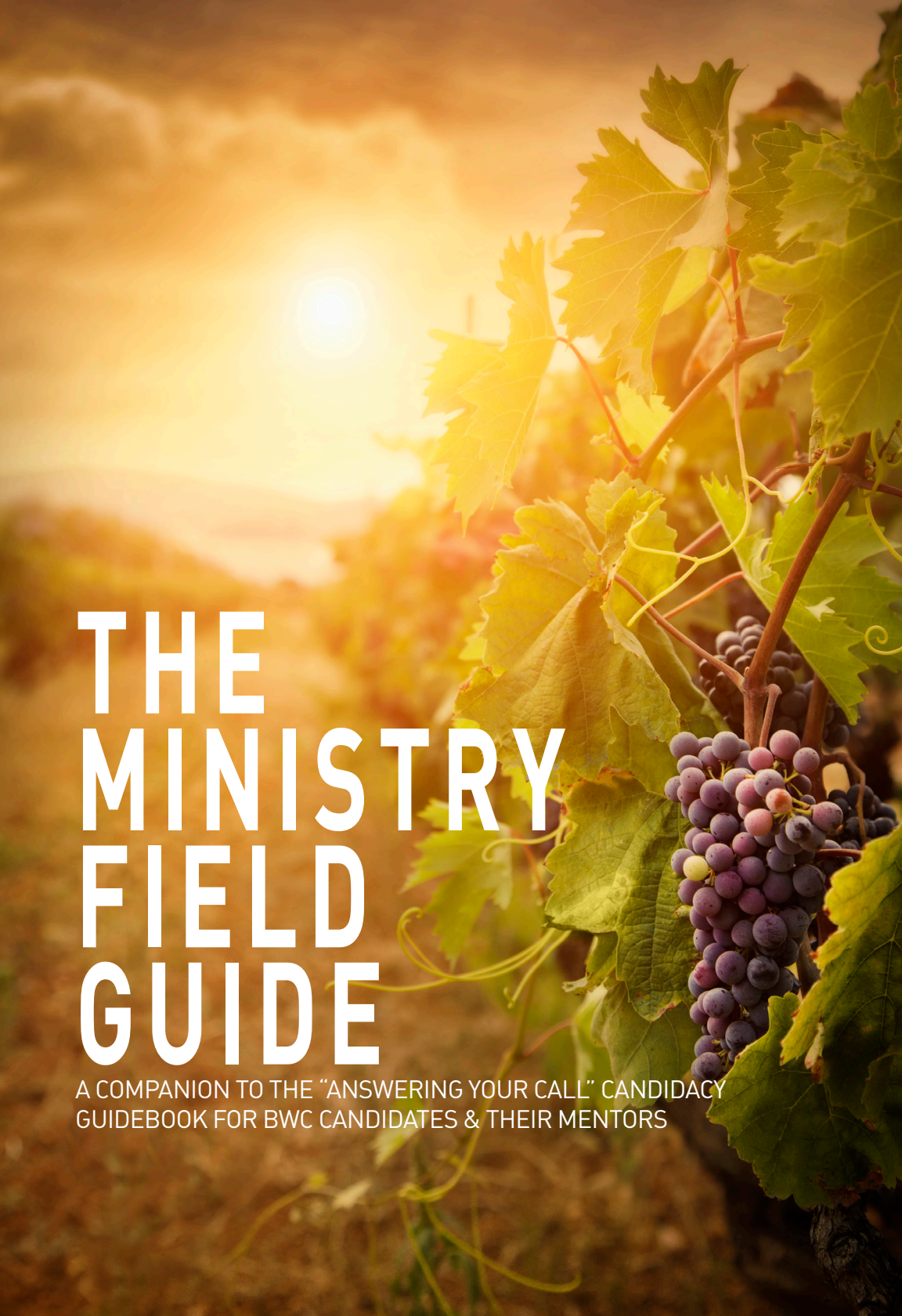

THE MINISTRY FIELD GUIDE

A COMPANION TO THE "ANSWERING YOUR CALL" CANDIDACY GUIDEBOOK FOR BWC CANDIDATES & THEIR MENTORS

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STEP 1

ADMISSION TO THE PROCESS

1. The candidate shall be a professing member in good standing of The United Methodist Church or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist campus ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one (1) year. Graduation from an accredited high school or certificate equivalent (GED) is a prerequisite.

