

THE 2004 BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

Paragraphs Pertaining to the Work of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry

¶ 310. Entrance Procedures into Licensed and Ordained Ministry

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 ordered ministry.

Wesley's Questions for the Examiners—In order that The United Methodist Church may be assured that those persons who present themselves as candidates for licensed or ordained ministry are truly called of God, let those who consider recommending such persons for candidacy as licensed or ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church prayerfully and earnestly ask themselves these questions:

1. Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
2. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God's grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?
3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

Candidate answers these questions in writing for the interview with PPRC.

As long as these marks occur in them, we believe they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit.

¶ 311. Candidacy for Licensed and Ordained Ministry

Persons, upon hearing and heeding the call to servant leadership through licensed or ordained ministry, shall contact the pastor of their local church, another ordained deacon or elder, or their district superintendent to inquire about the process of candidacy. Persons are encouraged to use the resources *The Christian as Minister* and the Ministry Inquiry Process. [*These can be ordered from Discipleship Resources*]

1. Those seeking to begin candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry:
 - a) shall have been a professing member in good standing of The United Methodist Church for at least two years immediately preceding the application for candidacy; including a year of service in some form of congregational leadership, either in that local church or one agreed to by the district committee on ordained ministry, provided that in the case of an affiliate member, there has been a consultation with and approval by the charge conference of the home church;
 - b) shall apply to their district superintendent in writing, in a letter describing their sense of call to licensed or ordained ministry, for admission to the candidacy program with a copy for the district committee on ordained ministry; and
 - c) shall be assigned to a candidacy mentor by the district committee on ordained ministry in consultation with the district superintendent;
 - d) shall be registered through the candidacy mentor with the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry;
 - e) shall complete with the mentor the preliminary studies in the Candidacy Guidebook in a way that gives consideration to the candidate's background and experience; and
 - f) are encouraged to pursue their education at one of the United Methodist seminaries.

Inquiring Candidate, Phase 1

2. Those who have completed the process in § 1 and are ready to publicly declare themselves to be candidates for licensed or ordained ministry shall:

**Inquiring Candidate,
Phase 2**

- a) consult with their pastor and committee on pastor or staff-parish relations after formulating a written statement reflecting their call to ministry and requesting recommendation for certification. The candidate shall be interviewed by the committee on his or her statement of call and Wesley's historic questions in ¶310;
- b) be recommended by the charge conference. To be valid, such a recommendation shall be:
 - i) approved by written ballot by two-thirds of the charge conference present at this meeting, provided that in the case of an affiliate member there has been a consultation with the pastor of the home church, and
 - ii) the candidate shall have been graduated from an accredited high school or received a certificate of equivalency;
- c) continue the candidacy studies for ordained ministry with a candidacy mentor.

3. Candidates who have completed the requirements of § 1-2 and desire to be certified as candidates for licensed or ordained ministry shall:

**Requirements
for first time
certification**

- a) appear before the district committee on ordained ministry for examination;
- b) submit a written response providing evidence of understanding and expectation concerning the following:
 - i) the most formative experiences of your Christian life;
 - ii) God's call to licensed or ordained ministry and the role of the church in your call;
 - iii) your future usefulness as a minister in The United Methodist Church;
 - iv) your personal beliefs as a Christian; v) your personal gifts for ministry;
 - vi) how your personal relationships may affect your future ministry;
- c) submit a written response providing evidence of understanding of the ministries of local pastors, deacons and elders within The United Methodist Church;
- d) complete and release required psychological reports, criminal background and credit checks. They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference board of ordained ministry:

**All forms named in “d”
are obtained by the
mentor from Care and
Counseling and the IGRC
Board of Ordained
Ministry Registrar.**

- (1) a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse; or
 - (2) a notarized statement certifying that this candidate has neither been accused in writing nor convicted of a felony, misdemeanor, any incident of sexual misconduct, or child abuse.
- e) provide other information as the district committee may require for determining gifts, evidence of God's grace, fruit, and demonstration of the call to licensed or ordained ministry; and
 - f) 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. To this end they shall agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God.³

Where possible, the local church is encouraged to assist candidates with the expenses of candidacy.

