



South Carolina Conference
The United Methodist Church

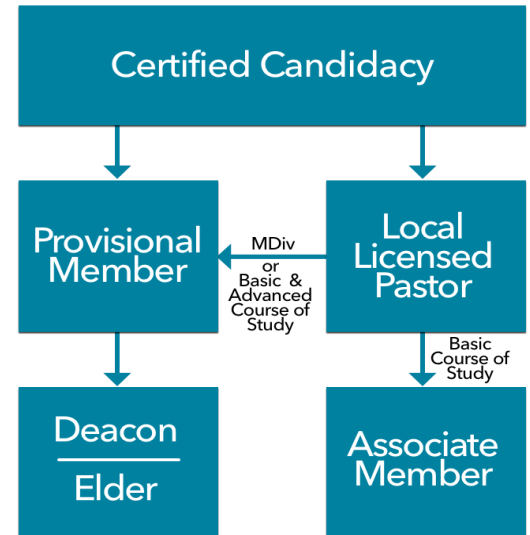
GUIDE TO CANDIDACY



This guide is made for anyone who is exploring the possibility of ministry with and through The United Methodist Church, and more specifically, the South Carolina Conference.

The guide is divided into six sections which each address the different stages and types of ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. A road map of this process is to the right. It may help you to better understand how someone becomes ordained. Below is a list of important terms and understandings which may help you through this process. Feel free to skip around this guide. It's not made to be read straight through, and not everything is applicable to everyone.

We are so happy that you are exploring this avenue of ministry and excited to work with you on this journey!



HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

Advanced Course of Study (ACOS) – Advanced 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 to complete the Disciplinary Basic Graduate Theological Studies. Participants in the program must have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry, completed the Basic Course of Study and is serving an appointment.

Approved for Service – A process by which ordained, provisional and licensed clergy from other United Methodist Conferences, Methodist Denominations, and other Christian Denominations can be approved to serve United Methodist Churches in South Carolina.

Associate Member – Associate members are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.

Certified Candidacy – Candidacy phase when a candidate has completed the mentoring process and has met with and been certified as a candidate for licensed or ordained ministry by the district committee on ordained ministry.

Commissioning – 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.

Conference – The governing and administering body for United Methodists in the South Carolina Area.

Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BoM) – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in the conference.

HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

Course of Study (COS) - 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 must have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and is serving an appointment. Often referred to as the Basic Course of Study (BCOS).

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

District – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors.

District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) - The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in each district.

District Superintendent (DS) – an elder appointed by the bishop, usually for a six-year term. The DS oversees the ministry of the district's clergy and churches, provides spiritual and pastoral leadership, works with the bishop and others in the appointment of ordained ministers to serve the district's churches, presides at meetings of the charge conference, and oversees programs within the district.

Elder – Persons who are ordained to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service; 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.

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) – The GBHEM is the leadership development agency of the United Methodist Church. It prepares global leaders for a global church and the world. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from the training and candidacy programs.

Licensed Local Pastor (FL/PL) – Persons who are licensed and appointed to preach, conduct divine worship, and perform the duties of a pastor in the context of a specific appointment, but are not ordained as elders. Licensed local pastors are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.

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

Other Denomination (OF) – Ordained Clergy Members of other Christian Denominations that have been "Approved to Serve" United Methodist Churches in South Carolina. They retain their membership in their home denomination and therefore do not have voting rights in the South Carolina Conference.

Other Elder (OE) – Ordained Clergy Members of other United Methodist Annual Conferences or Methodist Denominations that have been "Approved to Serve" United Methodist Churches in South Carolina. They retain their membership in their home conference or denomination and therefore do not have voting rights in the South Carolina Conference.

Provisional Member – 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 participants in the Clergy Leadership Academy and under the care of the Conference Board of Ordained. Provisional members have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character, and conference relations of clergy.

UMCARES – A website/database which helps track your progress through the candidacy process. It is administered through GBHEM and managed through the Conference Office.

INQUIRING CANDIDATE

Who does this? Everyone! Anyone who is going into any kind of ordained ministry must first be a Candidate.

Who to talk to:

Steps:

Pastor or DS

Learning About Ordained Ministry [Inquiring]

1. Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency
2. Be a UM member or an active, baptized participant in a UM ministry setting for at least one year.
3. Talk to your pastor and let them know you're thinking about ordained ministry.
4. Read "The Christian as Minister," and discuss it with your pastor.

