



Pennsylvania Southeast Conference ~ United Church of Christ
1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100
Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774
psec.org

Ministry Formation Plan

*in the
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
United Church of Christ
for*

Members in Discernment

November 2016

Table of Contents

Preface	Page 5
Part One: EXPLORATION	Page 6
Step 1: Local church discernment and authorization	Page 6
Step 2: Association Committee on Ministry (COM) discernment and authorization	Page 7
a. Introduction of candidate to Chair of COM	Page 7
b. Items needed prior to interview with COM	
c. Interview	Page 7
d. COM meets with candidate to discuss recommendations for growth	Page 7
e. Vocational/Psychological Assessment	Page 8
f. Member in Discernment (MID) status determined	Page 8
g. Covenant of Discernment and Formation Explanation	Page 8
Exploration Checklist	Page 9
Part Two: DISCERNMENT	Page 10
1. Educational Formation for Authorized Ministry	Page 10
a. Ordained Ministry	Page 10
b. Licensed Ministry	Page 11
c. Commissioned Ministry	Page 11
2. Mentors	Pages 11-12
3. Regular Contact with Pastor and Local Church	Page 13
4. Annual Review	Pages 13
5. General MID Practices of Ministry	Page 14
6. Educational Formation Plan Checklist	Page 15
Part Three: MINISTERIAL AUTHORIZATION – seeking ordination or commissioning	
1. Final Assessment for Ordained Ministry:	Page 17
2. Final Assessment for Commissioned Ministry:	Page 18
3. Ecclesiastical Council:	Page 19
Part Four: Expectations of Continuing Covenant Relationship	Page 21

DEFINITIONS

Authorized Ministers:	Ordained, licensed and commissioned are the three forms of ministry in the UCC.
COM:	Committee on Ministry
Commissioned Minister:	A Commissioned Minister is a lay church member who has been called by God and who has been recognized, trained and commissioned by an Association for a specific church-related ministry (i.e. Christian Education, Church Musician).
EFP:	Educational Formation Plan
Licensed Minister:	A Licensed Minister is a lay church member whom God has called and who has been recognized, trained and authorized by an Association to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, (i.e. preaching and conducting services of worship) for a designated time under the supervision and guidance of that Association.
MID:	Member in Discernment. A lay member of a United Church of Christ Congregation who desires to prepare for authorized ministry.
MID Advisors:	A team of Association-appointed leaders who train MID's for authorized ministry. They include: Home/local Pastor, Mentor, Field Education Supervisor.
Ordained Minister:	An Ordained Minister has been called by God and recognized, trained and ordained to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership. (as per the UCC Manual on Ministry)
PSEC:	Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
UCC:	United Church of Christ

APPENDICES

<i>Appendix A: Local Church Ministry Discernment Committee-ASK THE QUESTION</i>	Page 22
<i>Appendix B: Responsibilities of the Mentor</i>	Page 22
<i>Appendix C: Member-In-Discernment Application</i>	Page 23
<i>Appendix D: Checklist of Required Materials for MID Status</i>	Page 25
<i>Appendix D1: Covenant of Discernment & Formation</i>	Page 26
<i>Appendix D2: MID Annual Review</i>	Page 29
<i>Appendix E: Chart for Educational Formation Planning</i>	Page 32
<i>Appendix F1: Guidelines for Ordination (PSEC)</i>	Page 43
<i>Appendix F2: Ordination Exam Team Demographics Sheet</i>	Page 44
<i>Appendix G: Outline for the Ordination Interview</i>	Page 45
<i>Appendix H: The Ordination Paper</i>	Page 46
<i>Appendix I: The Commissioning Paper</i>	Page 47
<i>Appendix J: The Ecclesiastical Council</i>	Page 48
<i>Appendix K: The Marks</i>	Page 49
<i>Appendix L: Grant Assistance for Seminarians</i>	Page 51
<i>Appendix M: Vocational/Psychological Guidelines and Assessment Information</i>	Page 53

PREFACE

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature personhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Introduction

The biblical story of faith and salvation was initiated by God and carried out by a cast of characters who followed, as best they could, the leading of the Holy Spirit. That story is still unfolding in The United Church of Christ where God calls certain people to ministry in and on behalf of the church. These leaders receive ecclesiastical authorization to preach, pray, teach, administer the sacraments to ensure the spiritual and religious growth of individual disciples and faith communities.

This manual is a working document for Committees on Ministry (COM) in the five Associations of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (PSEC) to identify and prepare Members in Discernment (MID) to practice authorized ministry. It draws primarily from the United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry (2001), The General Ministries Pronouncement as well as policies developed by the PSEC Church and Ministry Council. It provides a step-by-step process to clarify the goals of discernment by which leaders are equipped for ministry.

MIDS should use this guide to track their progress toward authorized ministry. The MID has the ultimate responsibility for his/her personal and professional development. This includes (but is not limited to) familiarization with the entire MID process, meeting all authorized ministry requirements, providing relevant documentation in a timely manner to the appropriate people and collecting authorizing signatures on MID documents and maintaining them in an up-to-date file.

COM's will use this guide to facilitate and document the discernment process in partnership with the MID and his/her Mentor. While COM's have primary responsibility for facilitating the MID process, ALL church leaders (lay and authorized) participate in training new pastors who have evident gifts and skills to lead and serve in various ministry settings. That responsibility is shared in a four-way covenant between the MID, the local church where that MID holds membership, the Association and the MID's Mentor.

