



**Dakotas Conference**  
The United Methodist Church

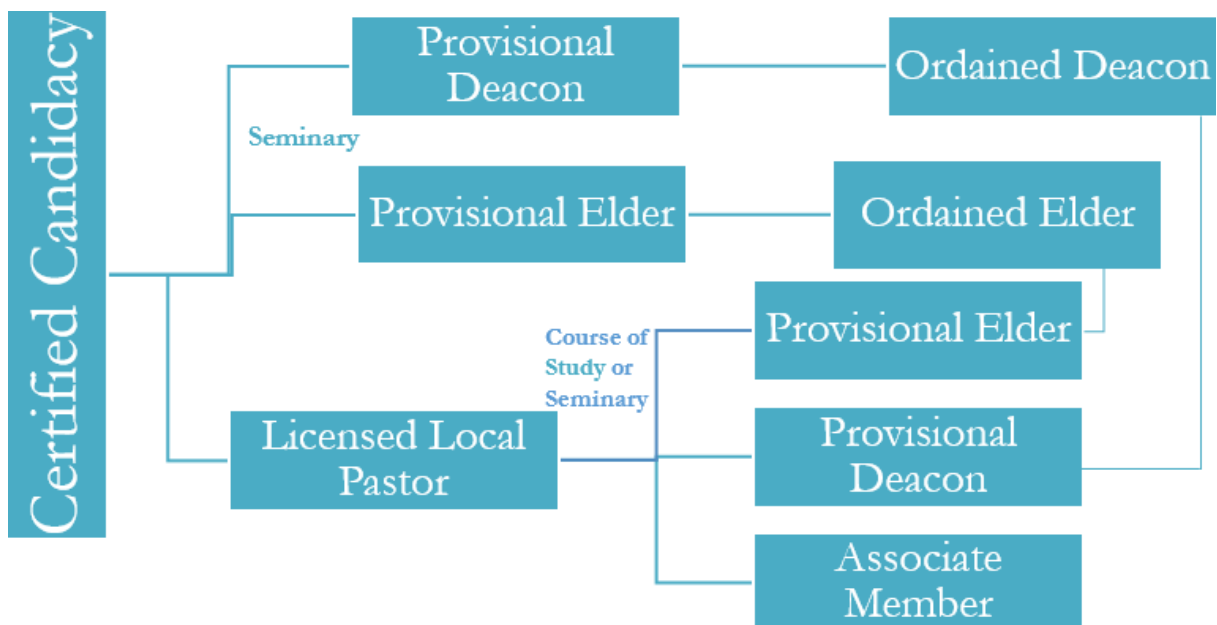
# GUIDE TO CANDIDACY



*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 follows. It may help you to better understand how someone becomes licensed or ordained. The next pages are a list of important terms and understandings which may help you through this process. Feel free to skip around in this guide. It's not made to be read straight through, and not everything is applicable to everyone. If you need help understanding your next step, speak with your Pastor, Chaplain, District Superintendent or call the Office of Leadership Development at the Dakotas Conference (605-996-6552)*

*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.
- Book of Discipline (BOD)** – The book of history, law, doctrine and policies of the UMC, all ¶ numbers refer to the 2020.2024 BOD.
- 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.
- 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.
- Course of Study (CoS)** - The basic theological education program of the GBHEM. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors who are unable to attend an approved seminary. Participants in the program must be certified candidates, attended licensing school, recommended for license by dCOM and 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 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. We have four districts. (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest)
- District Superintendent (DS)** – an elder appointed by the bishop. 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.
- 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. **Ordained:** People who have been through the Ordination process.
- Provisional Member** – Conference relationship of commissioned ministers (deacons and elders) who are 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 BoM. 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.

