



Theology & Doctrine Committee Guidelines: Disciplinary Questions Part I Provisional Deacon, Provisional Elder and Associate Member Candidates

DISCIPLINARY QUESTION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Answering the Disciplinary Questions offers you an opportunity to demonstrate your proficiency in articulating Christian theology and the doctrine of the Church.
2. Read and answer each question carefully. Each part of each question is to be addressed. Be aware that certain questions call for examples from your personal experience and/or ministry.
3. Each question requests that you address in writing at least one basic doctrine of the Church. You should, at a minimum, consider that doctrine(s) from the following viewpoints:
 - a. rootage of the doctrine in **Scripture**,
 - b. development of the doctrine within Christian **history/tradition**,
 - c. impact of the doctrine of the Methodist **experience** (and the Methodist experience in the doctrine), and
 - d. impact of the doctrine on your personal theology and the impact of your personal experience on your understanding of the doctrine.
4. Your answers are to be an exercise in critical **theological thinking**. Remember that the Discipline requires that you “should demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly in both oral and written forms” (2020/2024 Discipline, ¶322 & 324). Be aware that your reader will take seriously every word that you have written. Your responses should be written with the utmost attention to spelling, grammar, punctuation, and style.
5. We expect all of our candidates to use **inclusive language** throughout their paperwork.
6. A few guides to inclusive language from our UMC seminaries can be found at:
 - a. <https://divinity.duke.edu/sites/divinity.duke.edu/files/documents/scos/COS%20%20Inclusive%20Language%20Policy.pdf>
 - b. <http://candler.emory.edu/programs-resources/course-study/policies-procedures.html>
 - c. <http://www.itc.edu/assets/pdf/Student-Handbook-2013.pdf>

For Questions Contact:

Chairperson, Theology & Doctrine
Rev. Gene Aiken, 1200 Elizabeth St, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582
PH: (864) 952-9537, email: eaiken@umcsc.org

DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS – PART 1
FOR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP DEACON/ELDER CANDIDATES
¶ 322.(10) ASSOCIATE MEMBERS, ¶ 324.7 PROVISIONAL DEACONS/ELDERS (2020/2024 Book of Discipline)

1. Type your full **name, address, phone number and email address** at the top right of each page to help the committees easily identify your work.
2. RESTATE each question in full and number it exactly as listed below. Note that several questions have more than one part. Answer each part of the question fully.
3. Answers must be **TYPED, Double-spaced** for 8 ½ x 11, **number** all pages.
4. E-Mail **ONE** copy of **Part I with bibliography to:** Clergy Services, clergyservices@umcsc.org.
5. Your answers should be honest reflections of where you are presently on your journey of faith. Be straightforward in your answers. Give proper credit, if you make use of quotes or paraphrase.
6. The responses to Part I should be **no more than 25 pages**.
7. Papers not meeting all of the above instructions and requirements will be returned to the Sender.

PART I FOR COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE (324.7 a-i, p)

- (a) Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological and historical sources.
- (b) What is your understanding of evil as it exists in the world?
- (c) What is your understanding of humanity, and the human need for divine grace?
- (d) How do you interpret the statement “Jesus Christ is Lord”?
- (e) What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers and in responsible living in the world?
- (f) What is your understanding of the kingdom of God; the Resurrection; eternal life?
- (g) How do you intend to affirm, teach and apply Part III of the Discipline (Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task) in your work in the ministry to which you have been called?
- (h) The United Methodist Church holds that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience and confirmed by reason. What is your understanding of this theological position of the Church?
- (i) Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today?
- (p) Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.