will refrain from participating.	
4. Approval by a written ballot with a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote is required for recommendation.	
5. DCOM Registrar or Chair will send a copy of the Action Outline to the Director of Ministerial Services and the Candidate (or let the candidate know in some other way).	
6. Once voted upon (certified or delayed) the DCOM Registrar will upload all the materials used, including the Psychological Assessment, into eBridge.	
7. Upon certification, the Candidate should be encouraged by the DCOM to attend a United Methodist Seminary (§ 310.2) and to apply for Ministerial Education Funds with the Office of Ministerial Services.	

<b>Continuing Certified Candidacy</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
1. Candidate meets with the DCOM annually for continued recommendation.	
2. Candidate continues to make progress in seminary or COS studies and submits copies of transcripts to DCOM annually. Those in seminary should submit a copy of their transcripts to the Director of Ministerial Services annually.	
3. Charge Conference recommendation in file annually.	

<b>Becoming a Local Pastor</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
1. Certified Candidate must be approved by DCOM, the DS, and be projected to receive an appointment to attend licensing school.	
2. Candidate must attend Licensing School in April to be appointed.	
3. Candidate must have an up-to-date (5 years) Medical Report.	
4. Candidate will meet annually with DCOM. (Jan-Feb)	
5. Candidate will be assigned to and participate in a Local Pastor Mentor Group and turn in the Annual Local Pastor Mentor Report.	
6. Candidate will make progress in Course of Study.	

<b>Becoming Commissioned (Provisional Membership)</b>	Date Completed
1. Must be a Certified Candidate for one year, minimum of 12 years (without being under appointment).	
2. Request a DropBox from Erika Glawson ( <a href="mailto:Erika@awfumc.org">Erika@awfumc.org</a> ) by May 15 <sup>th</sup> .	
3. Participate in the Mentoring Program (3 monthly meetings in June, July and August) for those applying to Provisional Membership. **This is not mandatory, but is highly encouraged.	
4. Complete all Education Requirements.	
5. Complete an up-to-date Medical Form (5 years) and Psychological Assessment (3 years).	
6. Seek approval from your DCOM to apply for Provisional Membership.	
7. Make an application to Provisional Membership to the Board of Ordained Ministry. Application/Packets are due by September 15 <sup>th</sup> each year and available at AWFUMC.org on the Ministerial Services Page under Commissioning and Ordination.	
8. Meet with the Board of Ordained Ministry for an interview and approval.	
9. Elected to Provisional Membership by Clergy Session.	
10. Commissioned to ministry as a Provisional Member.	

<b>Becoming Ordained (Full Connection)</b>	Date Completed
1. Serve 2 consecutive years of full time (or equivalent) in an approved ministry setting, under appointment.	
2. Participate in Residency in Ordained Ministry Group for 2 years. This requires complete participation in all RIOM, meetings, events and other experiences.	
3. Provisional Members have 8 years to come into Full Connection (leave time included).	
4. Make an application for Full Connection to the Board of Ordained Ministry. Request a DropBox with Erika Glawson in the Office of Ministerial Services ( <a href="mailto:Erika@awfumc.org">Erika@awfumc.org</a> )	
5. Meet with the Board of Ordained Ministry for interviews and for an approval or delay vote.	
6. Election to Full Connection by Clergy Session.	
7. Ordained to the Order of Elders or the Order of Deacons.	

Note: All ¶ (paragraph) numbers refer to the *2016 Book of Discipline*.

For all questions, please contact the Director of Ministerial Services at [Jenni@awfumc.org](mailto:Jenni@awfumc.org)

## Key Words to Know

### 1. Associate Member ([321 - ,1323])

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 the provisions of, [322.4 and **J324.6** may apply to the Conference Board for Provisional and then Full Membership.

### 2. Group Candidacy Mentor

A deacon or elder in full connection or local pastor who has completed the Course of Study assigned to an Exploring Candidate to support and guide them through the candidacy process beginning with the Candidacy Retreat.

### 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 an 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](http://www.gbhem.org/certification/index.html). Information about the church business administrator process can be found at [www.umacba.org](http://www.umacba.org).

### 4. Candidacy Certification (certified candidate) c.[310- 314)

Candidacy phase when requirements for Inquiring & Exploring Candidate are met.

### 5. Commissioning (commissioned minister) (**J325**)

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 (DOM) c.[635)

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. District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM)

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

10. Elder (1332 - 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.

11. Exploring Candidate

The second step or phase in the candidacy process for ordained deacon, elder, or local pastor. A group candidacy mentor is assigned. The candidate, group and mentors work together to continue discerning the candidate's call to ministry.

12. Full Connection

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

13. Inquiring Candidate

The first step in the candidacy process for ordained deacon, elder, or local pastor. The candidate reads and discusses *The Christian as Minister* and *The Ministerial Process*.

14. License for Pastoral Ministry (1315 - 320)

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

15. 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 the 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. There must be a projected appointment for the candidate to attend 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. Licensing School is the beginning of Basic Course of Study.

16. Licensed Pastor

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

17. Ordination (ordained)

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

18. Provisional Membership (1324 - 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 two-year period, they are Residents in Ministry under the care of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and participants in the residency program.

19. Residency

The Alabama-West Florida Conference two-year program for provisional/commissioned ministers.

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