Step-by-Step Guide to Becoming a Certified Candidate

The licensed or ordained ministry is recognized by The United Methodist Church as a called out and set apart ministry. Therefore it is appropriate that those persons who present themselves as candidates for licensed or ordained ministry be examined regarding the authenticity of their call by God to set-apart ministry. This document is to be used as a guide to becoming a certified candidate.

**Step 1: Prior to Candidacy Summit**
Those beginning candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry shall:

- Contact a clergyperson in your ministry setting, another United Methodist clergyperson or your District Superintendent.
- Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with her or him.
- Be a member of a UMC or a baptized participant of a recognized UM campus ministry or other UM ministry setting for one (1) year.
- Attend interview with District Superintendent.
  - Interview Date: _____/_____/_____
- Send letter by email to your District Superintendent and copy the dCOM registrar, indicating the following:
  - Completion of *The Christian as Minister* and email address and / or phone number of clergyperson
  - Name and contact information of your ministry setting (local church / campus ministry, etc.)
  - Involvement in your ministry setting
  - Statement of call
  - Request for entrance into Candidacy Process
- After receiving the letter from the candidate, the District Superintendent will invite the candidate to the candidacy process through OCAS/GBHEM and Pathways to Ministry online systems and assign Conference Registrar (registrar@greatplainsumc.org) as mentor for OCAS.

**Step 2: Candidacy Summit Registration**
*Due Dates: May 1 (for June Summit) or December 1 (for January Summit)*

- Register for Great Plains Candidacy Summit, including payment of $250.00 registration fee to the conference registrar. Where possible, the local church or ministry setting is encouraged to assist candidates with the expenses of candidacy.
- Register for OCAS/GBHEM online system
  - Add candidacy@gbhem.org to your contact list / address book.
  - Complete Candidacy Application Form (Form 101, Part 1)
- Pay $75.00 (online only) Candidacy Guidebook fee
- Print Release Form (Upon completion, place in your personal file and electronically mark the step complete on the OCAS system.)

(from pages 3-6 from the Great Plains United Methodist Board of Ordained Ministry Policy Handbook)
Personal Data Inventory Form (PDI) and Personal / Professional Reference Form

Register for Pathways to Ministry online system.

- Add noreply@pathwaystoministry.com to your contact list / address book.
- Use Pathways to Ministry to download and upload completed forms if you so choose; or as a virtual checklist and mail your forms to the District Committee on Ministry (dCOM) Registrar.

Prepare for Summit Mentoring Group (Complete prior to Candidacy Summit)

- Form a Prayer team - invite a 3 to 5 person team to pray for you during this journey
- Read 1 Samuel 3; Esther 1-4, 8; Acts 9:1-31 and Candidacy Guidebook pgs 16-19
- Reflection Exercise: Write your call story. (2 page maximum)
- Read and journal exercises in Candidacy Guidebook pgs. 33-46
- Complete leadership assessment tool, as determined by the BOM
- Additional steps may be determined as plans for the Candidacy Summit are finalized.

Step 3: Candidacy Summit Attendance (June or January)
The Candidacy Summit is a common ministry preparation experience for the purpose of building collegiality and understanding among the varieties of ministry for candidates. After completion of the Candidacy Summit, the candidate will have a maximum of five (5) years to become a certified candidate.

The Candidacy Summit will include:

- An Orientation to Ministry, including laity, deacons, elders, local pastors, extension ministries, etc.
- Interpretation of leadership assessment tool, as determined by the BOM.
- Complete Psychological Assessment
- Safe Gatherings online training and application, if not already Safe Gatherings certified.
- Assignment of candidate to a Summit Mentor and a Summit Mentor Group. (Mentor Groups will be assigned primarily by geography and technology will be utilized for students attending college or seminary out of state.)

Step 4: Post-Candidacy Summit Mentoring Sessions

- Meet with Summit Mentor Group for three (3) meetings to cover Exploring Candidacy Curriculum.
  - Mentoring Group Session - Date: _____/_____/_____
  - Mentoring Group Session - Date: _____/_____/_____
  - Mentoring Group Session - Date: _____/_____/_____
- Meet one-on-one with Mentor to prepare for DCOM.
  - Meeting Date: _____/_____/_____

Psychological Assessment

- Schedule an appointment with your assigned assessor (assigned by the Conference Registrar) to discuss the results of your Psychological Assessment Report
  - Date: _____/_____/_____
- Inform your mentor when this is complete. After the appointment, the assessor will send the Psychological Assessment Report to the Conference Registrar.
Step 5: Preparation for dCOM Certification Interview  
Step 5 may be completed before or after Steps 3 and 4.

- Contact clergyperson in your ministry setting to schedule a meeting of the pastor-parish relations committee or equivalent body specified by dCOM.
- PPRC Meeting Date: ____/____/____
- Complete and email Form 04 - Statement of Call and Questions for Beginning Candidacy to the clergyperson, PPRC Chair, dCOM Registrar and Conference Registrar

PPRC or body specified by the dCOM

- Recommended (Pastor shall contact the DS to request a special session of the charge conference and schedule a meeting at your church or ministry setting to request approval.)
  - Complete and submit Form 01 - Declaration of Candidacy or Continued Candidacy for Licensed or Ordained Ministry and Approval of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee or Equivalent Body.
- Not recommended (Staff Parish Chair contacts the District Superintendent)

Charge Conference or body specified by the dCOM

- Recommended by 2/3 majority vote on a written ballot (Candidate contacts the dCOM Registrar requesting Certification Interview.)
  - Complete and submit Form 02 - Approval of the Charge Conference for Candidacy and Continued Candidacy.
- Not recommended

Step 6: Application for dCOM Interview

- Complete and submit the following to the District and Conference registrar:
  - Form 07 - Medical Report of Ministerial Candidate
  - Form 10 - Application for Clergy Relationship and Progress Report
  - Form 12 - Report of the Clergy Mentor Relationship
  - Form 13 - Report of the District Superintendent, Sending or Supervising Pastor, and/or Other Supervisor
  - Submit transcript or copy of diploma providing proof of graduation from accredited high school or copy of a certificate of equivalency to Conference Registrar.

Step 7: dCOM Interview

- A 3/4 majority vote and written ballot are required for one of the following:
  - Certify as a candidate (Yes; ¶310.2)
  - Delayed (Not yet; specific focus areas may be assigned.)
  - Discontinue (Discontinued from the candidacy process.)
- After the interview, meet with dCOM Registrar to discuss next steps.