

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

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[Maintains confidential files: psychological report and background checks.]

SECTION I: PROBATIONARY PROCESS (to be followed by all who are seeking probationary membership including those seeking commissioning, associate membership, and recognition of orders from another denomination).

Requirements for admission to PROBATIONARY MEMBERSHIP (Deacons and Elders) in the North Texas Annual Conference are found in *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2000*, ¶315 and *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2004*, ¶324.

Note: Candidates will follow the process of the *Discipline* under which they were certified as a candidate. However, when answering Disciplinary questions for probationary membership, **candidates should use the questions from the most current *Discipline*** (regardless of year of candidacy).

A. Interview with District Committee on Ordained Ministry:

Each candidate must be interviewed by their District Committee on Ministry and receive a 3/4 vote to be recommended to the Committee on Preparation and Qualifications (P & Q). This interview should be completed before September 1, 2007. The candidate should request that their DCOM Chair forward a letter to the Registrar reflecting the DCOM recommendation.

Candidates should notify their DCOM of their intent to apply for commissioning. Candidates will be asked to complete paperwork in preparation for their interview with the DCOM.

B. By September 15, 2007, Candidates will make a written request to Board of Ministry File Administrator for application for membership in the North Texas Annual Conference.

C. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that a copy of their PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT is on file with the Registrar. Candidates must have an original report forwarded from the testing agency directly to the BOM Registrar. The Committee on Preparation and Qualifications retains the right to require new or additional tests if those submitted are deemed incongruous with standards of the Pastoral Care and Education Center reports. Please note that if the report is five years or more out of date, the candidate may wish to repeat the psychological evaluation prior to application. *It is the candidate's responsibility to verify that the report reaches the Registrar and is acceptable.*

D. Comments on ¶ 315 (2000) and ¶ 324 (2004)

315.1 (324.1) All candidates applying to the North Texas Conference for probationary membership, including those who are seeking recognition of orders from another denomination, must meet the requirements of the North Texas Conference and be recommended by a District Committee on Ordained Ministry in the North Texas Conference.

315.2 (324.2) Each candidate shall have a minimum of two (2) years in a service setting immediately preceding the year of application. This setting shall be determined by the DCOM and approved by the Bishop and cabinet, and provide for mentoring and supervision in theology and practice of servant leadership.

315.9 (324.9) Written answers to the Disciplinary questions should range 20-30 double-spaced pages in length. Each page should be numbered consecutively from beginning to end and include the candidate's name. Please start each question on a new page and keep the order of the questions consistent with that of the most current *Book of Discipline*. The answers should demonstrate the candidate's thinking and understanding and should not extensively quote other sources. Each set of answers must be collated, *but not bound*. Materials may be held together with paperclips or staples only.

E. Additional requirements for written work to be submitted

Each candidate will prepare and submit 14 copies of the following:

1. An autobiographical statement.
2. Two sermons preached before a congregation, with a manuscript or transcript of the preached sermons (14 written copies of each sermon) along with five (5) audiocassette or videocassette tapes, CDs, or DVDs. One sermon is preached on the text of the candidate's choice, the second, Philippians 2:1-11. The sermons should be recorded during delivery in front of a congregation. In addition, the candidate will submit 14 copies of the order of worship for the services in which the sermons were preached.

Note: Persons on the Deacon track may choose to submit the one required sermon and an alternate expression of the Proclamation of the Word. This alternative needs to reflect the candidate's specialized ministry and communicate the candidate's call to Word [i.e. a Bible Study session, a mission trip debriefing session with scriptural content, a significant work (or works) of music integrated into worship]. The candidate will submit five (5) videos or DVDs, 14 written copies of the supporting material [i.e. Bible Study lesson, order of worship, etc.], and a written description of the candidate's experience of living out the call to Word through this particular ministry event.

3. Answers to the questions for probationary membership in The United Methodist Church. Remember to use the most current *Book of Discipline*.
4. Answers to the two additional questions required by the North Texas Conference.
 - a. What is the United Methodist understanding of the process of salvation?
 - b. What is your understanding of itinerant ministry?
5. A full lesson plan and outline of any book of the Bible. The lesson plan should be the candidate's own creation and should be able to be given to another person who could then teach the lessons. Therefore, each lesson should include: statement of purpose, background information on the text, exploration of the text with the group, and application to life. The audience and setting for the study should also be identified.
6. Candidates may choose to submit their Disciplinary questions (& additional NTC questions) early to be read by a member of P & Q. This optional early due date is

