

Appendix L

ORDINATION PAPER GUIDELINES

The ordination paper is its own unique genre of writing. It should reflect your particular sense of call, your lived experience, theological perspective and training. Written with academic rigor and the proper citation of sources, the paper should integrate the work of other theologians and ministry practitioners whose ideas you synthesize into your own ministry and this ordination paper.

The ordination paper is expected to be 4,000-5,000 words, and will:

- Include your call to ministry and understanding of theological concepts as they relate to the Christian life
 - Address these key theological concepts: God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Trinity, the sacraments, scripture, and atonement
 - Also include topics that are significant to you, such as: creation, liturgy, ecclesiology, soteriology, eschatology
 - Depth of topic is more important than breadth of topics
- Use a coherent and consistent academic formatting style for layout and source citations

Additionally, express your theological understanding of effective ministerial leadership in the United Church of Christ as framed by The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers.

MARKS REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR THE ORDINATION PAPER

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 UCC 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?