

Appendix C

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY PAPER OUTLINE

The Spiritual Journey and Call paper

This paper tells your story, your experience of God, faith and spirit throughout your life as well as the story of your call.

When Christians talk about a "call," we mean that God is calling us—in our mind and heart—to take an action or make a choice with our lives. The Latin word for "call" —*vocatio*—is the root of a word often used to describe a call that leads us into a way of life: a "vocation."

A call to ministry includes the community's recognition of and calling forth gifts for ministry. One of the distinguishing aspects of ministry in the United Church of Christ is the affirmation that ministerial leadership is always defined by an ongoing sacred covenant among the minister, the congregation, and the denomination; thus, ministry is more communal than individual, and the call to Authorized Ministry is always discerned with others.

Your paper can include reflections on the following:

- Your first awareness of God
- Your experience of Church and community
- Your quest for meaning and where God has been in the quest
- The defining moments in your life and how you see God in them
- Experiences of life that reflect love, compassion, justice
- The story of your call – How did you hear God's voice?
- What gifts do you bring to ministry?
- Your understanding of ordination and Authorized Ministry

You can also create a timeline filled with key events, people, places, experiences, etc., and ponder how God has been part of those moments.

Your local church Discernment Support Team can be a valuable resource in clarifying the defining moments of your life that have brought you to the step of seeking Member in Discernment status, as well as the gifts you bring to ministry.