October 15, 2007. If the candidate chooses to submit an early draft, these drafts will need to be received by the Registrar no later than the October 15 deadline. Note that submission of an early draft does not guarantee the written work will pass. **Candidates will still need to submit final copies of all work by December 1, 2007.**

F. Background Check

All candidates will undergo a background/criminal/credit check. Included in the packet requested for Probationary Membership is an application for a Background Check. Previous background checks are not acceptable. The form should be sent immediately to the contracted company so that the Registrar receives the background check **by November 1, 2007.**

G. References

Candidates will receive a form asking them to submit names of persons who will provide reference letters to the Committee. The Board of Ministry File Administrator **must receive these names no later than November 1, 2007.** The references will include:

1. The Supervising Pastor (Candidacy Mentor) of the candidate's Candidacy Studies.
2. The Senior Minister of the church being served by the candidate, if applicable, or the candidate's present PPR Chairperson, if applicable, or the pastor where the candidate presently attends church.
3. A reference of the candidate's choice.
4. A reference from the candidate's intern/field experience instructor. (Mentor Pastor)
5. A reference from the candidate's Theological School.
6. Persons who have provided mentoring and/or supervision during the two (2) years of service required for commissioning.
7. The candidate's current District Superintendent.

If a candidate has applied previously, but was not recommended for probationary membership, the candidate must again prepare all written material for submission.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

A. Interview with the Committee on Preparation and Qualifications

Members of the committee will carefully read the written work and listen to the sermons of each candidate. They will review the psychological report, letters of recommendation, personal information sheet, sermons, teaching plan, and theological answers. Then, the committee, using questions from the work submitted as a guide, will interview the candidate. The candidate should be prepared to discuss the following in the interview process:

1. Call to ministry
2. The sermons and teaching plan
3. The answers to the *Disciplinary* questions
4. The meaning of the Sacraments and Salvation
5. Understanding of commissioning and ordination as a United Methodist
6. Any part of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*
7. Any information in references, ministry experiences, or psychological evaluation
8. Understanding of United Methodist Polity, including itinerancy
9. Strengths and weaknesses and how the choice of ministry as a profession affects lifestyle.

B. The following must reach the Board of Ministry File Administrator by December 1, 2007:

1. Fourteen written copies of the sermon, 14 copies of the orders of worship, and five audio copies of the sermons. *It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure the quality of the audio/visual copies.* Deacons who choose to submit a video recording of a chorale piece or Bible Study, please provide 14 written copies of written work and 5 video copies.
2. Fourteen copies of the teaching plan (see above for details).
3. Fourteen copies of the answers to the *Disciplinary* questions (from the most current Book of Discipline) and questions on Salvation and Itinerancy.
4. A medical report on the form provided by the Board of Ministry File Administrator. (The Board will reimburse up to \$50 of the cost of a physical examination upon receipt by the Registrar of a request with a receipt from the physician. *No reimbursement will be made for medical examination if the original receipt is received after December 1, 2007*)
5. Fourteen copies of the personal information form provided by the Board of Ministry File Administrator.
6. A transcript of college or university and seminary work.
7. **Two personal photographs** suitable for print in a newspaper with name printed on the back.
8. **A letter from the District Committee on Ministry or District Superintendent giving the date of certification of candidacy and recommendation for ordination and probationary membership, or commissioning and probationary membership.**
9. The Psychological Report from the testing center (sent to Registrar). Please see note earlier in this section on Psychological Reports.
10. Reference letters.
11. Recommendation of the Cabinet of the North Texas Conference.
12. Summary evaluation from intern/field experience (if applicable).
13. Letter from candidate's seminary stating the candidate's expected graduation date (if applicable).
14. The service setting of a candidate for probationary membership on the Deacon track must be approved by the bishop and cabinet of the conference prior to acceptance as fulfillment of this requirement (§331.6).

C. Interview Dates

Upon receipt of all items listed above, the candidate will be notified of the interview time. Interviews will be held **January 28, 29 & 30, 2008** at the Prothro Center on Lake Texoma.