¶ 312. Continuation of Candidacy

The progress of candidates shall be reviewed annually by the district committee on ordained ministry which shall interview the candidate annually and may then continue the candidacy when the following conditions have been met satisfactorily:

1. The candidate has received the annual recommendation of his or her charge conference.
2. The candidate is making satisfactory progress in his or her studies. A candidate preparing for ordained ministry who is enrolled as a student in a school, college, university, or school of theology recognized by the University Senate shall present annually to the district committee on ordained ministry an official transcript from the school the person is attending. The transcript shall be considered by the district committee on ordained ministry as part of the evidence of his or her progress.
3. The candidate continues to evidence gifts, fruits and God's grace for the work of ministry.

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 committee in the same or another annual conference.

¶ 313. Discontinuance and Reinstatement of Certified Candidates

1. Discontinuance of a Certified Candidate—Certified candidates may be discontinued on their own request, upon severing their relationship with The United Methodist Church, or upon action to discontinue by the district committee on ordained ministry. The district committee on ordained ministry shall file with the conference board of ordained ministry a permanent record of the circumstances relating to the discontinuance of the certified candidate.
2. Reinstatement of Certified Candidate's Status—Certified candidates whose status has been discontinued by a district committee on ordained ministry of an annual conference of The United Methodist Church shall only be reinstated by the district committee of the district in which they were discontinued. When approved by the district committee on ordained ministry, their certified candidate's credentials shall be reissued and they shall be eligible to continue the process.

¶ 314. Appointment of Certified Candidates

A certified candidate is eligible for appointment as a local pastor upon completion of License for Pastoral Ministry (¶ 315).

¶ 315. License for Pastoral Ministry

All persons not ordained as elders who are appointed to preach and conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor shall have a license for pastoral ministry. The board of ordained ministry (¶ 634.2g) may recommend to the executive session of the annual conference the licensing of those persons who are:

1. Probationary members commissioned by the annual conference, or
2. Local pastors who have completed the following:
 - a) The conditions for candidacy certification in ¶¶ 311.1-3 and;
 - b) The studies for the license as a local pastor as prescribed and supervised by the Division of Ordained Ministry or one-third of their work for a Master of Divinity degree at a school of theology listed by the University Senate;
 - c) Been examined and recommended by the district committee on ordained ministry (¶ 663.8); or
3. Deacons in full connection, seeking to qualify for ordination as an elder; or
4. Licensed or ordained clergy from other denominations who have training equivalent to the studies for license as a local pastor prescribed by the Division of Ordained Ministry, but do not meet the educational requirements for probationary membership in the annual conference.

All IGRC candidates go to licensing school, even those who have completed 1/2 of their seminary work and are eligible for commissioning.

5. In every case, those who are licensed shall have:

- a) Released the required psychological reports, criminal background and credit checks, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse. They shall submit, on a form provided by the conference board of ordained ministry:
 - (1) a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse; or
 - (2) a notarized statement certifying that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
- b) Been approved by the board of ordained ministry (§ 634.2g);
- c) Provided the board with a satisfactory certificate of good health on a prescribed form from a physician approved by that board.

<p>Persons who are certified candidates will already have supplies this information.</p>

Between sessions of the annual conference, persons who have completed the conditions for licensing listed above may be granted interim license as a local pastor upon recommendation of the cabinet, the district committee on ordained ministry, and executive committee of the conference board of ordained ministry, and may be appointed by the bishop.

