



West Ohio Conference
of The United Methodist Church

Board *of* Ministry Handbook

Updated 2014

Glossary

Credentials

Associate Member: Local pastors who have reached age 40, completed at least four years of full-time service as a local pastor, and the five year Course of Study, and have been approved by the board of ordained ministry and clergy session. They are not ordained but are available for full-time service and are guaranteed an appointment within the annual conference. Associate members have voice and vote in every matter except constitutional amendments, ordination, and conference relations of clergy. ¶ 321-323

Deacon: Deacons are called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. They serve the community and congregation in a ministry that connects the two. Deacons are called to a lifetime of servant leadership, serving the congregation and the world. A deacon serves all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the marginalized, and equips and leads the laity in ministries of compassion, justice, and service. The deacon's role connects the church's worship with its service in the world. ¶ 328-331

Elder: Those called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. Like all Christians, elders are committed to a lifetime of service, although this service manifests itself in different ways than deacons or the laity. The elder serves in ministry and servant leadership and gives pastoral leadership to order the life of the congregation. Elders devote themselves to the ministry of the Word, including primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Word of God. ¶ 332-335

Roles: Team Leader

The team leader works to ensure that the interview process is carried out from start to finish in a way that is just, compassionate, and helpful. The team leader sets the tone and helps create a culture that is focused on understanding the candidate and how best to discern the appropriate response at this stage in the journey.

Primary duties include:

- Be in prayer for all candidates and the interview team
- Be familiar with the files of each candidate
- Spend time with his/her interview team in BOM meetings and prior to interviews to ensure there is an intentional plan for the interview process for each candidate
- Work with the group, using the guidebook, to ensure appropriate well-rounded questions for each interview in each of the five essential areas
- Assign Primary Readers for each file
- Assign Secondary Readers for each file
- Be prepared to serve in whatever capacity is necessary
- Provide clarity on the process when needed, consulting the BOM staff when necessary
- Help the team come to a decision around each candidate and ensure that all primary readers are prepared to present to the plenary

Roles: Primary Reader

One primary reader will be selected for each candidate. It is recommended that District Superintendents and Assistants to the District Superintendent not be selected as primary readers.

Primary duties include:

- Contact candidate in advance of the interview to let him/her know that you are praying for the interview. (Handwritten notes, emails, or phone calls are appropriate).
- Read candidate's file thoroughly and present the candidate's file to the team. Using the guidebook, highlight areas of strength and areas for further clarification and questions.
- Work with the team to determine appropriate areas for questions during the interview.
- Greet candidate during welcome time and introduce candidate to the team.
- Bring candidate to the room and give him or her an overview of the interview process.
- After interview is complete, ensure the candidate has had all questions answered and then bring him or her to the waiting area.
- After a decision has been made, bring the candidate back in and share the results.
- Walk the candidate out.
- Present the candidate at the plenary. Include the following:
 - Name
 - Place where he/she are serving
 - Request for credentialing
 - Decision by the group including the vote tally
 - Summary of the group's impression of the candidate
(If the decision is SPLIT or NO, this should be more comprehensive and include specific examples for the decision. Primary readers are encouraged to write this out in advance. For split decisions, ensure someone sharing both perspectives is involved in the presentation.)
- Field questions from the plenary floor about the candidate
- Ensure all necessary paperwork is complete for the candidate

Roles: Secondary Reader

One secondary reader will be selected for each candidate.

Primary duties include:

- Be in prayer for the candidate prior to the interview.
- Read file thoroughly and provide an additional perspective of the candidate's file to the team in advance of the interview. Using the guidebook, bring specific areas and questions you would like to focus on during the interview.
- Work with the team to determine appropriate areas for questions during the interview.
- Assist primary reader with all necessary paperwork for the candidate.
- For split decisions or no decisions, assist primary reader in preparations as necessary for plenary.
- Be available to fill in as primary reader if necessary.

A Guide for Interview Questions

We appreciate how seriously the members of this Board of Ordained Ministry take the task of interviewing and credentialing our candidates.

This guide is intended to provide you with a helpful framework for shaping the questions asked of the candidates. While we expect this framework to improve consistency across interviews, it is not a cookie-cutter list.

The goal is to develop a solid understanding of where the candidate is in each of the five areas. Teams will be responsible for developing appropriate questions in order to ensure that a full understanding of the candidate is reached.

Under each of the categories, you will find a

- *Goal.* The primary thing you are attempting to understand about the candidate.
- *Key Questions.* After reading the paperwork and by the end of the interview, your team should have a clear answer to this question for the appropriate stage of your candidate.
- *Areas of Focus.* These are topics that we expect will help you arrive at your goal and help to answer the key questions for the candidate. You will not be asking questions about each area of focus. Many of your answers will be supplied in a candidate's paperwork.

Call

Goal: To develop a clear sense of the candidate's call to ministry and how it is integrated with his or her theology, leadership, holistic development, and lived mission of the church.