D. Probationary and Associate Membership Schedule

2007

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|----------------------|---|
| July 1 - August 1 | Candidate should contact their District Committee on Ministry to set an interview. <i>Candidate must have a completed Psychological report prior to DCOM interview.</i> |
| August 1 – August 31 | Candidate Interviews with DCOM |
| September 6 | Meeting for all Candidates at First United Methodist Church, Denton, 10 a.m. |
| By September 15 | Candidate writes to Board of Ministry File Administrator requesting application for membership in the North Texas Annual Conference. |
| October 15 | Optional early due date for draft of paperwork. |
| By November 1 | Reference Names Form mailed to Board of Ministry File Administrator. |
| December 1 | All written work, psychological reports, letters, forms, etc., should be submitted to the Board of Ordained Ministry File Administrator. |

No candidate will be scheduled for interview unless the candidate has completely fulfilled all requirements by December 1, 2007. *If any part of the material submitted is incomplete or omitted, that candidate will not be scheduled for an interview.*

2008

January 28, 29, & 30 Interview with Committee of P & Q at the Prothro Center.
April TBA Meeting with the Bishop.

E. Meeting with the Bishop

Persons who complete the requirements for Probationary Membership and are being recommended to the Annual Conference for Probationary Membership will meet with the Bishop in April. Each person will be contacted personally by the Office of the Bishop regarding the specific details.

SECTION II: TRANSFERRING TRACTS WITHIN PROBATIONARY MEMBERSHIP

Any Probationary Member choosing to transfer from the Deacon to Elder tract or from Elder to Deacon track must do the following:

1. Write a letter to the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry indicating the intent to transfer
2. Submit all written materials required of persons applying for Probationary Membership

Persons who are applying to change tracts, after serving as a probationary member in one tract, must first complete all requirements determined necessary by the Committee on Preparation and Qualifications. This may include, but is not limited to, certain educational experiences or additional years of probationary membership in the new tract. Persons seeking to transfer to a new tract will follow the schedule for application for Probationary Membership.

SECTION III: FULL MEMBERSHIP PROCESS FOR DEACONS AND ELDERS

Board of Ordained Ministry File Administrator, Duane VanGiesen, PO Box 866128, Plano, Texas, 75086-6128. Phone (972) 526-5000 (ext. 211); Fax (972) 526-5003; e-mail: vangiesen@ntcumc.org. [Maintains all non-confidential files]

Board of Ordained Ministry Registrar, Rev. Todd Harris
ToddH@fumcallen.org [maintains confidential files: psychological report and background checks]

Note: Candidates will follow the process of the *Discipline* under which they were certified as a candidate. However, when answering Disciplinary questions for ordination, **candidates should use the questions from the most current *Discipline*** (regardless of year of candidacy).

A. Requirements for Ordination as Elder and Full Connection in the North Texas Annual Conference under *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2000*, ¶326; *The Book of Discipline, 2004*, ¶335.

Comments on ¶326:

326.4 (335.4) If a candidate has not been previously tested by the Pastoral Care and Education Center or another approved center prior to receiving Probationary Membership, they must call PCEC (214-526-4525) for an appointment.

- a. The interview must be completed before **September 1, 2007**.
- b. The candidate must pay for the cost of this assessment, and the assessment must be received by the Registrar by **December 1, 2007**. *It is the responsibility of the candidate* to ensure that the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry receives a copy of the evaluation for the candidate's file.

326.5 (335.5) Two sermons preached before a congregation, with a manuscript or transcript of the preached sermons (14 written copies of each) along with five (5) audiocassette or videocassette tapes, CDs, or DVDs. One sermon is preached from the text of candidate's choice, and one preached from John 1:1-18. The sermons should be recorded during delivery to a congregation. In addition, the candidate will submit 14 copies of the Order of Worship for the services in which the sermons were preached.

326.7 (335.6) Written answers to the Disciplinary questions should range 20-30 double-spaced pages in length. Each page should be numbered and include the candidate's name. Please start each question on a new page and the ordering should be consistent with that of the most current *Book of Discipline*. The answers should demonstrate the candidate's thinking and understanding and not extensively quote other sources. Additionally they should integrate the candidate's experiences in the practice of ministry. Each set of answers must be collated, *but not bound*. Materials may be held together with paperclips or staples only.

B. Requirements for Ordination as Deacons and Full Connection in the North Texas Conference under *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2004* ¶330.

If a candidate *has not* been previously tested by the Pastoral Care and Education Center or another approved center prior to receiving Probationary Membership, they must call PCEC (214-526-4525) for an appointment.

- a. The interview must be completed before **September 1, 2007**.
- b. The candidate must pay for the cost of this assessment, and the assessment must be received by the Registrar by **December 1, 2007**. *It is the responsibility of the candidate* to ensure that the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry receives a copy of the evaluation for the candidate's file.

330 Candidates must have served as probationary members for at least three full annual conference years after completion of the educational requirement for ordination as Deacon.