2. The candidate reviews The Christian as Minister with his/her local church pastor, another ordained deacon or elder, or his/her district superintendent. The Christian as Minister (ISBN 978-0-938162-63-6, $9.99 each) is available from Cokesbury.com or by calling 1-800-673-1789. A PDF version (Large Print) is posted online at **https://www.umdisabledministers.org/download/minister.pdf**

3. The candidate submits a letter to his/her district superintendent, with a copy to the chairperson of the district committee on ordained ministry (DCOM), describing his/her sense of call to the ministry of a licensed pastor or ordained clergy. (Paper shall be brief, 1-2 pages)

4. Background Check: The candidate will complete the highlighted portions of the Background Authorization Form found at **https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/center-for-clergy-and-laity-development/** and return the signed copy as an attachment to BOMStaff@bwcumc.org They will receive an"invitation" link to Smart-Trak to complete the background check on-line at the cost of $42. The report will become available to the DCOM chair for review.

5. At the invitation of the DCOM Chair and/or DCOM Registrar, the candidate proceeds to the BWC Application and Assignment Portal at **https://bwc-umc.smapply.org** to inititate the process by registering their own individual login. The candidate completes Application Stage 1, including Eligibility, Application Information, Statement of Call, notarized Candidate's Disclosure Form (replaces Form 114), and review of Expectations of Leaders. These actions must be completed at least one month prior to the DCOM interview.

STEP 2

INITIAL INTERVIEW

6. Attend Initial Interview with DCOM.

7. If recommended for admission into the candidacy program, the candidate receives from the chair or registrar of the DCOM a letter with the name of their candidacy mentor. If not recommended for admission at this time, the chair of the DCOM sends a letter to the candidate outlining the reasons for the committee's decision.

8. The candidate registers through our on-line interactive web site, UMCARES, by sending their name and contact information to UMCARES@bwcumc.org. The DCOM Chairperson or Registrar will provide the candidate with the name of the Candidacy Mentor and that assigned mentor must be properly enrolled in UMCARES for the process to continue.

9. Once their UMCARES registration is confirmed by the district superintendent and mentor, the candidate will proceed to review the enrollment process outlined on the UMCARES site. The candidate will pay the $75 fee and arrange to pick up a Candidacy Guidebook from the Conference Mission Center.

10. The Candidacy Mentor will initiate the first meeting with the candidate and set up a schedule for working through the Candidacy Guidebook in a way that gives consideration to the candidate's background and experience.

11. Psychological Assessment: The candidate will complete the prerequisites in both the Candidacy and Psychological Assessment tracks of UMCARES, including the Release of Information, Personal Data and EM360. Contact UMCARES@bwcumc.org to schedule the aspects of the psychological examination process. The candidacy mentor will be trained to serve as proctor for the on-line assessments. Following the on-line assessments, the candidate will meet for one clinical interview with the conference psychologist. The conference psychologist will provide their report to the DCOM chair (or designee) with recommendations for the candidate to follow in order to proceed. This feedback session must take place prior to the certification interview. The candidate or his/her local church is responsible for a total payment of $600, made payable to the Conference Treasurer. Payment is due by the time of the feedback session.

STEP 3

PROGRESS TO CERTIFIED CANDIDATE STATUS

12. The candidate's local church Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) receives training from the DCOM. The SPRC interviews the candidate about their call, in light of Wesley's historic questions (BoD Para 310.1.d). If approval is gained by the SPRC, the candidate meets with the Church/Charge conference and must receive 2/3 written vote of Charge Conference to continue. (Use Declaration of Candidacy Form, signed by district superintendent or presiding elder). Please note that this interaction with the SPRC may precede the Initial Interview (Step 2).

