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Southwest Ohio
Northern Kentucky
Association

Member in Discernment Packet

Included in this packet:

Member in Discernment Process

Guidelines for MiD Candidates Completion of the Marks of Ministry

The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the UCC

Rubric for Reading and Media Reflection

Verbatim/Case Study Template



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Member-in-Discernment Process

We are delighted by your interest to pursue UCC ordination in the Southern Ohio Northern Kentucky Association. Verified membership in a local UCC church for at least one year precedes official entry into the MiD process. Entry must be approved by the MiD committee who function as a “team” and will be identified as the MiD team in this document. Step 1a. details how to request entry into the MiD process. Steps 2 – 5 offer an outline of the MiD process completed fully by candidates before ordination. Completion verifies competency to effectively demonstrate the Marks of Ministry and readiness to meet an ecclesiastical council. This process may span a minimum of one year to a maximum of seven years. The following items will be compiled into a portfolio.

Step 1 a.) To request admission into the MiD candidate process, submit the following to the MiD Chair

a) Local Church Membership _____ date _____

b.) three letters of recommendation: pastor of your church, governing body/council of your church, a person (not a relative) who can speak to your character.

c.) Your personal spiritual journey

Step 2 When the MiD team advises you in writing that you have been accepted into the MID program, you are responsible to schedule your Mid-West psychological evaluation. Consult the SONKA office before scheduling this evaluation. **There will be a cost that we recommend be shared by you, your church, and SONKA.**

Step 3 Build your Portfolio, composed in part of MiD team verification you have completed each of the Marks of Ministry by demonstrating your effective ministry practice and understanding of each Mark. The MiD team will meet with you periodically upon your request [at least annually] to discuss your progress in your process and to engage conversation with you when you bring presentations of each Mark to MiD team meetings. The MiD team will consult with you to verify you completed a Mark and will discuss additional development needed when a Mark is not yet fully met. An assigned MiD team member will be your advisor to support preparation and formation. Your portfolio will include: verified completion of each Mark, your Mid-West evaluation, official academic transcripts, continuing education certificates, internships, mentoring programs, and CPE individual and educator evaluations, and entry paperwork.

Step 4 The MiD team highly recommends CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) in your MiD preparation. Notify the MiD team to discuss how you will complete an alternate option [Mark Five - 2] if a hardship reason precludes you from engaging one unit of CPE.

Step 5 You will write an ordination paper consisting of three parts: part one is theological perspectives, part two is understanding history, theological roots, polity and practice of the United Church of Christ, part three is how one’s ordained ministry informs the practice of ministry. This paper should be no less than 12 pages or more than 20 pages in length doubled spaced in 12 point print.



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Guidelines for MiD Candidates' Completion of the Marks of Ministry

The MiD process supports candidates to competently demonstrate each Mark of Ministry of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ. These guidelines are offered to equip you to prepare, present, and discuss with the MiD team your progress in your process to competently complete each Mark on your path to ordination.

Mark One: Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

Share your call story in detail, including your ministry discernment in your current setting. Engage the MiD team in conversation about your call and current process.

Mark Two: Nurturing UCC Identity

1. Verify completion of a UCC History and Polity course.
2. Attend a UCC wider church event annually.
3. Talk with the MiD team about why you are a member of the UCC.
4. Provide a letter of UCC church membership for at least one year and three letters of recommendation. [submitted at time of request to enter MiD process]

Mark Three: Building Transformational Leadership Skills

Provide a clearly detailed account of a specific recent project, ministry or educational opportunity that communicates how you lead and how you equip others.

Name ministry skills you utilized and how you will use what you learned to guide future ministry.

Mark Four: Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

1. Present a written or recorded sermon; describe your preparation, Scripture choice, & resources.
2. Submit a transcript of completed courses in homiletics, church history, Old & New Testament.

Mark Five: Caring for All Creation

1. Tell the MiD team about your self-care/ internal wellbeing process.
2. Submit ACPE student & educator evaluations from one CPE unit OR regularly discuss your pastoral care ministry with your MiD advisor and present two case studies at MiD team meetings.

Mark Six: Participating in Theological Praxis

Discuss your understanding and application of the UCC Ministerial Code in your ministry.

Discuss your ecumenical and interfaith participation, advocacy, and partnerships.