¶ 316. Responsibilities and Duties of Those Licensed for Pastoral Ministry

1. Probationary members approved annually by the board of ordained ministry and local pastors approved annually by the district committee on ordained ministry may be licensed by the bishop to perform all the duties of a pastor (§ 340), including the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion as well as the service of marriage (where state laws allow),⁴ burial, confirmation, and membership reception, while appointed to a particular charge. For the purposes of these paragraphs the charge will be defined as “people within or related to the community being served.” Those licensed for pastoral ministry may be appointed to extension ministry settings when approved by the bishop and the board of ordained ministry.
2. Such authorization granted by the license may be renewed annually by the district committee or the board of ordained ministry.
3. The license shall remain valid only so long as the appointment continues and shall be recertified by the bishop when assignments change between sessions of the annual conference.⁵
4. A local pastor shall be under the supervision of a district superintendent and a pastoral mentor who shall supervise the local pastor's work in the Course of Study for ordained ministry and give counsel on matters of pastoral responsibility (§ 340, ¶323).
5. Local pastors shall be amenable to the clergy session of the annual conference in the performance of their pastoral duties and shall attend the sessions of the annual conference.
6. The membership of local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment is in the annual conference where they shall have the right to vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to general, jurisdictional, or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
7. All local pastors shall receive written communication about decisions made regarding their relationship with the annual conference
8. Local pastors who have completed the Course of Study may upon retirement annually request from the District Committee of Ordained Ministry and the Bishop a license to continue to serve in the local church where they hold membership for the purpose of providing sacramental rites of baptism and Holy Communion, at the request of the appointed pastor.

317. Interim License as Local Pastor

Between sessions of the annual conference, persons who have completed the conditions for licensing listed above may be granted interim license as a local pastor upon recommendation of the cabinet, the district committee on ordained ministry, and executive committee of the conference board of ordained ministry, and may be appointed by the bishop.

¶ 318. Categories of Local Pastor

Upon satisfactory completion of the requirements of ¶ 315, the district committee on ordained ministry shall certify the completion of the prescribed studies to the candidates and the board of ordained ministry, and they shall be listed in the journal as eligible to be appointed as local pastors. Award of the license shall not be made until an appointment to a pastoral charge is made in accordance with ¶ 337. In recommending to the annual conference those who have met the requirements to serve as local pastors for the ensuing year, the board of ordained ministry shall classify them in three categories with educational and other requirements of their category. Any person who fails to meet these requirements shall be discontinued as a local pastor. The categories shall be defined as follows:

1. **Full-Time Local Pastors**—Those eligible to be appointed full-time local pastors are persons (a) who may devote their entire time to the church in the charge to which they are appointed and its outreach in ministry and mission to the community; (b) who receive in cash support per annum from all Church sources a sum equal to or larger than the minimum base compensation established by the annual conference for full-time local pastors; (c) who, unless they have completed the Course of Study, shall complete four courses per year in a Course of Study school or the correspondence curriculum prescribed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (¶ 1421.3d); (d) who, when they have completed the Course of Study, are involved in continuing education (¶ 351);6 (e) who shall not be enrolled as a full-time student in any school.
2. **Part-Time Local Pastors**—Those eligible to be appointed as part-time local pastors are persons
 - (a) who have met the provisions of ¶ 315;
 - (b) who do not devote their entire time to the charge to which they are appointed; or
 - (c) do not receive in cash support per annum from all Church sources a sum equal to or larger than the minimum base compensation established by the annual conference for full-time local pastors; and
 - (d) who, unless they have completed the Course of Study, shall complete two courses per year in a Course of Study school or the correspondence curriculum prescribed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Part-time local pastors may be appointed to small membership churches that are grouped together in a charge under the supervision of a mentor.
3. **Student Local Pastors**—Those eligible to be appointed as student local pastors shall be enrolled as pretheological or theological students in a college, university, or school of theology listed by the University Senate (a) who have met the provisions of ¶ 315, and (b) who shall make appropriate progress in their educational program as determined by the board of ordained ministry.
4. Upon recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, the clergy members in full connection may vote approval annually for students of other denominations enrolled in a school of theology listed by the University Senate to serve as local pastors for the ensuing year under the direction of the district superintendent; provided that they shall indicate to the satisfaction of the board of ordained ministry their agreement to support and maintain the doctrine and polity of The United Methodist Church while under appointment.
5. Local pastors, except student local pastors, may serve on any board, commission, or committee with voice and vote, except on matters of clergy character, qualifications, status, and ordination, except the board of ordained ministry and the district committee on ordained ministry (¶ 634.1). They shall not be eligible to vote on or serve as delegates to the general, jurisdictional, or central conference.