13. The Candidacy Mentor completes the BWC Mentor Report, available under Resources on the Board of Ordained Ministry website (**https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/board-of-ordained-ministry/**). The candidate must be consulted and review this report before they add their signature and the report is sent to the DCOM. This report is to be a reflection on insights gained and growth perceived in the candidate during the mentoring process. It is not to make recommendations to the committee.

14. In Application Stage 2, the candidate will upload other requirements prior to their interview for certification, including the following (also found as downloadable forms on the Board of Ordained Ministry website under "Resources," **https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/board-of-ordained-ministry/**):
    a) a completed report from the site visitor;
    b) a completed observation report from the home pastor;
    c) a completed observation report from the chair of the Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations committee; and
    d) the candidate is required to have a medical professional complete the medical summary report (replacing Form 103) and return it to the DCOM.

15. In Application Stage 2, the candidate will submit in writing to the DCOM the following from the Book of Discipline, ¶310.2a:
    a) the most formative experience of their Christian life;
    b) God's call to licensed or ordained ministry and role of the church in their call;
    c) their beliefs as a Christian;
    d) their gifts for ministry;
    e) their present understanding of their call to ministry as elder, deacon or licensed ministry; and
    f) their support systems.

16. The candidate requests an interview with the DCOM when all required documents have been submitted, at least one month prior to the anticipated Certification Interview.

17. The candidate interviews with DCOM for certification. Approval for certification as a candidate for ordained ministry requires a three-fourths written ballot. The candidate is informed of the results in writing.

STEP 4

FOLLOW-UP ON CERTIFICATION INTERVIEW

18. The Candidacy Mentor submits the "Report of Completion" to the Division of Ordained Ministry of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry through the UMCARES system (replaces form 113).

19. The Candidacy Mentor and candidate meet to discuss the interview and results of the meeting with district committee. The Candidacy Mentor and candidate work together to develop a plan for education. Candidates pursuing licensing must enroll in and complete the License to Preach School or have completed one-third of their seminary education at a University Senate-accredited school.

20. The Candidacy Mentor maintains a minimum of four annual meetings with the Certified Candidate until the candidate is licensed or commissioned. An annual report from the mentor is required.

21. Certified candidacy is renewed annually by Charge Conference and district committee on ordained ministry. An annual interview with the DCOM is required. The following documents must be submitted to the DCOM each year for the candidate to be recertified, through the BWC Application and Assignment Portal:
    a) mentor's report;
    b) updated Biographical Information Form;
    c) educational transcripts;
    d) plan for education; and
    e) an annual report from the candidate indicating educational progress, service in the church or other approved service site (if applicable), and growth in spiritual maturity.

Also, a letter of recommendation from his/her district superintendent and DCOM interview form must be completed annually for the candidate's file.

MEF ASSISTANCE:

Certified Candidate Status enables the candidate to apply for financial assistance for their education through the Ministerial Education Fund (MEF).
As of Fall Semester 2018, the reimbursement rates are as follows:

- Course of Study or Advanced Course of Study = $300 per course.
- Send verification of completion of your course to Local Pastor Registrar, Rev. Michael Beiber by email: bwcllpregistrar@gmail.com and allow one month for reimbursement.
- Master's-level Degree (or UM required courses) = $350 per credit hour.
- Details on how to apply for MEF funds are contained in the the MEF application packet, located on-line on the BWC website at **https://www.bwcumc.org/ministries/center-for-clergy-and-laity-development/**

Upon Certification, candidates are expected to choose the track of Local Pastor, Deacon, or Elder. Progress from this point is determined by this choice.

OPTION A

FOR THOSE SEEKING LICENSING AS A LOCAL PASTOR:

1. If the Certified Candidate is seeking licensing for pastoral ministry, an interview for licensing may be conducted on the same day as the certification interview. The candidate must submit the following:
   One sermon on Video along with the sermon manuscript for that sermon.
   (See specific directions in the BWC Application portal)

2. Through the BWC Application Portal, submit written responses to the following questions (3-5 pages)
   1. What is the meaning and significance of the Sacraments?
   2. Talk about the nature of the Kingdom of God and then use a biblical parable to illustrate one aspect of the Kingdom.
   3. What is your understanding of the Wesleyan concept of divine grace?
   4. How will you discern and implement God's vision for your ministry setting?