The critical nature of the MID process and our attention to it cannot be overstated. Greg Jones and Kevin Armstrong address in their book *Resurrecting Excellence*, the leadership crisis created, in part, by diminished vigilance to the system and the standards by which people are identified and prepared for pastoral leadership. Many people in our current culture are increasingly convinced that Christianity is marked more by destructive or mediocre congregations and leaders than by examples of excellent Christian life and leadership (p.24). We can do something about that. This guide is one small part of ensuring pastoral excellence in the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.

Rev. William Worley
PSEC Conference Minister

PART ONE: EXPLORATION

This part of the journey involves asking essential questions of potential MID candidates who are considering their response to a call from God to authorized ministry. “Ask the Question” (Appendix A) was designed for this very purpose.

STEP 1: LOCAL CHURCH DISCERNMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

Note: The following steps must be done in the order listed here.

There are important roles for the local church to play throughout the procedures for the recognition and authorization of ministry in and on behalf of the UCC. These roles are the result of certain principles.

First, local churches are primary places in which the gifts of persons for ministry are observed, called forth, nurtured, and celebrated. The Constitution states: “*The United Church of Christ seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service*” (paragraph 20). Local churches are instrumental in helping their members hear and clarify their call to ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministry. The ongoing and future leadership of the Church and its mission are dependent on local churches being very intentional and sensitive to this role.

This principle results in the requirement that a person **must** be a member of a local church of the UCC *for at least a year* in order to seek and maintain recognition and authorization as an ordained, commissioned or licensed minister of the UCC. The only exception is the case of a UCC ordained ministers serving a local church not affiliated with the UCC. They may retain their ordained ministerial standing as long as their Association approves. (Paragraph 114 and 115 in the Bylaws)” and Manual on Ministry.

When a member of a local UCC church expresses a desire to prepare for authorized ministry in response to God’s call, the pastor and other church leaders should sit down together and thoroughly explore this. The person should provide the church leaders with the following:

- A statement about their Christian journey
- A statement of how they understand their call at the present time
- Documentation of their formal education (transcripts, evaluations)
- Educational Plan

These documents become the foundation of the person's portfolio. A portfolio is a collection of documents that will grow throughout the discernment process which will take no less than one year (as mandated in the Manual on Ministry). The contents of the portfolio will differ depending on the type of authorization the person is seeking BUT must be kept current.

As the person considering authorized ministry, the pastor, and church leaders meet, they may wish to discuss:

- Has the person been an active participant in the life of the local church? In their participation have they shown the gifts and maturity necessary for authorized ministry?
- What is the person's understanding of authorized ministry? To what form of authorized ministry do they experience a call? Does the person have a realistic view of authorized ministry and understand the types of things an authorized minister does? Is there another form of ministry more suited to the person's gifts and interests?
- Does the person understand the educational requirements needed?
- Do they know about the need for Member in Discernment relationship with an Association in the UCC and understand the requirements to seek that status?

If the pastor and church leaders confirm a call to ministry, they will recommend the person to the Association's COM to become a Member in Discernment (MID) as part of the candidate's preparation for authorized ministry. This is communicated via a letter to the Chairperson of the Association's COM. This letter will include the following:

- The church's recommendation of the person for Member in Discernment status
- The process used by the local church to make that decision
- Verification of the candidate's membership in the local church and the amount of time the person has been in the UCC.

STEP 2: ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY DISCERNMENT AND AUTHORIZATION

Note: The following steps must be done in the order listed here.

a. Introduction of candidate to COM

The candidate will meet with a member of the MID committee or COM. This person will review the process with the candidate, answer any questions and orient the candidate to the process and the requirements in order to proceed to an interview with the COM.

b. Items needed prior to interview with COM

The candidate will provide the COM with the information from step 1 in addition to the following which is added to the portfolio:

- Member-In-Discernment Application
- Three letters of reference (including one from their local church pastor)

Once the Chair of the COM receives the above materials, an interview with the COM will be scheduled. The candidate's pastor or in the event the church is in transition, the Consistory Chair will attend this interview to present the candidate to the COM.

c. Interview

At the meeting, the pastor (or Consistory Chair) will be given the opportunity to share information about the person's history and involvement with the local church, the process the local church went through to recommend the person to the association COM, and why it did so. The COM will interview the candidate as to his/her sense of call, her/his faith journey, understanding of authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ, and academic and professional intentions.

Committees on Ministry are asked to review the following concepts with their potential MIDs:

- Biblical, theological and ecclesiological discernment of Call and Formation
- Developing and Assessing Readiness
- Ongoing Formation and Lifelong Learning

d. COM meets with candidate to discuss recommendation

If the COM is considering a "yes" as a result of the interview, the COM, along with the Conference will work with the candidate to complete the required vocational/psychological assessment and criminal background check. A definitive yes or no cannot be offered until Vocational/Psychological Assessment is completed and reviewed.

e. Vocational/Psychological Assessment

A career assessment—which includes comprehensive personal, emotional, and psychological evaluation—is required for all persons prior to entering the Member in Discernment (MID) Process. Participants will be asked to provide personal and biographical information and take a series of standardized assessments.

See Appendix M.

f. MID status determined

Following the meeting and receiving the results of the assessment and background check, the COM will make a decision about accepting the candidate as an MID. The possible outcomes can be:

Yes, the candidate is accepted

Yes, with certain conditions

No, with willingness to reconsider if certain issues are addressed

No, the candidate does not have the gifts for ministry or the candidate does not have a call to ministry.

With a “no” decision the candidate has the option to continue working with the COM for possible acceptance at a later date. With a “yes” decision along with satisfactory resolution of or plan to address any conditions, all involved parties sign the “Covenant of Discernment and Formation” as the MID along with the local church, her/his mentor, the Association MID Committee/COM, and the Conference all begin their covenantal journey of preparation towards consideration for authorized ministry. The signed Covenant becomes part of the portfolio.

