

**Living Water Association, ONE (Ohio NorthEast) Heartland Conference UCC**  
**Committee on Ministry Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 3, 2020 • 9.30 am • Zoom**

**Committee on Ministry – Ordination Review for Halldor Gudmundsson**

Chaired by Bentley DeBardelaben-Philips and Doris Powell

Absent: Sam Greening, Sprite Johnson, Steve Johnson, Luke Lindon, Bill Smith.

Minutes of June 20, 2020 (Andy Lang ordination review) accepted by consensus.

**Early discussion:**

Appreciation of LWA doing an online worship service. Hopes that there will be more in the future.

**Devotion** on Queen Esther *For such a time as This* by Doris Powell – A time for discernment.

**Worship** A wonderful worship which included folks from Iceland and Norway. The Hymn Here I am, Lord was newly translated into Icelandic and performed perhaps for the first time for this service.

**Questions**

Asked about difference between spiritual and religious

How the story of God has evolved within you?

Why UCC and not ELCA?

The ELCA is not where I am theologically at this time. The UCC is a better fit.

Why now to Parish Ministry?

This is the call I have discerned. With all of my experience I believe that I can offer a great deal to any congregation. I do realize that not all congregations are like Pilgrim in Tremont where I am a member. Because of my evangelical background and that mindset, I believe that I can pastor in many different settings.

Questions on environmental justice: I understand the need for environmental concerns and greening. I personally haven't worked much in this area. It isn't a major area at Pilgrim.

**Our conversation**

Grateful for someone so grounded and astute were some of the comments.

**Decision** Ordination pending call – unanimous.

**Discussion on Alternate paths of Ministry**

Led by the Reverend Dr Renee C Jackson –Minister for Ministerial Formation

Alternative pathways – use terminology **Multiple Paths** because none is superior to the other.

Nayiri issues – concerns. How best to handle folk from other denominations ordained by their congregation as opposed to denomination.

Answer: Can't accept local church ordination. There isn't anyway to check their credentials and their education. We need to accept them on our terms and with our process.

Our MID is long. Licensed ministers may have years of experience but now must start from the beginning.

Answer: Not just their credentials should be taken into account but a thorough use of the Marks should be developed and established.

### **More Comments by Rev Renee**

First we need to make relationship of MID for as long as necessary as for guidelines in a particular association. Their experience should be a factor. The Marks show their present awareness and then go from there.

Working groups need to communicate better. See where growth has taken place in the Marks assessment. There should be multiple assessments along the way – continuing formation and discernment. There are multiple ways to assess in any point in time. Need to give everyone grace and some people need to be pushed.

How are we uniquely called? There is a particularity in one's call. We're tasked to walk with people in their call.

A therapists seeking ordination needs psychological evaluation – MIDs shouldn't dictate our process.

**Members' comments** We should have a more embraceable format for both MIDs and COM.

The Marks are an assessment tool, an evaluation, especially for those who have been in 10yrs or more.

We need an unbiased process because we are apples, oranges pears and grapes –  
Rev Renee responded: One size doesn't fit all.

CPE was an example talked about a lot.

Rev Renee said that some can have the experience of CPE without actually taking the course.

What are our basics? We need clarification.

Rev Renee there is a standard for all candidates. The Marks are the basis. If we can't have excellence at least competence in each mark We should not have exorbitant hoops because that's the way they've always been done.

If association requires CPE then what is the next closest thing especially if time and money is an issue?

I don't think we can use our own experience to determine requirements.

Benefits with one on one supervision. (CPE and other matters)

Mentors are also a significant place of support/formation for newly ordained clergy who are in their first call.

We need to train mentors to be mentors

We have required alternative path people in the past to have supervised ministry experiences.

Many of us struggle with being a welcoming church for various ministries. We do believe in the priesthood of all believers. We do accept multiple paths and value of life experience. Some ministers are outraged though and feel that this is minimizing all their work and long years of study. They now feel that none of that means anything if we ordain people without a seminary education.. We need to hear this voice as well. There are hard feelings to all of this. We need to acknowledge that there is a struggle with this going on, that there is real grappling.

Rev Renee responded: Why do we want to hold onto an elitist idea? Who was that standard made for? Women? People of Color? Is it because that's the way we've always done it when God may not care. There's an inherent presumption that an alternative path is not doing training and education. God calls who God calls. We are to help them with their call. Credentialing comes through your Association. Some one on a non-traditional path may eventually wind up going to seminary. It's not either/or it's both/and.

Final: We'll continue the process on multiple paths and we will do better training at our December COM meeting.

Notes taken by David Durkit (Soon to be David Herrin)