330.1 Candidates must have served under Episcopal appointment in a ministry of service the entire probationary period.

330.2 Candidates must have been previously elected as a probationary member.

330.3,4 Candidates should submit written responses to questions listed for ordination as a Deacon in the most current *Book of Discipline*.

*Written answers to these questions should range 20-30 double-spaced pages in length. Each page should be numbered and include the candidate's name. Please start each question on a new page and the ordering should be consistent with that of *The Book of Discipline*. The answers should demonstrate the candidate's thinking and understanding and not extensively quote other sources. Additionally, they should integrate the candidate's experiences in the practice of ministry. Each set of answers must be collated, *but not bound*. Materials may be held together with paperclips or staples only.

Additional notes on the written work to be submitted:

Each candidate will prepare and submit the following:

1. Current autobiographical information statement and all other forms required by the North Texas Conference.
2. Two sermons preached before a congregation, with a manuscript or transcript of the preached sermons (14 written copies of each) along with five (5) audiocassette or videocassette tapes, CDs, or DVDs. One sermon is preached from the text of candidate's choice, and one preached from John 1:1-18. The sermons should be recorded during delivery to a congregation. In addition, the candidate will submit 14 copies of the Order of Worship for the services in which the sermons were preached.
Note: Candidates for ordination as a Deacon may choose to submit the one required sermon and an alternate expression of the Proclamation of the Word. This alternative needs to reflect the candidate's specialized ministry and communicate the candidate's call to Word (i.e. a Bible Study session, a mission trip debriefing session with scriptural content, a significant work (or works) of music integrated into worship). The candidate will submit five (5) videos or DVDs, 14 written copies of the supporting material (i.e. Bible Study lesson, order of worship, etc), and a written description of the candidate's experience of living out the call to Word through this particular ministry event.
3. Answer to the additional question required by the North Texas Conference: What is your understanding of itinerant ministry?
4. A lesson plan and outline of any book of the Bible. See details below.

C. Early Written Draft Option

Candidates may choose to submit their Disciplinary questions early to be read by a member of P & Q. This optional early due date is **October 15, 2007**. If the candidate chooses to submit an early draft, these drafts will need to be received by the Registrar no later than the **October 15 deadline**. Note that submission of an early draft does not guarantee the written work will pass. **Candidates will still need to submit final copies of all work by December 1, 2007.**

D. Background Checks

All candidates for ministry will undergo a background/criminal/credit check. Included in the application packet is a release form for this purpose. **The form should be sent directly to the contracted company immediately, no later than October 15, 2007.** No previous background checks are acceptable.

E. References

Candidates must submit names of persons who will provide reference letters to the Committee on a reference form provided by the Board of Ordained Ministry File Administrator. These references must be received no later than **November 1, 2007**. Reference names will include:

1. The Senior Minister/Immediate Supervisor, if serving on church staff, or the PPR Chairperson.
2. Two references of the candidate's choice. (Both must be directly familiar with the candidate's ministry).
3. If not previously received, a report from the Mentor Pastor of the intern/field experience.
4. The candidate's current District Superintendent.

F. On Site Visits

Each candidate applying for Full Membership will receive an on-site visit from a team of persons serving on the Committee on Preparation and Qualifications. The Registrar will organize teams for the on-site visit. Each team leader will coordinate the visit with the candidate.

The candidate will prepare a written description of approximately two pages describing the strengths and growing areas of the candidate's ministry and the challenges of her/his current appointment. ***The candidate will mail a copy of the report they have prepared to the Board of Ministry File Administrator by December 1, 2007.***

G. The Interview Process

Members of the Committee will read all of the written work and review the sermons. They will also review psychological reports, letters of recommendation, personal information sheet, as well as the sermons, teaching plan, and theological answers. The entire Committee will participate in the interview process. Candidates should be prepared to discuss the following:

1. The sermons.
2. The teaching plan on a book of the Bible (see below).
3. Answers to questions submitted.
4. Call to ministry.
5. Theology and personal understanding of itinerant ministry.
6. Sacraments and Salvation.
7. Understanding of ordination as an Elder, and full membership in the annual conference.
8. Part II of the *Book of Discipline*.
9. Personal strengths and weaknesses and how the choice of ministry as a profession affects one's lifestyle; any relevant information from references or the candidate's psychological report.

H. Summary of important due dates for materials

By September 15, 2007 Candidate writes to Board of Ministry File Administrator requesting application for membership in the North Texas Annual Conference.