3. The candidate interviews with the DCOM (¶315.2.c) and may be recommended to the Board of Ordained Ministry for licensing.

4. The license to preach is granted only to those who have received an appointment to serve as a local pastor. Candidates who no longer are serving under an appointment must return their license to the district superintendent. (¶320.1)

5. Full-time local pastors shall complete four courses annually in the Course of Study, with a maximum of eight years to complete. (¶319.3) OR Part-time local pastor shall complete at least two courses annually in the Course of Study, with a maximum of twelve years to complete. (¶319.3) OR Student pastors must be enrolled in a college, university, or seminary approved by the University Senate and must be making adequate annual progress in their educational program. (¶318.3)

6. Licensed local pastors shall meet annually with the DCOM to be continued in their status as local pastors. Required for this action are (a) a completed local pastor's interview form, (b) a completed mentor's report,(c)a letter of recommendation by his/her district superintendent, and (d) a current transcript documenting their progress in the Course of Study. Local pastors must be making adequate progress in the Course of Study or in seminary in order to be continued in this status.

OPTION B

RECOMMENDATION FOR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP

1. Candidates who hold or will complete at least a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary (or, for those in the Deacon track, the appropriate Master's degree), have been a certified candidate for at least one year, and have demonstrated his or her gifts for ministry and service (to the satisfaction of the DCOM) are eligible for recommendation to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry for Provisional Membership. (¶324.1-2)

2. Graduate Requirements: The BWC requires candidates for Provisional Membership to have completed an MDiv degree (or, for those in the Deacon track, the appropriate masters degree) with 27 required credits in Old Testament; New Testament; systematic theology; church history; mission of the church in the world; evangelism; worship/liturgy; United Methodist doctrine, polity and history; and ethics. Please note: the ethics requirement is an additional requirement in the Baltimore-Washington Conference, beyond the Basic Graduate Theological Studies required by the denomination.

3. Candidates seeking recommendation by the DCOM for Provisional Membership may be interviewed by the DCOM during their second-to-last year of seminary. An official transcript must be provided as well as a plan for completing their degree during that conference year.

4. Candidates must submit a sermon to the Board of Ordained Ministry's Sermon Review Committee. This sermon may be submitted up to one year prior to interviewing with the committee. The sermon must receive a passing grade for the candidate to be recommended for Provisional Membership.

5. Candidates must submit to the BoOM Biblical Study Review Committee the lesson plan for a Bible Study that has actually been led by the candidate. The study must receive a passing grade for the candidate to be recommended for Provisional Membership.

6. Candidates shall submit to the DCOM, in writing, answers to the questions found in Par. 324.9a-p at least one month prior to the interview.

7. Candidates shall interview with the DCOM regarding written answers and readiness for ministry. The vote to recommend must pass by a ¾ majority.

8. Candidates will be contacted by the Provisional Member Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry regarding the requirements and deadlines in order to be examined by the BoOM for Provisional Membership and Commissioning.

OPTION C

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FOR LICENSED LOCAL PASTORS SEEKING ORDINATION

For those Licensed Local Pastors seeking Recommendation for Provisional Membership (and ordination as Full Member Elders): ¶324.6 and ¶322 progress as Associate Member

Local Pastors must have:

1. Satisfied all requirements in ¶324.1-3, 7-14 of the 2016 Book of Discipline;

2. Completed the five-year Course of Study for ordained ministry, of which no more than one-half may be taken by correspondence or Internet; up to one-half of Course of Study may be online courses; and completed "an equivalent program of study embedded in an undergraduate degree at a UM-related college or university;" and

3. Completed an Advanced Course of Study consisting of 32 semester hours of graduate theological study offered by a seminary recognized by the University Senate or its equivalent as determined by GBHEM that shall include United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity.

OCTOBER 2019

MY NEXT STEPS

BWCUMC.ORG/CLERGY-DEVELOPMENT

Executive Minister of Call and Clergy Care:
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Baltimore-Washington Conference
The United Methodist Church