Key Questions:

- **Provisional:** How has the candidate articulated his or her call toward ordination with a clear picture of how this call *could look* in a ministry setting?
- **Ordination:** With demonstrated examples, how has this candidate articulated how his or her call *connects with identified gifts*? Is there evidence of integration of call and practical theology, leadership, holistic development and lived mission?
- **Associate Member:** (In addition to ordination question) How has the candidate clearly articulated why this chosen pathway was an important part of living into the call?

Areas of Focus:

Appointment Process

- **Deacon:** Is the candidate proactive & in conversation with DS about the possibilities for meaningful appointments (both primary & secondary)?
- **AM & Elder:** What is his or her commitment to itineracy?

How are you distinctly living out your call to _____?

- Service And Word
- Sacrament & Order (Elder & Am)
- Compassion & Justice (Deacon)

Wesleyan Theology

Goal: To develop a clear understanding of the candidate's theology.

Key Questions:

- **Provisional**

How has the candidate *articulated* an integrated, systematic and Wesleyan theology?

- **Ordination**

How has the candidate consistently *integrated* theology into the practical ministry setting?

Areas of Focus:

- Grace
- Sacraments & Living Sacramentally
- Scripture
- Understanding Of The Trinity
- Theological Self-Awareness

Holistic Development

Goal: To develop a clear picture of how the candidate is attentive to the essential aspects of personal, holistic development.

Key Questions:

- **Provisional:** How does the candidate show *awareness* and *attention* to holistic personal growth and wellness? Where are the blind spots?
- **Ordination:** How does the candidate show *demonstrated accountability* (not perfection) and articulation of how he or she is caring for holistic development? How were the areas of growth identified at the provisional stage addressed?

Areas of Focus:

- Self-Care / Healthy Boundaries
- Emotional Intelligence
- Identity As A Leader Apart From Ministry
- Relationship With God
- Psychological Assessment
- Finances
- Health / Wellness
- Relationships With Others (Family, Friends)

Leadership Experience

Goal: To develop a clear picture of the candidate's effectiveness and fruitfulness as a leader.

Key Questions:

- **Provisional:** How has the candidate demonstrated fruitfulness as a leader in his or her *life*?
- **Ordination:** How has the candidate demonstrated fruitfulness as a leader in his or her *ministry*?

Areas of Focus:

- D.S. & Local Church Evaluations
What do others notice about his or her gifts?
- How have you been Managing Conflict? How have you been Empowering & Equipping Laity?
What was the fruit?
 - **Elders & AM:** How is the candidate ordering the church so that laity are empowered?
 - **Deacons:** As he or she builds bridges between the church and the world, how are laity being empowered and equipped?
- Preaching / Teaching / Effective Communication
For both deacons and elders: Where is the proclamation of word as an integrated part of the candidate's ministry? How does this go beyond Sunday morning?

Mission of the Church

Goal: To develop a clear understanding of the candidate's understanding of the church's mission and the ways that his or her leadership is furthering the mission of the church.

Key Questions:

- **Provisional:** How is the candidate furthering the mission of the church in his/her *life*?
- **Ordination:** How is the candidate furthering the mission of the church in his/her *ministry setting*? What fruit was born?

Areas of Focus:

What stories of effectiveness can you share with us around _____?

- Making Disciples
- Mission / Outreach
- Strategic Planning / Vision
- Care For The Marginalized / Justice
- Fruitfulness / Disciple-Making Project
(For Ordination Candidates Only)

Communication with the Cabinet

*In an effort to improve communication between those tasked with evaluating and appointing candidates and those tasked with credentialing candidates, we will commit to share: **clear, concise, timely communication regarding strengths and weaknesses of candidates***

District Superintendents will fill out an evaluation for each candidate in their district. This evaluation will share information gleaned from:

- Observations made of the candidate within the year of the evaluation
- Observations of the candidate doing meaningful ministry

The Board will complete a feedback form to be shared with the candidate and the Cabinet for every candidate who will be returning to the board.

(i.e. All Provisional Candidates, Ordination & AM Candidates that are told NO.)

This feedback form will highlight

- Strengths of the candidate
- Examples of areas of concern (for candidates receiving a NO)
- Areas where growth must be seen when they return to the board

West Ohio Conference Provisional Candidates

Name _____

Denied for Provisional Membership as a _____ Deacon
_____ Elder

On _____, 20_____

Greatest Strengths for Ministry Identified in the Interview:

Specific Areas of Concern (Give Examples):

Essential Next Steps Before Returning to the Board:

West Ohio Conference Ordination & AM Candidates

Name _____

Denied for Full Membership as a ___ Deacon
 ___ Elder
 ___ Associate Member

On _____, 20_____

Greatest Strengths for Ministry Identified in the Interview:

Significant Areas of Concern (Give Examples):

Essential Next Steps Before Returning to the Board:

Other Essential Information:

Who will help follow up with this candidate to provide support and accountability?