

**Guidebook**

# **CANDIDACY MENTOR**



[www.vaumc.org/dcomresources](http://www.vaumc.org/dcomresources)

*updated September 2024*

# Candidacy Mentor

“Mentoring occurs within a relationship where the mentor takes responsibility for creating a safe place for reflection and growth . . . Mentoring is a part of the preparation and growth for inquirers and candidates for ordained ministry . . . Mentoring is distinct from the evaluative and supervisory process that is a part of preparation for ministry.” (*The Book of Discipline*, paragraph 348.1a).

## Purpose

Within the candidacy process, the purpose of mentoring is relational. A mentor walks along side a candidate, is present with the candidate, and offers spiritual guidance. The mentoring process is grounded in the assumption of a supportive relationship.

At times, the relationship will include moments of encouragement, comfort, and affirmation. At other times, it will be moments of challenge, accountability, and raising the hard questions.

The purpose of a mentor is to help listen to what God is calling us to do.

It is essential that we are clear that mentoring is not evaluative or supervisory. Those responsibilities reside elsewhere. The mentoring relationship is to involve trust, honesty, and agreement.

**Certified Candidates have up to 12 years before moving forward. A mentor report form is due each year as part of the renewal process.**

# Qualities of a Mentor

Spiritually mature, demonstrating a deep and continuing commitment to God and growing in grace and love.

Demonstrates a strong understanding of call and commitment to Jesus Christ and to Christian ministry as lived through the church's ministry.

Appreciates the varieties of lay, licensed and ordained ministry.

Engages in spiritual practices.

Engages in personal vocational development.

Self-aware, respectful, and respected.

Encourages others to be comfortable and discuss in depth the many facets of vocational and personal development.

Able to be open and flexible in adapting to candidates' needs when possible.

Interest in candidates and mentoring.

Maintains family relationships and personal lives that are congruent with the standards expected of clergy.

Possesses excitement and joy for Jesus, the church, and the candidate's ministry.

*Candidacy mentors are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and local pastors who have completed Course of Study.*

# Responsibilities

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## Pray for candidates.

Talk with the candidate to establish covenant and meeting schedules.

Study and discuss *Answering the Call: Candidacy Guidebook* with candidates.

Establish and maintain confidentiality.

Assist the candidate in navigating candidacy process (see checklists).

Prepare the candidate for S/PPRC and charge conference meetings.

After the candidate becomes a certified candidate, continue to meet as they discern their next steps toward licensing or ordination.

Complete Annual Candidacy Mentor Report form.



# Using Answering the Call

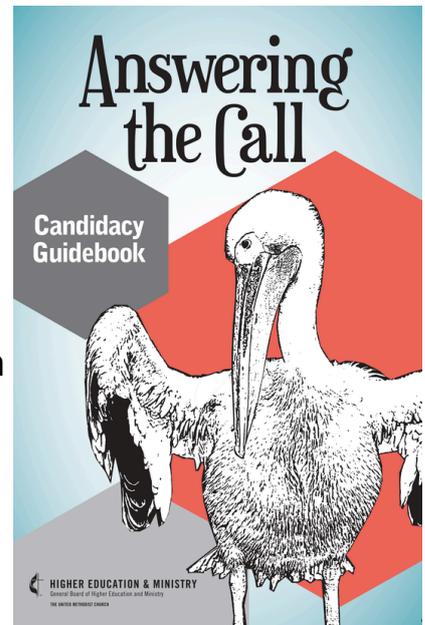
Required to meet at least three times before a candidate can interview to become a certified candidate.

**Session 1:** Get to know each other. Review Chapter 1, establish a covenant, and schedule meetings. Discuss chapter 4.

**Session 2:** Read chapters 2 and 3. Use the discussion questions.

**Session 3:** Read chapters 5 and 6. Use the discussion questions. Spend time discussing the differences between being licensed and ordained.

**Session 4:** Read chapters 7-9. Use the discussion questions. Discuss seminary, if applicable.



## Recommended Meeting Format

The meeting format should be discerned together by the mentor and candidate(s).

- Time of prayer and spiritual formation (practice a discipline together).
- Time of personal sharing - successes, difficulties (10-15 minutes)
- Focused time on reflection of pre-determined month meeting focus topic (see below for recommendations).
- Planning for next time together.
- Closing Prayer.

# From Admitted to Certified Candidate

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At this stage of mentoring, focus on call and being United Methodist clergy. Recommendations:

- Use *Answering the Call* as outlined above.
- In a mentor group, take turns sharing call stories and reflecting together.
- Discuss the meaning of set-apart ministry, the difference between licensed and ordained, and itinerancy.
- Reflect together on “Why the United Methodist Church?”
- Provide guidance to the process to become a certified candidate.

# From Certified Candidate to Local Pastor or Provisional Member

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At this stage of mentoring, focus on the set-apart ministry of the licensed or ordained:

- Refine call to set-apart ministry licensed or ordained.
- Reflect on the practice of ministry.
- Review and reflect on the historical questions found in paragraph 324.7.
- Provide guidance to the process to become a a licensed local pastor or provisional member.

# Candidacy Mentor Report Forms

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Forms are found online at [www.vaumc.org/dcomresources](http://www.vaumc.org/dcomresources).