DS or Coordinator of Clergy Services

Enrolling in the Candidacy Process

1. Contacting your DS in writing. In the letter
 - a. Include a "Statement of Call"
 - b. Request admission to the candidacy process
 - c. Request to be registered in the UMCares system
 - d. Ask that the DS submit "Request for Candidacy Packet Form (10SCBOM)" to the Office of Clergy Services

Notes: 1) The DS may require a personal meeting with you. 2) UMCares Registration cost is \$45.00 and will be paid by you online within UMCares after you have been registered. 3) Once the UMCares registration fee has been paid you will be able to download the Candidacy Guidebook.

2. Psychological Assessment
 - a. At the District Office, discuss the Psychological process
 - b. At the District Office, sign the Psychological Consent Forms and submit the original to the Office of Clergy Services.
 - c. Contact and begin psychological testing process with the vendor listed on the Consent Form.
3. Candidacy Packet (*will be sent to you by the Office of Clergy Services*)
 - a. Biographical Information Form (Form 102)
 - b. Report of the Candidate's Pastor (*confirming church/ministry membership and "The Christian as Minister" discussions*)
 - c. Credit Statement (Form 06SCBOM)
 - d. Criminal Background Statement
 - e. Medical Report (Form F-103)
 - f. Proof of High School graduation or equivalent (*can be a diploma or college degree*)
 - g. TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) test results.

Notes: 1) Submit a copy of all Completed Forms and Requested documents to the Office of Clergy Services and a copy to your district office. 2) All completed forms and requested documents should be submitted by October 1 to attend the Candidacy "Fall Retreat" or by June 1 to attend the Candidacy "Summer Retreat".

4. Complete the Credit & Criminal Background Screening. (*After you submit your Criminal Background Statement, an email invitation will be sent with a link for you to complete a Credit Check & Criminal Background Screening. The cost will be \$20.00 and will be paid by you online.*)
5. Candidacy Retreat Application
 - a. Complete and submit to Clergy Services the Candidacy Retreat Application (*will be sent to you by the Office of Clergy Services when all the forms and required information in the Candidacy Packet have been completed and submitted.*)
 - b. Include a \$125.00 check for the Retreat fee, made payable to the SC United Methodist Conference Treasurer.

CERTIFIED CANDIDACY

Who does this? Everyone! Anyone who is going into any kind of ordained ministry must first become a Certified Candidate.

Who to talk to:	Steps:
Coordinator of Clergy Services or the Associate Registrar for Candidacy	<p>Exploring Candidacy (<i>candidate is known as an Exploring Candidate during this stage</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend the “Summer” or “Fall” Candidacy Retreat, where you will be assigned your candidacy mentors. 2. Complete the Mentor Group Meetings –The first two mentoring sessions occur at the retreat. You will schedule four more meeting times with your mentoring group after the retreat to continue working through the Candidacy Guidebook. 3. Psychological Testing – You will take the psychological assessment with other candidates at the Candidacy Retreat. Your cost is \$340.33 which must be paid prior to the retreat. This represents 1/3 the cost of the test. The Board of Ordained Ministry pays the remaining 2/3.
Coordinator of Clergy Services and your Pastor	<p>Declared Candidacy (<i>candidate is known as a Declared Candidate when this stage is complete</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive S/PPRC recommendation: Share your statement of Call with the S/PPRC and be prepared to discuss Wesley’s historic questions in ¶ 310.1d.1-3. 2. Receive Charge Conference Approval and submit the Declaration of Candidacy Form 104 to the district office and the Office of Clergy Services. <p><i>Notes: Items 1 and 2 require 2/3 vote by written ballot. The ballots should be given to the District Office for your file.</i></p>
DS	<p>Certified Candidacy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request to become a Certified Candidate in writing to the dCOM <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Include written responses to queries in ¶310.1d.1-3, and ¶310.2a. b. Include a statement agreeing to the personal dedication outlined in ¶310.2d. 2. Submit to the District Office and the Office of Clergy Services the Report of the Candidacy Mentor (<i>Completed by you and your Candidacy Mentors</i>) 3. Meet with District Committee on Ministry (¶310.2) 4. Receive dCOM approval after being interviewed by the dCOM <p><i>Notes: dCOMs may request an introductory interview prior to meeting with you for certification.</i></p>

Congratulations! You’re A Certified Candidate!