It is important to remember, acceptance as a MID is not a guarantee of ordination or authorization to commissioned or licensed ministry. It is a granting of status which enables the candidate to continue working towards authorized ministry.

MIDs will be assigned a mentor with whom they are expected to maintain regular contact. MIDs are also expected to maintain regular contact with their local church and their local pastor. There will be periodic reviews with the MID Committee/COM to maintain status as an MID.

g. Covenant of Discernment and Formation

It is the polity of the UCC to live in covenant. In this journey of discerning one’s call, it is important to covenant together to support, nurture and hold one another accountable so that together we can discern God’s call to authorized ministry.

To that end, we recommend that all parties of this new relationship covenant together by using this Covenant of Discernment and Formation found in *Appendix D1*.

EXPLORATION CHECKLIST

Part 1

- Member of local church approaches pastor and church leaders with his/her sense of call to authorized ministry

- Member provides the following documentation to begin portfolio
 - Statement of Christian Journey
 - Statement of how they understand their call
 - Documentation of formal education (transcript)
 - Educational Plan

- Pastor, church leaders, and candidate meet to discern call

- When Pastor and church leaders feel the person is ready to move forward with the process, letter is sent to COM recommending the person be considered as a candidate for MID status. Letter is to include:
 - The church's recommendation of the person for Member in Discernment status
 - The process used by the local church to make that decision
 - Verification of the candidate's membership in the local church and the amount of time the person has been in the UCC. Copy of letter becomes part of the MID portfolio.

Part 2

- Candidate meets with member of MID Committee or COM

Part 3

- Candidate scheduled to meet with COM

- Prior to the meeting, candidate provides COM with the documentation from Part 1 and the following additional documentation to continue portfolio:
 - Member-In-Discernment Application
 - Three letters of reference (including one from their local church pastor)
 - Candidate meets with COM along with pastor and/or lay leader
 - COM and Conference work with MID to complete career/psychological testing and criminal record check

- COM makes decision, notifies candidate by letter which becomes part of portfolio

- If accepted, COM assigns a Mentor

- If accepted, Covenant of Discernment and Formation is signed and becomes part of the portfolio.

PART TWO: DISCERNMENT – God’s call to Ministry

Once MID status has been granted, the MID establishes a series of learning goals and objectives called an Education Formation Plan (EFP). The MID works that plan with the help of the COM, the Mentor, the Field Education Supervisor and the Local Church Pastor. Review and evaluation of the MID’s progress by the COM must be scheduled on at least an annual basis.

EDUCATIONAL FORMATION FOR AUTHORIZED MINISTRY

The purpose of educational formation is two-fold:

1. Acquire the appropriate knowledge and skills for authorized ministry
2. Develop the skills and practices of ministry as outlined in “The Marks of Ministry”

The MID along with the COM will work together to form an EFP. This plan will vary depending on which authorized ministry the MID is discerning. In conjunction with the required formal education and training listed below, the MID and COM should use the “Chart for Educational Formation Planning.” The MID would do a self-assessment of The Marks, listing options for educational content or experiences to develop those Marks where he/she feels growth is needed in the column entitled “Options for Educational Content or Experiences to Promote the Marks (EFP Possibilities)”. Some suggestions are already listed there. In the next column entitled “COM Required Educational Content or Experiences to Promote the Marks (Actual EFP)”, the MID and COM would list those educational/experiential requirements of the MID. This chart along with the EFP Checklist will become part of the MID’s portfolio.

Please note that in what follows, items listed as “equivalent” and/or “approved” will be deemed as such by the Association Committee on Ministry (COM).

Ordained Ministry

The minimum educational requirements for MID seeking ordination should include:

- Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- Master of Divinity Degree from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity that includes study in the following areas. If these courses are not available or not part of the Master's program, they may be taken at another approved educational institution or program:
 - Biblical Studies
 - Biblical Interpretation
 - Theology
 - Worship, sacraments, liturgy
 - Preaching and worship leadership
 - UCC History and Polity
 - Pastoral Care
 - Stewardship Education
 - Evangelism and Church Growth
 - Pastoral Leadership
 - Christian Education and Confirmation
 - Church History
 - Christian Ethics
 - Spiritual Disciplines
- Completion of the Conference's “Member in Discernment Academy”
- Completion of Field Education/Contextual Experience, either as part of the Master's program or other approved training
- CPE

The COM may add other requirements to those listed above.

Licensed Ministry

The minimum educational requirements for MID considered for licensing should include:

- Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- Completion of accepted educational program such as Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, or Certificate of Lay Leadership from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity, or other Theological Educational Program such as the Pennsylvania Academy of Ministry that includes study in the following areas:
 - Biblical Studies
 - Biblical Interpretation
 - Preaching and worship leadership
 - Worship, sacraments, liturgy
 - UCC History and Polity
 - Christian Ethics
 - Theology
 - Pastoral Care
 - Pastoral Leadership
 - Spiritual Disciplines

This requirement can also be completed by taking these courses at more than one location without completing a “program”, provided this is approved by the COM

- Completion of the Conference's “Member in Discernment Academy”.

The COM may add other requirements to those listed above.

Commissioned Ministry

The minimum educational requirements for MID seeking commissioning should include:

- Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- Completion of accepted educational program such as Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, or Certificate of Lay Leadership from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity, or other Theological Educational Program such as the Pennsylvania Academy of Ministry that includes study in the following areas:
 - Biblical Studies
 - Biblical Interpretation
 - Theology
 - UCC History and Polity
 - Church History
 - Spiritual Disciplines
 - Completion of COM approved courses or educational program/degree at an approved educational institution that will provide the MID with mastery over the theory and practice of the specific church related field in which commissioning is sought.

