



CoM Discernment Working Group Presentation of Ordination Paper & Worship

The Committee on Ministry aims to partner with you in your ongoing discernment of your ministry. We hope to be able to see you in all of the roles of ministry. Ordination is a step in a life-long process, not an end goal in itself.

THE ORDINATION PAPER

The ordination paper is expected to be 4000 words, (16 pages), and will:

- Communicate a sense of you as pastor, in your roles as student, pastoral counselor, worship leader, priest, preacher and prophet.
- Demonstrate your competence in writing, the narrative and development of your call to ministry, the coherence of your theology, and your self-awareness.
- Include your experience of call to ministry and articulate your understanding of theological concepts, as they relate to the Christian life.
- Express your theological understanding of Christian ministry framed by *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry*.
- Focus on some key theological concepts, such as: Nature of God, Ordination, Ecclesiology, Trinity, Jesus Christ, Sacraments, the Holy Spirit, the Sacraments. Please delve more deeply into the topics that are significant to you.

The following questions can help you think about *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry*. Do not answer all the questions. Use them as guide to reflect theologically on your ministry. Give examples of how *the Marks* are evident in your life and ministry.

Exhibiting A Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practices

- What is your experience of call: in relationship to God, the church and your community?
- What spiritual practices have helped you live a life of discipleship and prayer?
- What is your understanding of covenantal accountability?
- How does the Holy Spirit find expression in Christian worship in historic and current practice?

Nurturing UCC Identity

- How do you see the purpose, mission and vision of the United Church of Christ in its expression of the local and global work of the church? How do you personally live this out?
 - Purpose - Love with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.
 - Mission - United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all and seek justice for all.
 - Vision - United in Christ's love, a just world for all.
- What is your history with the UCC, as a member of a congregation and as a leader within communities of faith? How have you grown spiritually as a result?
- How does your Christian commitment call you to value and participate in ecumenical and interfaith activities?

Building Transformational Leadership skills

- In what ways do Christ's example and the Spirit's movement inspire your effective leadership and growth within the church?
- What principles of life-long learning encourage leadership development in yourself and others?
- How are administrative and practical needs of the church forms of ministry?
- What is your role in public spaces as a witness to God's redeeming work?

Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

- What is your understanding of Scripture and the nature of Biblical revelation?
- What role does scriptural study play in your preparation for ministry and worship?
- What is the "good news" you are called to proclaim?
- The Christian tradition is long and varied. How have you been shaped by aspects of the tradition, and what do you find particularly compelling to honor and build upon?
- What role has Faith Formation played in your life, and how do you see it needing to be expressed in the life of the church?
- How do you understand the Sacraments? What do they mean to you and to the life of a gathered community of faith?
- Where do you experience "the holy"?

Caring For All Creation

- How is the church called to be a healing community? How are you a part of it?
- How is that call expressed in ministry to those outside the local church? to all God's creation?
- How do you care for yourself, find the help you need? How does that aid your ministry?

Participating in Theological Praxis

- What is your process for theological reflection?
- What are your sources for a variety of theological reflections?
- With what theologians do you resonate and why?
- How does your theological reflection inform your teaching, preaching and leadership?

Working Together for Justice and Mercy

- What does the ministry of Jesus Christ demonstrate about confronting injustice and oppression?
- How do you demonstrate leadership in extending the radical hospitality of God?
- In what ways do you discover and address implicit bias in all ministry settings?
- How do you embody the UCC Ministerial Code of Ethics?

Strengthening Inter- and Intra-Personal Assets

- How do you maintain a healthy sense of self shaped by God, community and life experience?
- How do you show respect for the dignity of all people?
- What importance does exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity have in ministry?

Resources for writing your paper include COM, your advisor, and the Marks of Ministry. You may also find helpful a text on systematic theology, and other texts or writers who inspire you.

Take care with your paper; it is a professional document. Depth of topics is more important than breadth of topics. Choose a style manual and use it consistently. Ask another person to proofread your paper. COM may ask to see more than one version of your paper

THE ORDINATION INTERVIEW WORSHIP SERVICE

“a worship service of no more than 30 minutes designed and conducted by the candidate, including an original sermon by the candidate”

Beyond these basic requirements candidates for ordination have considerable room for creativity. This service is an essentially abbreviated Worship service and can follow a similar outline such as:

- Opening music/prelude
- Call to Worship/ Opening Prayer
- Hymn
- Scripture Reading (s)
- Homily/Sermon
- Prayers
- Hymn
- Benediction
- Closing music/postlude

All of these elements need not be included nor ordered in this way. There is room for creativity and ritual. Be authentic.

This worship experience will provide COM some idea of how you envision and lead worship and how you preach.

No musicians/accompanists are provided. You are welcome to provide musicians as you wish.

Bulletins are not necessary. Should you decide to provide bulletins you will need 27 copies for COM + any guests/supporters that may be your guests.

A “field trip” to the church where the service will be held, prior to the date of interview is a good idea. Or plan to arrive early so you may familiarize yourself with the worship space and work out logistics.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of the Discernment Working Group or the General Minister if you have further questions about the worship service and/or ordination interview.

Blessings as you pen, prepare and preach!