

Instructions from the Board of Ordained Ministry to Candidates for Provisional Membership Written Responses to the Book of Discipline

Each candidate for provisional membership in the Baltimore-Washington Conference must submit written responses to the United Methodist Book of Discipline, as well as additional questions designed by our Examination Committee.

Written submissions must meet or exceed the scoring rubric outlined in the Written Examination Rubric contained on the website, as determined by the Examination Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Pay special attention to the formatting requirements for your written work, as they are very specific. We encourage you to use the **on-line template**, found on the Provisional Member website, set up according to the following guidelines: Provide type-written answers to the questions, using 12 point type, the Times New Roman font and print on standard weight paper. All margins must be 1 inch. Please print on only one side of each page. Each page must be numbered at the bottom right, and the text must be double spaced. Type your name on the top right-hand corner of each page. Type the text of each question at the top of the page. Begin each question on a new page. ***Please limit your responses to no more than 3 pages per question.***

- Upload your completed document in Microsoft Word format through the Application Portal. Your complete Written Examination submission must be uploaded through the Application portal by the deadline in order to be accepted for review.

All citations refer to the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline

I. Call and Ordination

¶324.7 (k), (o)

(k.) Explain your understanding of the distinctive vocations of the Order of Elders and the Order of Deacons. How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a provisional deacon or provisional elder in the United Methodist Church?

(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, social responsibility, faithful sexual intimacy expressed through fidelity, monogamy, commitment, mutual affection and respect, careful and honest communication, and growth in grace and knowledge and love of God. What is your understanding of this agreement?

PLUS this additional question:

Q1. (answer only a or b)

Q1a **For candidates on the Elder Track only:** As a commissioned minister seeking ordination as an Elder, will you go where you are sent? Are you willing to serve that charge to the best of your ability? How will you accommodate family needs if necessary?

Q1b **For Candidates on the Deacon Track only:** In your specific ministry, how are you connecting, or how do you expect to connect, the world and the church and the church and the world?

II. Leadership

¶324.7 (g) (h) (l)

(g) How do you intend to affirm, teach, and apply Part III 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?

(l) Describe your understanding of *diakonia*, the servant ministry of the church, and the servant ministry of the provisional member.

PLUS these 4 additional questions

Q2. Clergy must establish and honor boundaries in their interactions with people in their congregation. Discuss your understanding of these boundaries and why they are important. How will you establish boundaries while still fulfilling your calling in ministry?

Q3. Give an example of a conflict you've had to address. Describe how you handled it; what the outcome was; and what you learned from it (e.g. what did you do right, what would you do differently, etc.).

Q4. Describe an occasion when you helped someone with a spiritual issue, helped them grow in faith, or shared with them the gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that was life-changing for them.

Q5. What role do The Social Principles have in the UMC and in your understanding and behavior as a candidate for ordained ministry in the UMC? What will you do if your own position on an issue differs from what is found in the Social Principles?

III. Polity of the Church

¶324.9 (i) (j) (m) (n)

- (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.
- (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.

PLUS these two additional questions

Q6. How are Deacons and Elders deployed by the United Methodist Church?

Q7. The Baltimore-Washington Conference has policies related to pastoral transitions, i.e., moving from one appointment to another. Where do you find these policies? Summarize in your own words the key points. What are the potential repercussions for the congregation, the new pastor and the previous pastor if these policies are violated?

IV. THEOLOGY OF GRACE

¶324.9 (b) (c) (f) (p)

- (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?
- (f) What is your understanding of the kingdom of God; the Resurrection; eternal life?
- (p) Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.

V. THEOLOGY OF GOD

¶324.9 (a) (d) (e)

- (a) Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological, and historical sources.
- (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?