This requirement can also be completed by taking these courses at more than one location without completing a “program”, provided this is approved by the COM.

- Completion of the Conference's “Member in Discernment Academy”

The COM may add other requirements to those listed above.

MENTORS

The role of the mentor is **CRITICAL** to help the MID understand and follow the discernment process, to explore various forms of ministry and to prepare for the challenges of authorized ministry. The mentor is appointed by the Association COM immediately upon granting MID status and is a partner in the MID Covenantal Agreement.

The MID and mentor meet at least once a month to work together on the MARKS of Faithful and Effective Ministry by using *Journaling the Journey* provided by the Association COM. Mentors serve as trusted companions and guides on the discernment journey by sharing important lessons learned from their own ministry careers. They help to clarify whether authorized ministry is the most appropriate response to the individual's call or if the MID could better serve the church by not being authorized. They also help discern which particular form of ministry (licensure, commissioning, ordination) is most suited to that individual's gifts and skills.

The mentor cultivates a commitment to excellence in the practice of all facets of the pastoral office including: encouragement of the MID's prayer life; dedication to the process of life-long learning; participation in various forms of worship; meditation and devotional practices; community leadership; participation in the wider church. The mentor fosters an atmosphere of trust and candor in which the MID can raise and explore questions concerning faith, the Christian life, ministry, and the church.

The MID is expected to be proactive in meeting with her/his mentor **at least** once a month. The MID is expected to be able to: articulate evidence of his/her spiritual growth; demonstrate awareness of, and work on, personal growing edges; name newly acquired ministry skills (preaching, teaching, visioning, counseling, etc.)

The mentor is an essential component in the network of covenant relations between the MID, the Association, the Association's COM, and the local congregation. Most centrally, the mentor serves as a link between the MID and the COM. The mentor embodies the church's support for the MID. The mentor will help the MID explore ways to implement the recommendations of the COM regarding the individual's Ministry Formation Plan.

In summary, the responsibilities of the Mentor are as follows:

- Receive orientation from the Conference regarding the mentor's role and seek appropriate training (spiritual direction, life coaching, listening skills workshops, etc.) for the work of mentoring.
- Act on behalf of the Committee on Ministry with the Committee's full and current knowledge of the MID's progress and the mentor's practices and role.
- Maintain frequent contact with the MID via e-mails, telephone calls, written communication, and face-to-face meetings.
- Offer on-going counsel and resourcing.
- Provide guidance, in consultation with the Association's Committee on Ministry, concerning course work and other education opportunities.
- Help the MID understand the expectations of the Committee on Ministry concerning the individual's path of preparation for authorized ministry.
- Help the MID understand the UCC's procedures for the authorization to ministry.
- Encourage the MID to participate in the life of his/her local congregation.
- Encourage the MID to be active in Association and Conference activities.
- Help the MID secure financial support for the MID process.
- Help the MID evaluate and select appropriate educational opportunities from among the possible paths of preparation for ministry (seminary courses, regional theological education programs, mentoring, etc.).
- Help the MID prepare the necessary documentation and reports required by the Associations and the broader church.
- Accompany the MID to meetings of the COM in order to review progress.
- Foster the deepening of the MID's Christian faith and life.

REGULAR CONTACT WITH LOCAL PASTOR AND LOCAL CHURCH SUPPORT

The MID is encouraged to stay in regular contact with their local Pastor. The MID needs to be proactive in staying in contact.

The MID is also encourage to meet at least twice a year with the Discernment Committee of the local church. This will encourage support and encouragement from the members of the church.

The MID could write a quarterly letter to the local church for their newsletter so that all are aware of the journey and the process. It would also be very important for the MID to send that same quarterly report to the Consistory/Council and to their local Pastor.

Remember, this is a shared journey. All parties are in covenant and so communication is crucial.

ANNUAL REVIEW:

The MID will meet with the COM on an annual basis. This meeting will help keep the MID connected to the Association, will offer a time for sharing joys and concerns, will allow an opportunity for the COM to be aware of the MID's journey of discernment and education, and offer a time to share any concerns or additional requirements on the part of the COM. The MID will invite his/her mentor to be present for this annual review. MID's may also invite their home church pastor/field education supervisor.

Prior to the meeting, the MID will complete the Annual Review form portion of Appendix D2. This form will be a starting point for conversation between the MID and the COM. During the meeting, the COM will engage in questions relating to the MID's education experience, field education experience if applicable, and their participation in the church at the congregational, association, and conference levels. In addition, there will be questions about theology, UCC polity, pastoral care, worship, and other topics which will guide and stretch the MID. The COM will refrain from merely asking what they can do for the MID. This meeting time will be used to keep track of the MID's discernment process, their educational journey, and their faith growth. It is recommended that the MARKS Assessment Tool and Journaling the Journey be used as part of this discussion. It will be a time to make sure the MID is on track and to gently guide them as necessary. The COM will relay to the MID exactly what they should be doing in the coming year in order to continue to move forward toward Ordination, Commissioned Ministry, or Licensing. There should be no ambiguity.

The annual review is not optional. While all attempts will be made to schedule the meeting at a convenient time (i.e. not during the end of a semester, taking into consideration travelling distance, working around school/work schedules), the MID must meet with the COM annually. The COM will initiate the scheduling of a meeting but the MID must make sure to be available during the timeframe offered.

After the meeting, the COM will complete the last page of Appendix D2 to document the date of the meeting, the participation of the MID along with any concerns which may arise during the meeting. This process will hold both the MID and the COM accountable for keeping the covenantal relationship. It will also document and acknowledge whether the COM wishes to renew the MID status for this individual and keep track of the mentor assignment. This information will be conveyed to the MID after the meeting by the COM and will be place in the MID portfolio. The process and status of the MID shall be as transparent as possible. At all times there will be space for the Holy Spirit to be present and to guide the conversations and process.