Mark Seven: Working Together for Justice and Mercy

Describe three distinct settings/events in your ministry context and your pastoral leadership approaches in each setting to: confront injustice and oppression, practice the radical hospitality of God, **OR** overcome explicit and implicit bias in the life of the church.

Mark Eight: Strengthening Inter- and Intra-personal Assets

Attend a UCC Boundary Training/ Clergy Excellence event at least every three years. Read *Covenant* by Jane Fidler Hoffman [UCC Resources].

Discuss perspectives, meaning, & implications for ministry.



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Manual on Ministry

MARKS OF FAITHFUL AND EFFECTIVE AUTHORIZED MINISTERS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

EXHIBITING A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION AND ONGOING SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

- Loving God, following Jesus Christ, and being guided by the Holy Spirit; living a life of discipleship.
- Praying actively and nurturing spiritual practices.
- Being called to ordained ministry by God and the Church.
- Continuing discernment of one's call in community.
- Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith.
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship.

NURTURING UCC IDENTITY

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ (John 17:21).
- Holding active membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.
- Participating in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, General Synod, and global ministries.
- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity, and theology.
- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ: continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives.

BUILDING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church.
- Witnessing in the public square to God's redeeming power.
- Performing necessary and appropriate administrative tasks.
- Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning.

ENGAGING SACRED STORIES AND TRADITIONS

- Exhibiting knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament.
- Maturing in effective proclamation and preaching.
- Understanding the history of the Christian Church, from biblical times forward.
- Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness.
- Leading faith formation effectively across generations.
- Holding the Holy with integrity especially as represented in the Sacraments.



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CARING FOR ALL CREATION

- Nurturing care and compassion for God’s creation.
- Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness.
- Practicing self-care and life balance.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Attending to one’s own spiritual and pastoral care, including engagement in supervision as appropriate.
- Stewarding the resources of the Church.

PARTICIPATING IN THEOLOGICAL PRAXIS

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one’s sense of ministerial identity.
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching, and ecclesial and community leadership.
- Articulating a theology and practice of ministry consistent with the UCC Manual on Ministry.
- Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships of the UCC.
- Experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives.
- Embodying the UCC Ministerial Code.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression.
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God.
- Identifying and working to overcome explicit and implicit bias in the life of the Church.
- Understanding community context and navigating change with a community.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence.

STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Respecting the dignity of all God’s people.
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.



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Rubric for Reading and Media Reflection

To support your process toward ordination, the MiD team may recommend your reading of selected books/articles/online publications, and/or viewing of other media resources. We look forward to sharing conversation with you about your reading or viewing, your self-reflection that may have been prompted, practical ministry application, and responses to the material.

We invite you to consider the following focus points and the perspectives you want to discuss with the MiD team after your reading /viewing. You're welcome to bring a written summary if you wish.

1. What did you learn by reading or viewing recommended resources?

- *What did you learn that was new? Did the resource invite you to consider new perspectives?*
- *Did the resource stir up any feelings about your present or anticipated ministry site/practice?*

2. What insights did you have about yourself as a minister when you engaged this resource?

- *Did you gain any new insights or awareness of yourself as a minister in relationship w/others?*
- *Did the resource invite or challenge you to consider making any internal or practical changes?*

3. Practical ministry application

- *How might this resource impact your growth and learning in your MiD process?*
- *How can you apply one or more themes in this resource in practical, pastoral relationships?*

4. Response to the material's content and perspective

- *What did you like about the resource? How does it resonate with your viewpoints/approach?*
- *What seemed irrelevant, impractical, or contrary to your call and/or ministry practice? Why?*

Most importantly, what would you like to say about your reading or viewing of this resource? What questions do you have for us about our recommendation or response to your perspectives? Would you encourage another MiD Candidate or others to utilize this resource? Why or why not?



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VERBATIM – CASE STUDY TEMPLATE

A Model for SONKA MiD Candidates

All material presented/submitted is strictly confidential: retained in your official SONKA file. All copies distributed at the MiD Team meeting will be shredded at the close of that meeting.

Use initials or a pseudonym to identify the person who received/participated in your ministry care.