By October 15, 2007 Completed Background Check form mailed directly to company.

By October 15, 2007 Optional due date for draft of written work.

By November 1, 2007 The reference names due to the File Administrator.

By December 1, 2007 Candidate's On-Site visit report.

By December 1, 2007

All written work must reach the Board of Ministry File Administrator by **December 1, 2007**. This includes:

1. Fourteen written copies of the sermons, fourteen copies of the Orders of Worship, and five audio copies of the sermons. **It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure the quality of the audio/visual copies.** Deacon candidates choosing to submit an alternative proclamation of the Word, see above for the details.
2. Fourteen copies of teaching plan: A full lesson plan and outline of any book of the Bible. The lesson plan should be the candidate's own creation and should be able to be given to another person who could then teach the lessons. Therefore, each lesson should include: statement of purpose, background information on the text, exploration

of the text with the group, and application to life. The audience and setting for the study should also be identified.

3. Fourteen copies of the answers of questions from *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.
4. A medical report on a form provided by the Board of Ministry File Administrator. (The Board will reimburse up to \$50 of the cost of the physical examination upon receipt by the Board of Ministry File Administrator of a request and a receipt from the physician. If the candidate is under conference insurance, it is expected that they will use the annual wellness exam, which is fully covered by insurance, for the physical examination documentation.) **No reimbursement will be made for medical examination if the original receipt is received after December 1, 2007.**
5. Fourteen copies of the personal information forms.
6. A **final and complete** transcript of seminary work.
7. **Two recent personal photographs** suitable for print in a newspaper with the candidate's name printed on the back.
8. A letter from the District Superintendent certifying at least two full years under full-time appointment, an evaluation concerning effectiveness in ministry, and a recommendation regarding ordination and full membership.
9. Report from Pastoral Care and Education Center or another approved center (sent to the Registrar). Please note that if the report is more than five years old, the candidate may want to repeat the psychological evaluation prior to application.
10. The original notarized form provided in application packet.

No candidate will be scheduled for interview unless they have **completely fulfilled all requirements by December 1, 2007.** *If any part of the material submitted is incomplete or omitted, the candidate will not be scheduled for an interview.*

I. Interview dates

Upon receipt of all the above listed items, the candidate will be notified of the time of their interview. The Committee will conduct interviews on **February 25, 26 & 27, 2008** at the Prothro Center at Texoma.

J. Full Membership Schedule

2007

September 1	Deadline for psychological testing with PCEC, if applicable (sent to Registrar).
September 6	Meeting for all Candidates at First United Methodist Church, Denton, 10 a.m. (The content of this meeting will be covered at the P & Q meeting during the Residency Retreat/Ministry Forum in September. Applicants for full membership do not need to attend both sessions.)
By September 15	Write Board of Ordained Ministry File Administrator requesting application and materials for Full Membership.
October 15	Deadline for background check form to be submitted.
October 15	Optional early due date for draft of paperwork.
November 1	Deadline for Board of Ministry File Administrator receiving reference names.
December 1	Deadline for all work to be in Board of Ministry File Administrator's office.

2008

February 25, 26, & 27
April TBA

Interviews for Elder's Orders at the Prothro Center.
Meeting with the Bishop.

K. Meeting with the Bishop

Persons who complete the requirements for Full Membership and are being recommended to the Annual Conference for Full Membership will meet with the Bishop in April. Each person will be contacted personally by the Office of the Bishop regarding the specific details of the event.

SECTION IV: CONTINUATION OF PROBATIONARY MEMBERSHIP

It is the responsibility of the Board of Ordained Ministry to nurture those persons who are probationary members of the North Texas Annual Conference. To be continued as a probationary member, candidates shall make regular progress in their effective ministry.

In order to help the progress of the probationary members and to address needs and concerns, the Committee on Preparation and Qualifications has chosen to interview probationary members annually in a brief personal consultation with members of the Committee. The Committee will utilize the candidate's paperwork submitted to P & Q from the Residency Committee. Candidates should be prepared to discuss the material submitted. Each probationary member will meet with a sub-committee of P & Q for Continuing Consultations.

The date for the probationary member consultation will be **Thursday, April 3, 2008**. Probationary and Associate Members will be notified by the Board of Ordained Ministry File Administrator concerning the place and scheduled times for the consultation. *Probationary Members who do not attend the consultation or contact the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry will not be recommended for continuance as a probationary member in the North Texas Conference. Candidates will be notified by the Registrar of the time of their interview on April 3, 2008.*