GENERAL MID PRACTICES OF MINISTRY

The autonomy of the local church, sacred to the UCC, has crept into all facets of church life and practice. The effect of that is the exercise of freedom from customs, traditions and practices (and in worst cases, ethics and values) that have formerly provided identity for our church and guidance for our leaders. The use of vestments, liturgical garb, and clergy titles is one small example. For training new leaders, clarification is significant. The following customs and traditions are practiced with subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) variations in each UCC Conference and Association. These descriptions are intended to serve as a guideline for clergy and MIDs in the Penn Southeast Conference.

The Geneva Pulpit Gown and Alba— are worn by authorized ministers and by MIDs working in field education placements who are invited (or required) to do so. The choice of the black gown (a Protestant symbol of educated clergy) or white alba (an early church symbol of purity and obedience) is at the discretion of MIDs in consultation with their field education advisor.

Stoles—are worn as a symbol of an authorized minister’s yoked relationship with Christ in service to God’s people. Stoles are bestowed upon MIDs on the day of their ordination, commissioning or licensure and are not worn before then.

Clerical Collars—like stoles, tab and Anglican clerical collars are symbols of the pastoral office and are worn at the discretion of MIDs in consultation with their field education advisor.

Titles—Reverend, Pastor, Minister, Clergywoman/man, are reserved for ordained and licensed ministers. MIDs are sometimes referred to as “Student Pastor” or “Student Chaplain” but do not claim a clerical title until the day of their authorization to ministry.

Sacraments—the UCC recognizes and celebrates two sacraments, baptism and communion. Only authorized UCC ministers may preside at the table and the font. MIDs can, and should, co-celebrate sacramental liturgies with their field education supervisor or home pastor who would offer the Prayer of Consecration (communion) and/or the Triune Blessing (baptism).

EDUCATION FORMATION PLAN CHECKLIST

Ordained Ministry

- Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- Master of Divinity Degree from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity
 - Biblical Studies
 - Biblical Interpretation
 - Theology
 - Worship, sacraments, liturgy
 - Preaching and worship leadership
 - UCC History and Polity
 - Pastoral Care
 - Stewardship Education
 - Evangelism and Church Growth
 - Pastoral Leadership
 - Christian Education and Confirmation
 - Church History
 - Christian Ethics
 - Spiritual Disciplines
- Completion of the Conference's "Member in Discernment Academy"
- Completion of Field Education/Contextual Experience, either as part of the Master's program or other approved training
- Completion of required education/experiences as listed on Chart For Educational Formation Planning
- CPE
- Any COM additional requirements

Licensed Ministry

- Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- Completion of accepted educational program such as Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, or Certificate of Lay Leadership from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity, or other Theological Educational Program such as Lay Ministry in the 21st Century or approved COM series of courses
 - Biblical Studies
 - Biblical Interpretation
 - Preaching and worship leadership
 - Worship, sacraments, liturgy
 - UCC History and Polity
 - Christian Ethics
 - Theology
 - Pastoral Care
 - Pastoral Leadership
 - Spiritual Disciplines
- Completion of the Conference's "Member in Discernment Academy"
- Completion of required education/experiences as listed on Chart For Educational Formation Planning
- Any COM additional requirements

Commissioned Ministry

- _____ Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent
- _____ Completion of accepted educational program such as Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, or Certificate of Lay Leadership from an approved and accredited Seminary or School of Divinity, or other Theological Educational Program such as the Pennsylvania Academy of Ministry or approved COM series of courses
 - _____ Biblical Studies
 - _____ Biblical Interpretation
 - _____ Theology
 - _____ UCC History and Polity
 - _____ Church History
 - _____ Spiritual Disciplines
 - _____ Completion of COM approved courses or educational program/degree at an approved educational institution that will provide the MID with mastery over the theory and practice of the specific church related field in which commissioning is sought.
- _____ Completion of the Conference's "Member in Discernment Academy"
- _____ Completion of required education/experiences as listed on Chart For Educational Formation Planning
- _____ Any COM additional requirements

Any other special requirements or equivalencies put into place during granting of MID status. Are there others?

PART THREE: MINISTERIAL AUTHORIZATION SEEKING ORDINATION OR COMMISSIONING

FINAL ASSESSMENT FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY

The purpose of this step is to determine if the MID is ready for authorization as an Ordained Minister. Once ALL the requirements for ordination have been met, the MID is interviewed by the COM accompanied by their MENTOR, and if the MID desires a member of their MDC.

MIDs seeking Ordination will present the COM with their updated portfolios and the following documentation:

- A revised self-assessment of The Marks (See MESA section of UCC website)
- Verification of membership and participation in a local church of the UCC
- Verification of current MID status
- A recommendation from their Local Congregation leadership requesting the MID be considered for ordination
- Certification of attainment of previous education and specialized educational goals (EFP) previously agreed upon by the MID and COM.
- A sermon created by the MID
- An Ordination Paper (See Appendix H, page 46)
- A current draft of the UCC Ministerial Profile with completed background check
- Certification of completion with the past 3 years of a Boundary Awareness Training course approved by the Association or Conference
- At least 4 letters of reference from the following:
 - MID's MENTOR
 - MID's Pastor
 - Someone from the MID's educational process familiar with the MID's educational preparation
 - Someone of the MID's choosing

Other items may also be included to document or describe the MID's readiness for Ordination, such as:

- Audio and/or video recordings
- Records from non-credit courses and/or workshops
- UCC history and polity documentation
- Demonstration of self-directed learning projects, reflective practice or on-the-job training
- Art work (with interpretation if desired)
- Programs from worship services
- Written papers/case studies/interview recordings
- Performance assessments
- Description of projects undertaken in the local congregation, association, conference national church or wider church and community
- Evidence of related experience, knowledge, skills from other experiences
- Evidence of applicable corporate training (e.g. conflict resolution, financial management, computer skills)
- Military training and/or corporate/agency training

Following this meeting the MID will be informed of the COM's decision of approval for Ordination. The answer may be:

- Yes, the candidate is approved
- Yes, but the COM has some issues or requirements to be addressed before a final decision is made by the COM

- No, with willingness to reconsider if certain issues are addressed
- No, the candidate is not approved

If the MID is approved for Ordination by the COM:

- An Ecclesiastical Council is convened that will confer final Ordained Ministerial status

FINAL ASSESSMENT FOR COMMISSIONED MINISTRY

The purpose of this step is to determine if the MID is ready for authorization as a Commissioned Minister. Once all requirements for commissioned ministry have been met, the MID is interviewed by the COM accompanied by their mentor, and if the MID desires a member of their MDC.

MID's seeking Commissioning will present the COM with their updated portfolios and the following documentation:

- A revised Assessment of the Marks (See MESA section of UCC website)
- Certification of attainment of previous education and specialized educational goals (EFP) previously agreed upon by the MID and COM.
- A Commissioning Paper (See Appendix I, page 47)
- A current resume or draft of UCC Ministerial Profile
- Report of Church activities related to the MID's field of commissioning
- Certification of completion within the past 3 years of a Boundary Awareness Training course approved by the Association or Conference
- Verification of membership and participation in a local church of the UCC
- At least 4 letters of reference from the following:
 - MID's mentor
 - MID's Pastor
 - Someone from the MID's educational process familiar with the MID's educational preparation
 - Someone of the MID's choosing

Other items may also be included to document or describe the MID's readiness for Commissioning, such as:

- Audio and/or video recordings
- Art work (with interpretation if desired)
- Records from non-credit courses and/or workshops
- Programs from worship services
- Written papers
- Performance assessments
- Description of projects undertaken in the local congregation/Association/Conference/Synod
- Evidence of related experience, knowledge, skills from other experiences
- Evidence of applicable corporate training (e.g. conflict resolution, financial management, computer skills)
- Military training and/or corporate/agency training

Following this meeting the MID will be informed of the COM's decision of approval for Commissioning. The answer may be:

- Yes, the candidate is approved
- No, with willingness to reconsider if certain issues are addressed
- No, the candidate is not approved

If the MID is approved for commissioning:

- The MID seeks a call in an appropriate setting to serve according to their approved ministry.
- The COM receives a letter from the local church/calling body detailing the nature of the call including items such as description of the ministry position, time requirements, and remuneration.
- The COM meets with the MID and church/calling body to confirm the call
- The COM and MID work together to prepare a service of commissioning

ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL

Once a MID has successfully completed the ordination or commissioning examination by the association COM, the final step in the approval process is an ecclesiastical council. Depending upon the association's policy, the ecclesiastical council could be held before or following the point at which the MID has received a call recognized by the association to authorized ministry.

The association COM arranges for an official meeting of an ecclesiastical council and decides with the MID what type of presentation the MID will make to the ecclesiastical council and how all or a portion of the MID's ordination/commissioning paper and biographical overview will be made available to the delegates to the ecclesiastical council. Ideally, the distribution of advance materials will be made to the delegates with enough time for their reading and discernment before the ecclesiastical council.

The purpose of the ecclesiastical council is to examine and authorize the ordination or commissioning of the MID. The following is a sample agenda for the ecclesiastical council:

- The association COM introduces the MID and makes its recommendation that the MID be authorized for ordination/commissioning. In making its recommendation, the COM will provide details supporting its recommendation drawing upon the materials the MID has submitted throughout the MID process and the COM's experience in working with this person.
- The MID makes a presentation to the ecclesiastical council based upon the ordination/commissioning paper. The presentation should demonstrate the person's theological, polity and functional understandings of ordained/commissioned ministry and relate these to the commitment and preparation of the person for the type of authorized ministry to which the MID has been called or to which the MID is seeking a call.
- The ecclesiastical council engages in an examination of the MID in order to satisfy itself as the preparation and fitness for the MID to ordained/commissioned ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. The examination is not limited to the presentation and the ordination/commissioning paper. A suggested best practice is to have a member of the association COM facilitate and moderate the examination, perhaps by asking delegates to submit written questions in advance of the council or at the council itself.
- On completion of the examination, the MID is excused from the ecclesiastical council, preferably with an accompanying member of the COM or other support person, while the ecclesiastical council votes whether or not to authorize the MID for ordination/commissioning pending an approved call. The decision of the ecclesiastical council is made on behalf of the association and is a decision made for the entire United Church of Christ. It will be a binding on and honored by other associations of the United Church of Christ. Once ordained or commissioned, the person is granted authorized ministerial

standing and becomes a voting member of the association and conference in which the minister has standing.

If the MID is approved for Ordination/Commissioning by the Ecclesiastical Council:

- The MID seeks a call to be approved by the association COM
- Once an approved call has been obtained, the COM receives a letter from the local church/calling body detailing the nature of the call including items such as description of the ministry position, time requirements, and remuneration.
- The COM meets with the MID and church/calling body to confirm the call
- The COM and MID work together to prepare a service of ordination/commissioning

PART FOUR: EXPECTATIONS OF CONTINUING COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

The United Church of Christ takes great care to provide adequate oversight for the ministries of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required. Ordained, commissioned, and licensed ministries of the United Church of Christ come under an oversight of watchful care provided by Association, since Associations are responsible for authorizing these ministries on behalf of the whole church. In addition, Associations grant privilege of call, received members in discernment, and provide other forms of authorization for ministry. It is incumbent upon Associations, in covenant with others, to exercise careful oversight of these authorized ministries so that they may be carried out in a manner reflective of the purposes set for them by the Constitution and Bylaws of the UCC.

