



**Dakotas Conference**  
The United Methodist Church

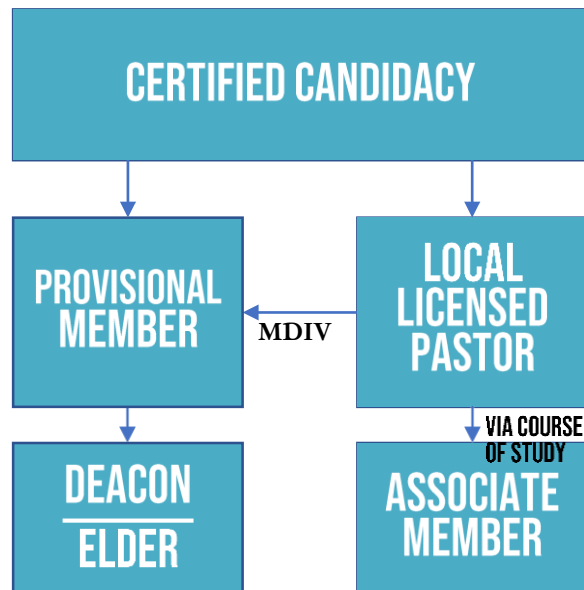
# GUIDE TO CANDIDACY



*This guide is made for anyone who is exploring the possibility of ministry with and through The United Methodist Church, and more specifically, the Dakotas Conference.*

*The guide is divided into six sections which each address the different stages and types of ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. A road map of this process is to the right. It may help you to better understand how someone becomes ordained. Below is a list of important terms and understandings which may help you through this process. Feel free to skip around this guide. It's not made to be read straight through, and not everything is applicable to everyone.*

*We are so happy that you are exploring this avenue of ministry and excited to work with you on this journey!*



## HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

- Associate Member** – Associate members are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.
- Certified Candidacy** – Candidacy phase when a candidate has completed the mentoring process and has met with and been certified as a candidate for licensed or ordained ministry by the district committee on ordained ministry.
- Commissioning** – The credentialing of provisional deacons and elders. The act of the church that publicly acknowledges God’s call and response, talents, gifts and training of the candidate. The church invokes the Holy Spirit as the candidate is commissioned to be a faithful servant leader among the people, to lead the church in service, to proclaim the Word of God and to equip others for ministry.
- Conference** – The governing and administering body for United Methodists in the Dakotas Area.
- Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BoM)** – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in the conference.

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## HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

- Course of Study (CoS)** - The basic theological education program of the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors who are unable to attend an approved seminary. Participants in the program must have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and is serving an appointment.
- Deacon** – Persons called by God, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion and Justice to both the community and the congregation.
- District** – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors.
- District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM)** - The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in each district.
- District Superintendent (DS)** – an elder appointed by the bishop, usually for a six-year term. The DS oversees the ministry of the district's clergy and churches, provides spiritual and pastoral leadership, works with the bishop and others in the appointment of ordained ministers to serve the district's churches, presides at meetings of the charge conference, and oversees programs within the district.
- Elder** – Persons who are ordained to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service; authorized to preach and teach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and to order the life of the Church for mission and ministry.
- General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM)** – The GBHEM is the leadership development agency of the United Methodist Church. It prepares global leaders for a global church and the world. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from the training and candidacy programs.
- Local Licensed Pastor (LLP)** – Persons who are licensed and appointed to preach, conduct divine worship, and perform the duties of a pastor in the context of a specific appointment, but are not ordained as elders. Licensed local pastors are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.
- Ordination** – The church affirms and continues the apostolic ministry through persons empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Provisional Member** – Conference relationship of commissioned ministers (deacons and elders) who are on trial in preparation for membership in full connection in the annual conference as deacons and elders. During that three-year period, they are participants in the Clergy Leadership Academy and under the care of the Conference Board of Ordained. Provisional members have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character, and conference relations of clergy.
- UMCARES** – A website/database which helps track your progress through the candidacy process. It is administered through the Conference Office.

# CERTIFIED CANDIDACY

**Who does this?** *Everyone! Anyone who is going into any kind of ordained ministry must first become a Certified Candidate.*

Check Off:	Who to Talk to:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pastor or DS	<p><u>Learning About Ordained Ministry [Inquiring]</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency</li> <li>2. Be a UM member or an active, baptized participant in a UM ministry setting for at least one year.</li> <li>3. Talk to your pastor or DS and let them know you're thinking about ordained ministry.</li> <li>4. Read <i>The Christen as Minister</i>. You can get a copy from your church or from the conference office. (Recommended)</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DS DCOM Chair Mentor Conference Office	<p><u>Declaring Your Candidacy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request admission to the candidacy process by contacting your DS and providing a written "Statement of Call".</li> <li>2. Your DS or DCOM chair will assign a candidacy mentor</li> <li>3. The Conference Office will register you with GBHEM and UMCARES.</li> <li>4. The Conference Office will send you registration paperwork and will ask for authorization for a background check.</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	UMCARES Mentor Conference Office	<p><u>Completing UMCARES Tracks</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete the UMCARES Candidacy Track               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application Form</li> <li>2. DS Signature</li> <li>3. Mentor Signature</li> <li>4. Admission Fee for Process</li> <li>5. Assessment Interview – (See Psychological Track)</li> <li>6. Local P/SPRC or Equivalent Meeting</li> <li>7. Charge Conference or Equivalent Meeting</li> <li>8. Appearance before DCOM</li> <li>9. Report of Completion</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Complete the UMCARES Psychological Assessment (must be done before DCOM Meeting)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ministerial Assessment Specialist Selection</li> <li>2. Release of Information</li> <li>3. Personal Data Inventory</li> <li>4. Personal/Professional References</li> <li>5. Request of Assessment Materials</li> <li>6. Monitors Agreement</li> <li>7. Incomplete Sentences Blank</li> <li>8. Monitors Testing Situation Report</li> <li>9. Ministerial Assessment Specialist Review</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