# CERTIFIED CANDIDACY

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

Candidate To Do:		Others Involved:		Steps:			
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>D.S</i>		<u>Learning About Ordained Ministry [Inquiring]</u>			
<input type="checkbox"/>				1. Obtain a high school diploma or equivalency			
<input type="checkbox"/>				2. Be a UM member or an active, baptized participant in a UM ministry setting for at least one year.			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		3. Talk to your pastor or DS and let them know you're thinking about ordained ministry.			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			4. Read <i>The Christian as Minister</i> . You can get a copy from your church or from the conference office. (Recommended)			
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Staff Parish Relations Com.</i>	<i>Local Charge Conference</i>	<i>Pastor/Campus Ministry Leader</i>	<i>District Superintendent</i>	<i>DCOM Chair</i>	<i>Dakotas Conference Office</i>	<u>Declaring Your Candidacy</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>							1. Write a <b>Statement of Call</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				2. Meet with SPRC, bring your <b>Statement of Call</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>			3. Request admission to the candidacy process by contacting your DS and bring your <b>Statement of Call</b> .
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Your DS or DCOM chair will assign a candidacy mentor and send you the registration paperwork and forms for a background check.
						<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Complete a Psychological Evaluation. Please contact Bea Stucke at <a href="mailto:Bea.stucke@dakotasumc.org">Bea.stucke@dakotasumc.org</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			6. Meet with your local Charge Conference to approve your Candidacy.
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>District Committee on Ministry</i>		<u>Meet with DCOM</u>				
<input type="checkbox"/>			Pre-Requirements for the Meeting				
			<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological Evaluation				
			<input type="checkbox"/> Transcripts				
			<input type="checkbox"/> Background Check Forms				

<input type="checkbox"/>		Agree to live according to the highest ideals of the Christian life, as set forth in ¶101-104 and ¶160-164
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Examination and Approval by the District Committee
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Approval of Certification

*Congratulations! You are A Certified Candidate!*

To maintain your status, you must

- 1) Meet with and be approved by the DCOM annually, and
- 2) 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 have a seminary degree.*

Candidate To Do:	Others Involved:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>		<u>Prerequisites</u> Be a <b>Certified Candidate</b> (Pages 3-4)

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>District Superintendent</i>	<i>District Committee On Ministry</i>	<i>Dakotas Conference Office</i>	<i>Clergy Session of Annual Conf.</i>	<i>Bishop and Cabinet</i>	<u>Becoming a Licensed Local Pastor</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Connect with your DS or the Chair of your DCOM to inform them of your intentions to become an LLP.
<input type="checkbox"/>						Successfully complete Licensing School (Held in June) or 1/3 of a Master of Divinity degree.
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				Meet with and be recommended by 3/4 majority vote of your DCOM.
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		Receive approval for licensing by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session at Annual Conference.
<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive an appointment from the bishop.

*Congratulations! You are 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 licensed local pastoral ministry and has finished their education.*

Candidate To Do:	Others Involved:	Steps:
<input type="checkbox"/>		<u>Prerequisites</u> <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>

Candidate	Conference Office	Site Interview	BOM	Clergy Session	<u>Becoming an Associate Member</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Recent Psychological evaluation (1-3 years).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Background check.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		Submit <a href="#">required application materials</a> by September 1 <sup>st</sup> .
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			Ministry Site Interview by BOM
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>		Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of BOM.
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive approval for provisional membership by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.

*Congratulations! You are an associate member!*

Continuing Education Requirements throughout your career:

- 1) Each clergy person is required to complete 8 continuing education credits per quadrennium.
- 2) There are funds available.

# PROVISIONAL TRACK

## VIA COURSE OF STUDY

**Who does this?** *This track is for those who have first become LLP's and are now working to become Provisional Members through the Advanced Course of Study.*

Candidate To Do:	Others Involved:	Steps:					
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>District Committee on Ministry</i>	<u>Prerequisites</u>					
<input type="checkbox"/>		4 years of full-time service, or the equivalent					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Satisfy all the requirements of Sections 1-4(A.2), 5 and 7-12 of ¶324					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Complete a bachelor's degree					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Complete course of study with no more than 1/2 taken online or via correspondence					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Complete advanced course of study through a University Senate-approved seminary.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continued Meetings with DCOM					
<i>Candidate</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>DCOM</i></td> <td><i>Conference Office</i></td> <td><i>Site Interview</i></td> <td><i>BOM</i></td> <td><i>Clergy Session</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>DCOM</i>	<i>Conference Office</i>	<i>Site Interview</i>	<i>BOM</i>	<i>Clergy Session</i>	<u>Becoming a Provisional Member</u>
<i>DCOM</i>	<i>Conference Office</i>	<i>Site Interview</i>	<i>BOM</i>	<i>Clergy Session</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Be interviewed by DCOM and recommended in writing to BOM by 3/4 majority vote of DCOM.		
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			Recent Psychological evaluation (1-3 years).		
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			Background check.		
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Submit <a href="#">required application materials</a> by September 1 <sup>st</sup> .		
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>		Ministry Site Interview by BOM		
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>		Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by 3/4 majority vote of BOM.		
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive approval for provisional membership by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.		