In acting on behalf of the whole church, Associations are covenantally related to other Associations, to the persons they have authorized for ministry and to local churches and other calling bodies. This spirit of covenantal relations is undergirded by the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, which establishes the relationship and authority of the various covenantal partners related to ministerial authorization.

Associations have the responsibility for extending nurture and ensuring ecclesiastical accountability for all authorized ministers, including retired ordained ministers and those serving in ministry settings other than in local churches such as chaplains, professors, pastoral counselors, and persons engaged in secular employment. (Manual of Ministry, pages 4-5 in Oversight Section)

Also, authorized ministers have the responsibility to be in covenant with their Association, other authorized ministers, and their setting of ministry. Just as Associations have the responsibility for supporting and holding accountable all authorized ministers; authorized ministers have the responsibility to be in covenant by supporting and being part of their Association, Conference and the wider UCC.

APPENDIX A

Local Church Ministry Discernment Committee-ASK THE QUESTION

Ask the Question is a great resource for discerning the call to ministry. This also contains information to help a person discerning a call to ministry to create a Discernment Committee within their local church. The link below will take you to that resource:

http://www.ucc.org/ask-the-question_q-a

APPENDIX B

The responsibilities of the MENTOR are as follows:

- Receive orientation from the Association regarding the advisor's role and seek appropriate training (spiritual direction, life coaching, listening skills workshops, etc.) for the work of advisement.
- Act on behalf of the Committee on Ministry with the Committee's full and current knowledge of the MID's progress and the MENTOR's practices, advice and role.
- Maintain frequent contact with the MID via e-mails, telephone calls, written communication, and face-to-face meetings.
- Offer on-going advice and counsel.
- Provide guidance, in consultation with the Association's Committee on Ministry, concerning course work and other educational opportunities.
- Help the MID understand the expectations of the Committee on Ministry concerning the individual's path of preparation for authorized ministry.
- Help the MID understand the UCC's procedures for the authorization of ministries.
- Encourage the MID to participate in the life of his/her local congregation.
- Encourage the MID to be active in Association and Conference activities.
- Help the MID secure financial support for the preparation process.
- Help the MID evaluate and select appropriate educational opportunities from among the possible paths of preparation for ministry (seminary courses, regional theological education programs, mentoring, etc.).
- Help the MID prepare the necessary documentation and reports required by the Associations and the broader church.
- Accompany the MID to meetings of the Committee on Ministry in order to review progress.
- Foster the deepening of the MID's Christian faith and life.



APPENDIX C
Committee on Ministry of the _____ Association
 Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Member-in-Discernment Application

Personal Information

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I. Nickname

Permanent Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

_____ *City State ZIP Code*

Current Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

*While in seminary/college
or similar*

_____ *City State ZIP Code*

Home Phone: () _____

Cell Phone: () _____

Current Phone: () _____

Please place an asterisk* next to your preferred telephone contact number and mailing address.

E-mail Address: _____

Birth Date: _____

Marital/Partner Status: _____

Spouse's/Partner's Name: _____

Names of Children: _____

Please include ages if minors

Church Membership Information

Church: _____

Address: _____
Street Address

_____ *City State ZIP Code*

Church Phone: () _____

Church E-mail: _____

Pastor: _____ Date of Membership: _____

Brief description of local church involvement: _____

Brief description of wider church involvement: _____

Are you involved in any other religious or secular volunteer activities? Yes No If yes, please explain:

Have you ever engaged in the Member in Discernment process with another UCC association or a similar ordination process with another denomination or ordaining community? Yes No If yes, please explain:

Academic Information

Undergraduate Institutions: _____
College/University *Dates Attended* *Degree/Certificate*

Seminary: _____
Seminary/School of Theology *Dates Attended* *Degree/Certificate*

Other Graduate Institutions or Training: _____
College/University/Seminary/Program *Dates Attended* *Degree/Certificate*

Current Employment Information

Position/Title: _____ Employer: _____

Work Address: _____
Street Address

_____ *City* _____ *State* _____ *ZIP Code*

Work Phone: () _____ E-mail Address: _____

Is it acceptable to call you at your workplace? Yes No Send e-mail to you at work? Yes No

In-Care Application Statement

I, hereby, request that the Committee on Ministry consider my application for Member-in-Discernment status with this Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

I understand that Member-in-Discernment status is a covenantal relationship between the local church, this Association, the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, the United Church of Christ and me (therefore, I must be a member of a UCC church in this Association).

I understand that this application request does not guarantee the granting of Member in Discernment status. I further understand that the granting of Member-in-Discernment status does not ultimately guarantee ordination or authorization as a licensed or commissioned minister or ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ.

I understand, that to be considered for Member-in-Discernment status, I must submit, in addition to this Application, the following documents: 1) a letter of recommendation from the governing body of a local UCC church that is a) supportive of my request for in-care status, b) that verifies my membership (including length of membership), and c) describes the process by which the church came to recommend me for in-care status; 2) three letters of reference (one from the pastor of my church); 3) a life journey paper; 4) a statement describing my understanding of my call to ministry; and, 5) transcripts of relevant academic work and a curriculum vitae or résumé.

I attest that the information contained in this application, and in the written information requested by the Committee on Ministry for consideration for Member-in-Discernment status, is both accurate and complete.