To maintain your status, you must

- Meet with and be approved by the DCOM annually,
- Submit any transcripts or progress of studies/education to the District Office.

Note: Once Certified, a candidate has 8 years to progress to become a licensed pastor or provisional member.

Licensed Local Pastor

Who does this? *This is for anyone who is called to serve in a pastoral role but does not (yet) have a seminary degree or commissioned.*

Who to talk to:

Steps:

Prerequisites

1. Be a Certified Candidate
2. For a Full Time Local Pastor (FL), be able to devote full time to charge to which appointed.
3. For a Part Time Local Pastor (PL), devotes less than full time to charge to which appointed.

DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services

Becoming a LLP

1. Connect with your DS or the Chair of your dCOM to inform them of your intentions to become a Licensed Local Pastor.
2. Meet with and be recommended by your dCOM to attend Licensing School (*3/4 majority vote*).
3. Successfully complete Licensing School (Held in April and May).
4. Receive approval for licensing by a *3/4 majority vote* of the clergy session at Annual Conference.
5. Receive an appointment from the Bishop

Congratulations! You're A Licensed Local Pastor!

To maintain your status, you must

- Make satisfactory academic progress
 - Full time Local Pastor's – Complete four courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within eight years
 - Part time Local Pastor's – Complete two courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within twelve years.
- Submit written Annual Report of Mentor, if a Mentor is assigned
- Submit a **written** statement of **educational plans** for the ensuing year to your dCOM (college, seminary or Course of Study)
- Submit an "Official" transcript to the dCOM each year showing academic progress until the completion of the Course of Study or Seminary.
- Meet with the dCOM annually and receive their recommendation for continuation.
- Have License signed and renewed annually by the DS after dCOM recommendation for continuation.

Note: You are only a Licensed Local Pastor if and while appointed. If for some reason you are no longer appointed, you return to lay status and are considered a Certified Candidate Approved to Be Licensed if Appointed.

Associate Member

Who does this? *This is for anyone who is called to serve in a pastoral role but does not (yet) have a seminary degree or commissioned.*

Who to talk to:

Steps:

Prerequisites

1. Be at least 40 years of age
2. Have served for at least four years' service as a full time licensed local pastor or equivalent.
3. Completed the Basic Course of Study
4. Have a minimum 60 hours toward a B.A. or equivalent
5. Be available to accept a full time continuing appointment

DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services

Becoming an Associate Member

1. Meet with and be recommended by your dCOM
2. Complete and Submit an Application for Clergy Relationship Form (105)
3. Attend the Change of Status Meeting (in June of each year)
4. Complete the forms in the Associate Membership Packet and return to Clergy Services
 - a. Medical Report (Form F-103)
 - b. Sign the Psychological Consent Forms and submit the original to the Office of Clergy Services.
 - c. Credit Statement (Form 06SCBOM)
 - d. Criminal Background Statement
 - e. Biographical Form (102) with current 2x2 photograph
 - f. Sermon on assigned passage.
 - g. Bible Study on assigned book of the Bible
 - h. Theology & Doctrine Disciplinary Questions
 - i. Call and Disciplined Life Disciplinary Questions
 - j. Academic Integrity Statement (13SCBOM)
 - k. DS supervisory Observation Report (05SCBOM) (submitted on your behalf by the DS)
 - l. Official transcripts showing a minimum of 60 hours toward a Bachelor's degree and completion of BCOS

Notes: 1) Submit a copy of all Completed Forms and Requested documents to the Office of Clergy Services by the assigned due dates listed in your packets.
5. Complete Phase II of the Psychological with the vendor listed on the Consent Form.
6. Complete the Credit & Criminal Background Screening. *(After you submit your Criminal Background Statement, an email invitation will be sent with a link for you to complete a Credit Check & Criminal Background Screening. The cost will be \$20.00 and will be paid by you online.)*
7. Meet with the four subcommittees of the BOM and be recommended by the BOM for Associate membership.
8. Receive the approval of the Clergy Session at Annual Conference.

Congratulations! You're An Associate Member!

Provisional Member

Who does this? Those who are called to ordained ministry as a deacon or elder. Completed seminary or the BCOS & ACOS.

Who to talk to:

Steps:

Prerequisites

1. Complete a Bachelor's degree
2. BCOS Route:
 - a. 4 years of full time service, or the equivalent
 - b. Complete BCOS and ACOS with no more than 1/2 taken online
3. Seminary Route:
 - a. Be a certified candidate for at least one year, and up to 12 years maximum.
 - b. Education:
 1. Elder Track: Complete M.Div.
 2. Deacon Track: Complete M.Div or MA degree in specialized field and all Basic Graduate Theological Studies Courses.

DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services

Becoming a Provisional Member

1. Meet with and be recommended by your dCOM
2. Complete and Submit an Application for Clergy Relationship Form (105)
3. Attend the Change of Status Meeting (in June of each year)
4. Complete the forms in the Provisional Membership Packet and return to Clergy Services
 - a. Medical Report (Form F-103)
 - b. Credit Statement (Form 06SCBOM)
 - c. Criminal Background Statement
 - d. Biographical Form (102) with current 2x2 photograph
 - e. Sermon on assigned passage.
 - f. Bible Study on assigned book of the Bible
 - g. Theology & Doctrine Disciplinary Questions
 - h. Call & Disciplined Life Disciplinary Questions
 - i. Academic Integrity Statement (13SCBOM)
 - j. Statement of Fulfillment of Theological Studies
 - k. DS supervisory Observation Report (05SCBOM) (submitted on your behalf by the DS)
 - l. Official transcripts showing degree conferred
 - m. Mentor Report

Notes: 1) Submit a copy of all Completed Forms and Requested documents to the Office of Clergy Services by the assigned due dates listed in your packet.
5. Complete the Credit & Criminal Background Screening. *(After you submit your Criminal Background Statement, an email invitation will be sent with a link for you to complete a Credit Check & Criminal Background Screening. The cost will be \$20.00 and will be paid by you online.)*
6. Meet with the four subcommittees of the BOM and be recommended by the BOM for Provisional membership.
7. Receive the approval of the Clergy Session at Annual Conference.

Congratulations! You're Commissioned and a Provisional Member!

Once you become a Provisional member you must:

- Meet Annually with the dCOM
- Become Ordained and a Full Member within eight years
- Participate and Complete the two year Formation in Ministry Program

Full Member

Who does this? Those who are called to ordained ministry as a deacon or elder. Completed seminary or the BCOS & ACOS and the SC Educational requirements.

Who to talk to:

Steps:

Prerequisites

1. Been a Provisional Member for at least two years, no more than eight.
2. Served under Episcopal appointment full time for at least two years. One of the two must be served in SC unless waived by the BOM.
3. Met all the Provisional Member Academic Requirements
4. Completed the additional SC Academic Requirements
 - a. Clinical Pastoral Education
 - b. Black History or Black Studies,
 - c. Homiletics or preaching (can be public speaking for Deacon Candidates)
 - d. Women's studies

DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services

Becoming a Full Member

1. Complete and Submit an Application for Clergy Relationship Form (105)
2. Attend the Change of Status Meeting (in June of each year)
3. Complete the forms in the Provisional Membership Packet and return to Clergy Services
 - a. Medical Report (Form F-103)
 - b. Sign the Psychological Consent Forms and submit the original to the Office of Clergy Services.
 - c. Credit Statement (Form 06SCBOM)
 - d. Criminal Background Statement
 - e. Biographical Form (102) with current 2x2 photograph
 - f. Sermon on assigned passage.
 - g. Bible Study on assigned book of the Bible
 - h. Theology & Doctrine Disciplinary Questions
 - i. Call and Disciplined Life Disciplinary Questions
 - j. Fruitfulness Project
 - k. Academic Integrity Statement (13SCBOM)
 - l. Statement of Fulfillment of Theological Studies
 - m. 2 Seminary Recommendations
 - n. DS supervisory Observation Report (05SCBOM) (submitted on your behalf by the DS)
 - o. dCOM Observation Report (submitted on your behalf by the dCOM)
 - p. Official transcripts completion of SC academic requirements

Notes: 1) Submit a copy of all Completed Forms and Requested documents to the Office of Clergy Services by the assigned due dates listed in your packet.
4. Complete Phase II of the Psychological with the vendor listed on the Consent Form.
5. Complete the Credit & Criminal Background Screening. *(After you submit your Criminal Background Statement, an email invitation will be sent with a link for you to complete a Credit Check & Criminal Background Screening. The cost will be \$20.00 and will be paid by you online.)*
6. Meet with the four subcommittees of the BOM and be recommended by the BOM for Full membership.
7. Receive the approval of the Clergy Session at Annual Conference.

Congratulations! You're An Ordained Full Member!