



Baltimore-Washington Conference

The United Methodist Church

Tips for Mentoring Candidates

(revised 2022)

1. Share the knowledge you've learned from your role as a deacon or elder
2. Share clergy experience (like being a part of an order, a part of a clergy group or lectionary group)
3. Caution them about some of the clergy pitfalls (not taking sabbath, being a "yes" person, not doing self-care, etc.)
4. Share your ordination process
5. Stress the importance of networking so people on DCOM, BOOM, & the cabinet will know who they are (go to meetings as participants, be visible)
6. Explore what servant leadership looks like that includes biblical examples, church examples, & your personal examples
7. Discuss self-advocating (especially as a deacon), diplomacy, picking your battles, humility at times, discussing with a mentor/colleague before responding, etc.
8. For deacon candidates, process what primary/secondary appts are, how to request appts, & the use of covenant agreements
9. Share encouragement for discernment. Consider inviting an elder and/or deacon to one of your meetings to hear about their experience.
10. Encourage their exploration for leadership, like serving on a church committee or conference committee - even attend these meetings (we're Methodists and our meetings are open to all)
11. Read through the [BWC field guide](#) (our guidelines for candidacy)
12. If you observe mental health concerns, encourage counseling (remember, they'll eventually need to do the psych eval)
13. Discuss stress management and organizational skills
14. Explore their theology and Wesleyan theology
15. Discuss seminary requirements & about applying for scholarships, as well as eligibility for MEF as a certified candidate

16. If they need to repair relationships with church leaders in order to get their future support, this is a good time to do so as they may need their recommendations for later in the process
17. Discuss Biblical and Wesleyan understanding of ordination
18. Explain about the different UMC resources like The BOD, The UMH, The BOR, The BOW, websites, social principles, Wesley's sermons & letters, & such (they'll need these for when they write their papers)
19. Explore their church experiences ("tell me more" / "what was that like for you?" / "what might you do differently?")
20. If they're on the deacon track, read sections of the [Margaret Ann Crain book](#) (strongly encouraged for deacon candidates)
21. Encourage them to interview 1-2 deacons and 1-2 elders (or invite one to one of your sessions for 15-30 mins to share)
22. Encourage them to explore the [UMC professional certifications](#) (this can be helpful for deacons, give them another niche)
23. Practice their call story as they'll be required to share it regularly
24. Identify their spiritual gifts, explore their specialized ministries
25. For deacon candidates, have frank conversations about deacons finding their own appointments, being the first one to be let go when churches can't afford the additional staff, and sometimes it's best to be trained in something relating to their work as a deacon so they can serve beyond the local church
26. If the person is not set on an ordination track, then try to be more general in their discernment process (so you're not coming off like you're pushing them down a specific path).
27. Discuss the clergy serving at the pleasure of the bishop and how we are to follow the bishop's leadership.
28. Open and close mentoring sessions with prayer (or sometimes do a brief devotional).
29. Model, model, model