The form is needed for the candidate to become a certified candidate, and annually to be renewed as a certified candidate.

It is not an evaluation or a recommendation.

Be descriptive of candidate's discernment journey.

Report form is to be shared with the candidate. There should be no surprises.

See pages 172-173 of *Answering the Call* for tips.



# Path to Become A CERTIFIED CANDIDATE

- A professing member of a UMC or baptized member of campus ministry for 1 year.
- Graduation from an accredited high school or certificate of equivalency.
- Read and review *The Christian as Minister* or *Blessed Wrestling* with local pastor or campus minister.
- Pastor submits report to certify meeting with candidate.
- Write a call statement.
- Complete Biographical form 102.
- Write to DS and dCOM chair, requesting an interview to be admitted as a candidate.
- Meet with dCOM to be admitted as a candidate. If admitted, continue checklist.
- Register with General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
- dCOM assigns a Candidacy Mentor. Meet at least 3 times using *Answering the Call*.
- Candidate is invited to Unity. (Checklist tracked in Unity).
- Prepare written responses to questions in paragraph 310.1d. Share with S/PPRC.
- Meet with S/PPRC Committee of local church (or equivalent) for recommendation.
- Charge Conference approval. Complete Declaration of Candidacy form 104.
- Prepare written responses to questions in paragraph 310.2a.

## Questions? Contact the Center for Clergy Excellence

Jessie Colwell, Director of Clergy Excellence, [jessiecolwell@vaumc.org](mailto:jessiecolwell@vaumc.org)  
 Jason Stanley, Director of Call & Candidacy, [jasonstanley@vaumc.org](mailto:jasonstanley@vaumc.org)  
 Lyn Harding, Program Admin Coordinator, [lynharding@vaumc.org](mailto:lynharding@vaumc.org)





# Path to Become A CERTIFIED CANDIDATE

- Complete Candidate's Disclosure form 114, notarized.

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- Expanded Background Check.

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- Complete Medical Report form.

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- Complete Psychological Assessment.

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- Submit top 5 Gallup StrengthFinders.

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- Attend Candidacy Summit.

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- Candidacy Mentor Report.

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- Schedule dCOM meeting.

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- Interview with dCOM.

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- If certified, continue meeting with Candidacy Mentor.

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- Discern next step - licensed local pastor or provisional member?

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- Review checklist for becoming a licensed local pastor or provisional member.

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# Become a Licensed Local Pastor

- Be a certified candidate.
- Continue meeting with Candidacy Mentor.
- Prepare sermon manuscript & preaching video.
- Record sermon.
- Prepare written sermon description.
- Prepare written responses.
- Schedule dCOM meeting.
- Meet with dCOM prior to April 15.
- If recommended, prepare to attend Licensing School.
- Attend Licensing School.



# Path to Become A PROVISIONAL MEMBER

Be a licensed local pastor or become a certified candidate for at least one year by July 1 of the year in which you are applying for provisional membership.

Complete a bachelor's degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate. Exceptions to undergraduate degree may be made for missional purposes, but at least 60 credit hours must be completed.

## For those pursuing ordination as an elder

Complete a Masters of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary by May of the year in which you are applying. Your classes must meet the Educational Requirements as set forth by the UMC & VAUMC.

**or**

Local pastors can meet this requirement by serving four years of full-time service and completing the Course of Study & Advanced Course of Study.

## For those pursuing ordination as a deacon

Complete a Masters degree from an accredited seminary by May of the year in which you are applying. Your classes must meet the Educational Requirements as set forth by the UMC & VAUMC.

**or**

Complete a master's degree in the area of specialized ministry in which the candidate will serve by May in the year in which you are applying. Your classes must meet the Educational Requirements as set forth by the UMC & VAUMC.

**or**

Follow the professional certification process as outlined in paragraph 324.5 in the BOD. Your classes must meet the Educational Requirements as set forth by the UMC & VAUMC.

Requirements continued on pg. 2

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# Path to Become A PROVISIONAL MEMBER

**For everyone**

- Apply from July 1-31 through the online jotform application found at <https://vaumc.org/bomapplications/>. Application will include turning in official transcripts.
- Contact the chair of your dCom to schedule a recommendation for provisional membership interview.
- Submit written materials and turn into your dCom via jotform.
- Receive a recommendation for provisional membership from the dCom by October 1.
- Candidate is invited to the Provisional Track in Unity. (Checklist for additional materials tracked in Unity).
- Attend orientation to the provisional application process Zoom meeting.

## Submit the following materials via the Unity Web Provisional Track

- Psychological assessment, if not completed within the past 5 years.
- Medical Report form, if not completed within the previous year.
- EQi (Emotional Intelligence Assessment) and debrief session.
- Field Education or equivalency
- Clinical Pastor Education (CPE) 0.5 units if completed (not due until ordination)

Requirements continued on pg. 3

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# Path to Become A PROVISIONAL MEMBER

**For everyone**

Theological School Recommendation.

Papers on Call, Personal Growth and Development, Practice of Ministry and Theology.

Sign and date the BOM's Plagiarism Policy.

All materials are due the first week in December (date varies by year).

If all materials meet the requirements as set in the application packet a provisional interview will be scheduled for the end of February (dates vary by year).

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