*Congratulations! You are A Provisional Deacon or Elder!*

To maintain your status, you must

### 3) Clergy Leadership Academy Participation

- a. Attend at least six retreats, plus the 2 Ordination and Commissioning Retreats with the Bishop.
- b. Preach 1 time.
- c. Participating in mentoring

### 4) 3 Years Full-Time Ministry or equivalent

Apply for Ordination by the September 1st before your 8th Annual Conference as provisional or your provisional membership will be discontinued.

# PROVISIONAL TRACK

## VIA SEMINARY

**Who does this?** *This track is for those who plan on getting a seminary degree (M.Div.) on their way to provisional membership.*

Candidate To Do:	Others Involved:	Steps:					
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>District Committee On Ministry</i>	<u>Prerequisites</u>					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Be a certified candidate for at least one year, and up to 12 years maximum.					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Continued Meetings with DCOM					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Complete a bachelor's degree.					
<input type="checkbox"/>		Complete 2/3 of M.Div. (deacon or elder) or 1/2 of master's degree in specialized field plus 1/2 of Basic Graduate Theological Studies (deacon) to apply. Education must be finished within 4 months of the Annual Conference.					
<i>Candidate</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>DCOM</i></td> <td><i>Conference Office</i></td> <td><i>Site Interview</i></td> <td><i>BOM</i></td> <td><i>Clergy Session</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>DCOM</i>	<i>Conference Office</i>	<i>Site Interview</i>	<i>BOM</i>	<i>Clergy Session</i>	<u>Becoming a Provisional Member</u>
<i>DCOM</i>	<i>Conference Office</i>	<i>Site Interview</i>	<i>BOM</i>	<i>Clergy Session</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Demonstrate gifts for the ministry of service and leadership to the DCOM's satisfaction.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Recent Psychological Evaluation (1-3 years).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Background Check.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		Submit <a href="#">required application materials</a> by September 1 <sup>st</sup> .		
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			Ministry Site Interview by BOM		
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>		Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by 3/4 majority vote of BOM.		
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive approval for provisional membership by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.		

*Congratulations! You are A Provisional Deacon or Elder!*

To maintain your status, you must

**5) Clergy Leadership Academy Participation**

- a. Attend at least six retreats, plus the 2 Ordination and Commissioning Retreats with the Bishop.
- b. Preach 1 time.
- c. Participating in mentoring

**6) 3 Years Full-Time Ministry or equivalent**

**7) Apply for Ordination by the September 1st before your 8th Annual Conference as provisional or your provisional membership will be discontinued.**



# ORDINATION TRACK

## Elder and Deacon

**Who does this?** This track is for those who've completed the provisional status.

Candidate To Do:	Others Involved:				Steps:
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>BOM</i>				<u>Prerequisites</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>					Complete the Clergy Leadership Academy retreat requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Finish any follow-up requirements from Commissioning interviews.
<input type="checkbox"/>					Participate in mentoring.
<input type="checkbox"/>					3 years full-time appointed ministry.
<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Conference Office</i>	<i>Site Interview</i>	<i>BOM</i>	<i>Clergy Session</i>	<u>Becoming a Full Connection Member</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Recent Psychological evaluation (1-3 years).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				Background check and health forms.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		Submit <a href="#">required application materials</a> by September 1 <sup>st</sup> .
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			Ministry Site Interview by BOM
<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>		Be interviewed by BOM and recommended to clergy session of the Annual Conference by ¾ majority vote of BOM.
<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	Receive approval for provisional membership by a ¾ majority vote of the clergy session of Annual Conference.

*Congratulations! You are an Ordained Deacon or Elder!*

Continuing Education Requirements throughout your career:

- 1) Each clergy person is required to complete 8 continuing education credits per quadrennium.
- 2) There are funds available.