To maintain your status, you must

- **Meet with and be approved by the DCOM annually, and**
- **Submit any transcripts or progress of education to the Conference Office.**

# LOCAL LICENSED PASTOR

**Who does this?** *This is for anyone who is called to serve in a pastoral role but does not (yet) have a seminary degree.*

Check Off:	Who to Talk to:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>		<p><u>Prerequisites</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be a <b>Certified Candidate</b> (Page )</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>DS DCOM Chair BOM Conference Office</p>	<p><u>Becoming a LLP</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect with your DS or the Chair of your DCOM to inform them of your intentions to becoming a LLP.</li> <li>2. Successfully complete Licensing School (Held in June) or 1/3 of a Masters of Divinity degree.</li> <li>3. Meet with and be recommended by 3/4 majority vote of your DCOM.</li> <li>4. Receive approval for licensing by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session at Annual Conference.</li> <li>5. Receive an appointment from the Bishop</li> </ol>

*Congratulations! You're A Local Licensed Pastor!*

To maintain your status, you must

- 1) Full time LLP's – Complete four courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within eight years.
- 2) Part time LLP's – Complete two courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within twelve years.

# ASSOCIATE MEMBER *Who does this? This is for anyone who is called to serve in a pastoral role but does not (yet) have a seminary degree.*

Check Off:	Who to Talk to:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>		<p><u>Prerequisites</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be at least 40 years of age</li> <li>2. Have served for at least four years' service as a full time local licensed pastor or equivalent.</li> <li>3. Complete course of study minimum 60 hours toward a B.A. or equivalent</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DCOM Chair BOM Conference Office	<p><u>Becoming a Associate Member</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with and be recommended by <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> majority vote of your DCOM.</li> <li>2. Accept full time continuing appointment</li> <li>3. Satisfy BOM physical health requirements, psychological reports, and background check.</li> <li>4. Meet with and be recommended by <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> majority vote of the BOM.</li> <li>5. Complete written doctrinal examination</li> <li>6. Prepare written sermon based off of suggested scripture verses.</li> <li>7. Receive approval for associate membership by a <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> majority vote of the clergy session at Annual Conference.</li> </ol>

*Congratulations! You're An Associate Member!*

# COURSE OF STUDY

**Who does this?** *This is one of two routes that people called to ordained ministry can take to provisional membership. This track is for those who have first become LLP's and are now working to become Provisional Members.*

Check Off:	Who to Talk to:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conference Office DS DCOM Chair	<p><u>Prerequisites</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 4 years of full time service, or the equivalent</li> <li>2. Satisfy all the requirements of Sections 1-3 and 7-14 of ¶324</li> <li>3. Complete a Bachelor's degree</li> <li>4. Complete course of study with no more than 1/2 taken online or via correspondence</li> <li>5. Complete advanced course of study through a University Senate-approved seminary.</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DCOM Chair BOM Conference Office	<p><u>Becoming a Provisional Member</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Submit autobiographical statement and written doctrinal exam to BOM.</li> <li>2. Present certificate of good health and Candidate's Disclosure Form 114.</li> <li>3. Be interviewed by DCOM and recommended in writing to BOM by 3/4 majority vote of DCOM.</li> <li>4. Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by 3/4 majority vote of BOM.</li> <li>5. Receive approval for provisional membership by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.</li> </ol>

*Congratulations! You're A Provisional Member!*

# PROVISIONAL MEMBER

**Who does this?** *This is one of two routes that people called to ordained ministry can take to provisional membership as a deacon or elder. This track is for those who plan on getting a seminary degree (M.Div.)*

Check Off:	Who to Talk to:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>		<p><u>Prerequisites</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be a certified candidate for at least one year, and up to 12 years maximum.</li> <li>2. Complete a bachelor's degree.</li> <li>3. Complete ½ of M.Div. (deacon or elder) or ½ of master's degree in specialized field plus ½ of Basic Graduate Theological Studies (deacon). Education must be finished within 4 months of Annual Conference.</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>DCOM Chair BOM Conference Office</p>	<p><u>Becoming a Provisional Member</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate gifts for ministry of service and leadership to the DCOM's satisfaction. <input type="checkbox"/> DCOM Votes.</li> <li>2. Submit autobiographical statement and written doctrinal questions to BOM. BOD 2016 ¶324.9 (a-p) (Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent Psychological Evaluation</li> <li>• Health Disclosure (Form 103)</li> <li>• Background and Credit Check (Form 114)</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Site Interview by BOM, either ministry location or school.</li> <li>4. Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by ¾ majority vote of BOM.</li> <li>5. Receive approval for provisional membership by a ¾ majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.</li> </ol>

*Congratulations! You're A Provisional Deacon or Elder!*