Some seminary courses may satisfy requirements for a Course of Study class, but they must be approved by the Division of Ordained Ministry in Nashville as equivalents.

¶ 319. Continuance as a Local Pastor

1. Persons licensed as local pastors who are not probationary members shall continue in college, in a program of theological education at an approved seminary, or in the Course of Study.
2. Upon completing each year's education and other qualifications, a local pastor who is not a probationary member may be recommended for continuance by the district committee on ordained ministry. The clergy members in full connection of the annual conference may approve continuance of a local pastor after reference to and recommendation by its board of ordained ministry.
3. A full-time local pastor shall complete the Course of Study curriculum within eight years and a part-time local pastor within twelve, unless a family situation or other circumstance precludes the local pastor's opportunity to meet said requirements. The local pastor may be granted an annual extension beyond the prescribed limit upon a three-fourths vote of the district committee on ordained ministry, recommendation by the conference board of ordained ministry, and the vote of the clergy members in full connection.⁷
4. A local pastor may choose to remain in a local relationship with the annual conference upon having completed the five-year Course of Study.
5. None of the provisions in this legislation shall be interpreted to change or limit authorizations to local pastors ordained as deacon and elder prior to 1996.⁸

¶318 sets the expectation that full-time LPs will complete 4 courses per year and part-timers will complete 2 courses per year. Part-timers may enroll in extension course of study classes in the IGRC.

¶ 320. Exiting, Reinstatement, and Retirement of Local Pastors Who Are Not Probationary Members

1. Discontinuance of Local Pastor—Whenever a local pastor retires or is no longer approved for appointment by the annual conference as required in ¶ 318, whenever any local pastor severs relationship with The United Methodist Church, whenever the appointment of a local pastor is discontinued by the bishop, or whenever the district committee on ordained ministry does not recommend continuation of license, license and credentials shall be surrendered to the district superintendent for deposit with the secretary of the conference. After consultation with the pastor, the former local pastor shall designate the local church in which membership shall be held. The board of ordained ministry shall file with the resident bishop a permanent record of the circumstances relating to the discontinuance of local pastor status as required in ¶ 634.3d.
2. Withdrawal Under Complaints and Charges—When a local pastor is accused of an offense under ¶ 2702 and desires to withdraw from the Church, the procedures described in ¶ 2719.2 shall apply.
3. Trial of Local Pastor—When a local pastor is accused of an offense under ¶ 2702, the procedures described in ¶¶ 2703-2713 shall apply.⁹
4. Reinstatement of Local Pastor Status—Local pastors whose approved status has been discontinued from an annual conference of The United Methodist Church or one of its legal predecessors may be reinstated only by the annual conference that previously approved them, its legal successor, or the annual conference of which the major portion of their former conference is a part, only upon recommendation by the district committee on ordained ministry from which their license was discontinued, the board of ordained ministry, and the cabinet. Persons seeking reinstatement shall provide evidence that they have been members of a local United Methodist church for at least one year prior to their request for reinstatement. The district committee shall require a recommendation from the charge conference where his or her membership is currently held. When approved by the clergy members in full connection as provided in ¶ 337, their license and credentials shall be restored, and they shall be eligible for appointment as pastors of a charge. They shall complete current studies and meet requirements as provided in ¶¶ 315, 318.

Whenever persons whose approval as local pastors has been discontinued by an annual conference are being considered for appointment or temporary employment in another annual conference, the board of ordained ministry where these persons are being considered shall obtain from the board of ordained ministry of

the conference where approval has been discontinued verification of their qualifications and information about the circumstances relating to the termination of their approval as local pastors.

5. **Retirement of Local Pastor**—A local pastor who has made satisfactory progress in the Course of Study as specified in ¶ 323.1 or .2 may be recognized as a retired local pastor. Retirement provisions for local pastors shall be the same as those for clergy members in ¶ 359.1, .2, .4, with pensions payable in accordance with ¶ 1506.5a. Retired local pastors may attend annual conference sessions with voice but not vote. A retired local pastor may be appointed by the bishop to a charge and licensed upon recommendation by the district committee on ordained ministry without creating additional claim upon the conference minimum compensation nor further pension credit.