RESPOND IN WRITING /PRINT/TYPING TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TEMPLATE POINTS

MiD Candidate submitting verbatim

Date of verbatim submission to MiD committee

Date of pastoral encounter/ ministry encounter and day of the week

Time of day/evening and duration of visit

Specific Location [examples: your church office, hospital, nursing home, person's home, other site]

Person or persons visited [NOT NAME] [e.g. church member, hospital patient, family, Board member]

How long have you known the person in your current ministerial role? Previous relationship?

Reason for this pastoral encounter/ministry event

Why did you choose to submit this verbatim? to the MiD Team and/ or to your MiD advisor?

Focus for discussion if presented at a MiD committee meeting?

What do you hope to learn presenting and processing this verbatim with your mentor or MiD team?

VERBATIM TITLE



INTRODUCTION to verbatim account

Social location of the person [pastoral care recipient/participant]

Age

Gender

Ethnicity

Description of Home if known

Family/Significant relationships

Central focus points of daily life: include all known [e.g. spouse, children, grandchildren, peers, friends, significant others, home, church activity, employment, retirement, volunteer activities, community organizations, widow, single, hobbies, interests, etc. – noting lack of the above if absence seems significant]

Your observations of the person [physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually]

Your observations of the environment where you are meeting. (identify if you are the pastor, chaplain, or in another role; if you are meeting a church member, family or other person; the reason for your meeting or encounter, and describe the specific environment where you are meeting/ engaging this pastoral event)

Identify, describe & give your impressions in the moment of the person/people in this interaction.

Your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations as you approach the pastoral encounter/ministry event.

A VERBATIM ACCOUNT INCLUDES VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

to protect confidentiality, use *pseudonyms* for persons other than yourself in the verbatim account

- Identify yourself and each verbatim participant using an initial e.g. C = Chaplain, PA = Pastor
- Chronologically number each time a person engages, e.g. C1, PA1, P1(Patient), S1(Spouse)
- Use brackets for nonverbal communication [expressions, body language, position]
- Write your unspoken thoughts, feelings, observations in parentheses (“I felt sad”)

EXAMPLE OF THE ABOVE BULLET POINTS

<u>Person</u>	<u>Verbal conversation</u>	<u>[Brackets] & (Parentheses)</u>
PA1	Hello	[I smile]
PA2	Good morning <i>Susan</i> . I’m glad we can meet	(I am aware I feel anxious when I say I’m glad.)
S1	I need help	[<i>Susan</i> is crying, looking at the floor]



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WRITE YOUR VERBATIM ACCOUNT [What you remember is what is important. Include as much as you can recall, remembering nonverbal communication is as important as verbal communication]

MINIMUM 3 PAGES – MAXIMUM 7 PAGES ACTUAL VERBATIM ACCOUNT

After writing your Verbatim account of the pastoral encounter/ ministry event begin ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT

- **Significance/ meaningfulness of this verbatim encounter**

1. What for you was significant/memorable about this pastoral encounter/ministry event?

1. Self-awareness

1. How did you feel/ think/respond **during** the encounter?
2. How were your feelings/thoughts, responses different from what you expected or assumed?
3. What did you learn [about yourself/ ministry/life] from the person you encountered?

2. Awareness of Others

1. How do you think the person and other participants [if any] felt during this encounter?

3. Theological Reflection

1. What theological themes emerged? [might include justice, forgiveness, peace, hope, love, suffering, dying, etc. etc.]
2. How did your theology impact you, the person, and others in this encounter/event?
3. How were you impacted by the person's and other participants' theology?
4. What did you learn about your practical theology? [your demonstrated theology]

4. Cultural and Community Perspectives

1. How did social location [includes culture, family dynamics, age, personal relationships, race, belief system, gender, sexual orientation, socio economic condition] impact the person?

5. Lessons in Ministry

1. What did you learn about how you practice ministry?
2. What did you learn about yourself as a person in ministry or ministry formation?
3. What are your next steps when/if follow up becomes possible with the person?
4. How/ when did you self-reflect on yourself and your actions? What new actions might you enact in the future based upon your learning from this encounter/event?

6. Evaluation/Recommendations/Goal development

1. How did this experience influence your pastoral identity and ministry formation?
2. How did it equip you to be aware of your strengths and growth edges?