¶ 321. Eligibility and Rights of Associate Members

Associate members of an annual conference are in the itinerant ministry of the Church and are available on a continuing basis for appointment by the bishop. They offer themselves without reserve to be appointed (and to serve as their superiors in office shall direct). They shall be amenable to the annual conference in the performance of their ministry and shall be granted the same security of appointment as probationary members and members in full connection.

1. Associate members shall have a right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except the following: (a) constitutional amendments; (b) election of delegates to the general and jurisdictional or central conferences; (c) all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.
2. Associate members may serve on any board, commission, or committee of an annual conference. They shall not be eligible for election as delegates to the general or jurisdictional or central conferences.
3. Associate members shall be subject to the provisions governing sabbatical leave, leave of absence, location, retirement, minimum salary, and pension.

¶ 322. Requirements for Election as Associate Members

1. Local pastors may be elected to associate membership by vote of the clergy members in full connection, upon recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, when they have met the following conditions. They shall have:
 - (1) reached age forty;
 - (2) served four years as full-time local pastors;
 - (3) completed the five-year Course of Study for ordained ministry in addition to the studies for license as a local pastor, no more than one year of which may be taken by correspondence or online/distance learning courses;
 - (4) 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;
 - (5) been recommended by the district committee on ordained ministry and the board of ordained ministry;
 - (6) declared their willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment;
 - (7) satisfied the board regarding their physical, mental, and emotional health (the annual conference shall require psychological reports, criminal background and credit checks, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry);
 - (8) for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of his/her influence as a clergy member of the annual conference, be willing to make a complete dedication of himself/herself to the highest ideals of the Christian life; and to this end agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily

health, mental and emotional maturity, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God; and

- (9) prepared at least one written sermon on a biblical passage specified by the board of ordained ministry and given satisfactory answers in a written doctrinal examination administered by the board of ordained ministry. (Consideration shall be given to the questions listed in ¶ 324.9.)
2. Upon recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, an annual conference may equate part-time service to the requirement of full-time service. Such equivalence is to be determined in light of the years of service involved, the quality of that service, the maturity of the applicant, and other relevant factors.
3. Associate members may retire under the provisions of ¶ 359 of the Discipline. They shall retain their license for pastoral ministry for service in the local church and maintain their relationship as retired clergy members of the annual conference.
4. Associate members may be received as probationary members in the annual conference under conditions as set forth in ¶ 324.6 upon receiving a three-fourths majority vote of the clergy members of the conference in full connection, present and voting.

¶ 324. Qualifications for Election to Probationary Membership and Commissioning

A person shall be eligible for election to probationary membership and commissioning in the annual conference by vote of the clergy session on recommendation of its board of ordained ministry after meeting the following qualifications.

1. **Candidacy Requirement:** Each candidate shall have been a certified candidate for probationary membership and commissioning for at least one year and no more than twelve years.
2. **Service Requirement:** Each candidate shall have demonstrated his or her gifts for ministries of service and leadership to the satisfaction of the district committee on ordained ministry as a condition for probationary membership and commissioning.
3. **Undergraduate Requirement:** A candidate for probationary membership and commissioning shall have completed a bachelor's degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate. Exceptions to the undergraduate degree requirements may be made in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in some instances, for missional purposes, for persons who have a minimum of sixty semester hours of Bachelor of Arts credit and:
 - a) have been prevented from pursuit of the normal course of baccalaureate education,
 - b) are members of a group whose cultural practices and training enhance insight and skills for effective ministry not available through conventional formal education, or
 - c) have graduated with a Bachelor degree or its equivalent from a college not recognized by the University Senate and have completed one-half of the studies of the Master of Divinity or equivalent first professional degree in a school of theology listed by the University Senate.
4. **Graduate Requirement:**
 - a) Candidates for deacon or elder shall have completed a minimum of twenty-four semester hours of graduate theological studies in the Christian faith. These graduate theological studies must include the areas of: Old Testament; New Testament; theology; church history; mission of the church in the world; evangelism; worship/liturgy; and United Methodist doctrine, polity and history. These courses may be included within or in addition to a seminary degree.
 - b) a candidate for ordination as an elder shall have completed one-half of the studies toward a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent, including one-half of the basic graduate theological studies from a seminary listed by the University Senate.
 - c) a candidate for ordination as a deacon shall have:

- (1) completed one-half of the studies of a master's degree from a United Methodist seminary or one listed by the University Senate, or
 - (2) received a master's degree in the area of the specialized ministry in which the candidate will serve, and completed one-half of the basic graduate theological studies, in a context which will provide formation as a United Methodist deacon in full connection within a cohesive program developed by the seminary and approved by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, documented by a record of completion from that school.
5. In some instances a candidate who is pursuing ordination to serve as deacon in full connection may fulfill the academic requirements through the following professional certification alternate route:
- a) shall have reached thirty-five years of age at the time to become a certified candidate;
 - b) completed a bachelor's degree, received professional certification or license in the area of ministry in which the candidate will serve, have completed a minimum of eight semester hours of graduate credit or equivalent quarter hours in the area of specialization, and have been recommended by the conference board of ordained ministry;
 - c) have completed one-half of the minimum of twenty-four semester hours of the basic graduate theological studies of the Christian faith including the areas of: Old Testament; New Testament; theology; church history; mission of the church in the world; evangelism; worship/liturgy; and United Methodist doctrine, polity, and history, in a context which will provide a cohesive program and formation as a United Methodist deacon in full connection within a cohesive program developed by the seminary and approved by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, documented by a record of completion from that school.
6. Local pastors may fulfill the requirements for probationary membership and commissioning when they have:
- a) reached forty years of age;
 - b) satisfied all requirements of Sections 1-3 and 7-14 of this paragraph.
 - c) completed the five-year Course of Study for ordained ministry, of which no more than four courses may be taken by correspondence or Internet; and
 - d) an Advanced Course of Study consisting of thirty-two semester hours of graduate theological study or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry that shall include the areas of evangelism, and United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity (see Judicial Council Decision 823). The thirty-two semester hours may be offered in a seminary setting or in an extension setting that meets the requirements of the University Senate.¹⁰
7. The board of ordained ministry shall require an official transcript of credits from each school before recognizing any of the applicant's educational claims. In case of doubt, the board may submit a transcript to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
8. Each candidate shall present a satisfactory certificate of good health by a physician on the prescribed form. Disabilities are not to be construed as unfavorable health factors when a person with disability is capable of meeting the professional standards and is able to render effective service as a probationary member and commissioned minister.
9. Each candidate shall respond to a written and oral doctrinal examination administered by the conference board of ordained ministry. The examination shall cover the following:
- 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 II 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?
 - j) Discuss your understanding of the primary characteristics of United Methodist polity.
 - k) How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a probationary member and commissioned minister in The United Methodist Church?
 - l) Describe your understanding of diakonia, the servant ministry of the church, and the servant ministry of the probationary member and commissioned minister.
 - m) What is the meaning of ordination in the context of the general ministry of the Church?
 - n) Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry.
 - o) You have agreed as a candidate 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 ministers, to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, and to this end agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God. What is your understanding of this agreement?
 - p) Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.
10. Each candidate shall have been recommended in writing to the conference board of ordained ministry, based on a three-fourths majority vote of the district committee on ordained ministry.
 11. Each candidate shall have a personal interview with the conference board of ordained ministry to complete his or her candidacy.
 12. Each candidate shall submit on a form provided by the board of ordained ministry a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony, or misdemeanor, or written accusations and its disposition of sexual misconduct or child abuse; or certifying that this candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse. The candidate also shall release required psychological reports, criminal background, credit checks and reports of child abuse.
 13. Each candidate shall file with the board a written, concise, autobiographical statement (in duplicate on a prescribed form) regarding age, health, family status, Christian experience, call to ministry, educational record, formative Christian experiences, and plans for service in the Church.
 14. Each candidate shall have been recommended in writing to the clergy session based on at least a two-thirds majority vote of the conference board of ordained ministry.