Signature

Date

Name (please print clearly)

Please return this Member in Discernment Application to:

The Chair of this Committee on Ministry

Committee on Ministry of the _____ Association, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ
Address, phone, email



APPENDIX D
Committee on Ministry of the _____ Association
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED MATERIALS
for
PERSONS SEEKING MEMBER-IN-DISCERNMENT STATUS

The following materials are required to be sent to the Committee on Ministry prior to an interview:

- _____ Completed and signed "Member-in-Discernment Application Form" (enclosed with packet).
- _____ Letter from the church where you hold membership verifying your membership in that church and the length of time you have been a member of the United Church of Christ.
- _____ A description from your home church outlining the process used to interview you and their recommendation of you to become a "Member in Discernment" of the association.
- _____ Three (3) letters of reference including one from the pastor/lay leader of your church.
- _____ Background material you provided the local church. This includes a 1) statement about your Christian journey, 2) a statement of how you understand your call at the present time, and 3) documentation of your formal education and future academic plans (including transcripts, resume and/or curriculum vitae).
- _____ Results of the required psychological screening and evaluation.
- _____ Documentation of completed criminal background check and child abuse clearance (within twelve months).

Please send the above materials, and address any questions you may have, to the Chair of the Committee on Ministry:

Name of Chairperson

Address

Phone # and E-Mail

Revised: June 2014

(To be completed upon granting of MID Status. It is the responsibility of MID to assure that this covenant is completed and copies delivered to all parties)



Pennsylvania Southeast Conference ~ United Church of Christ
1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100
Pottstown, PA 19464
484-949-8774
psec.org

APPENDIX D1: Covenant of Discernment and Formation

LOCAL CHURCH

We, the members of _____ United Church of Christ, located at _____, promise to support and nurture _____ in her/his period of discernment and formation as s/he explores a call to authorized ministry. We will, in partnership with _____ (MID), create a Discernment Team and work with her/him to discern the call to Authorized Ministry using the resource *Ask the Question*. We will as we are able, provide financial support for costs associated with ministerial preparation and training. We covenant with her/him and the _____ Association and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Consistory President

Date

ASSOCIATION

We the members of the _____ Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, covenant with the people of _____ United Church of Christ, located at _____ and _____, (MID), to explore a call to authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. We will develop an educational plan with _____ (MID) and accompany her/him as s/he engages in a path of discernment, preparation and formation. We will provide counsel and support, and will

meet with _____ (MID) at appropriate intervals to discern readiness for the authorized ministry sought. We will, as we are able, provide financial support for costs associated with ministerial preparation and training. We will assign a mentor and be responsible for the oversight of this relationship. When _____(MID) is determined to be worthy of authorized ministry, we will authorize her/him for ministry according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ. We covenant with her/him and the _____ United Church of Christ as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Committee on Ministry

Date

CONFERENCE

We the members of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, covenant with the people of _____ United Church of Christ located in _____ and _____ (MID) to explore a call to authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. We will, as we are able, provide financial support for costs associated with ministerial training. We will hold you in prayer as you discern your call. We will provide support and counsel through our Member in Discernment Mission Team. We covenant with _____ United Church of Christ, located at _____ and _____ (MID) and the _____ Association as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Associate or Conference Minister

Date

MENTOR

I, _____ (mentor), promise to faithfully meet with _____ (MID) once a month. I promise to support and walk with _____ as she/he discerns her/his call. We will work together on the MARKS of Faithful and Effective Ministry by using *Journaling the Journey* provided by the Association COM. I covenant with

_____ United Church of Christ, located at _____,
_____ (MID), the _____ Association, and the
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Mentor

Date

MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT

I, _____, promise to continue to faithfully discern with my covenant partners my call to ministry, including exploration regarding which form of authorized ministry may be the most appropriate response to my call. I will engage in the educational plan and formative practices developed with the Association COM that will prepare me for this calling. During this time I will continue to participate with my Local Church, contributing to its life and witness as possible and appropriate. I will also participate in the Member in Discernment events that are planned by the PSEC MID Mission Team. I will provide material as requested that reflect my progress to the Association Committee on Ministry. I covenant with _____ United Church of Christ, _____, mentor, the _____ Association, and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Member in Discernment

Date

June 2015



APPENDIX D2: MID ANNUAL REVIEW
Committee on Ministry of the _____ Association
 Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Member-in-Discernment Annual Review

Contact Information

Full Name: _____
Last First M.I. Nickname

Permanent Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Current Address: _____
While in seminary/college or similar Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Home Phone: () _____ Cell Phone: () _____

Current Phone: () _____

Please place an asterisk* next to your preferred telephone contact number and mailing address.

E-mail Address: _____

Local Church Membership: _____
Name of Church

Street Address Town/City

Academic Information

Current Academic Institution: _____
Institution Name Degree/Credential Pursued Anticipated Graduation Date

If applicable, please list all courses you have taken (both attempted and completed) in the past academic year and the grades earned or attach copies of transcripts/grade reports.

Fall:		Spring:		Summer I:	
<u>Course</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1) _____	_____	1) _____	_____	1) _____	_____
2) _____	_____	2) _____	_____	2) _____	_____
3) _____	_____	3) _____	_____	Summer II:	
4) _____	_____	4) _____	_____	1) _____	_____
5) _____	_____	5) _____	_____	2) _____	_____

If applicable, please list all courses you plan to take in the upcoming year:

Did you complete (or are you currently completing) a **field work assignment**? Yes No
If yes, please briefly describe & include a reference with address and phone number:

Name of Faculty Advisor: _____ Advisor's Phone: (____) _____

Employment Information

Position/Title: _____ Employer: _____

Work Address: _____

Street Address

City

State

ZIP Code

Work Phone: (____) _____ E-mail Address: _____

Is it acceptable to call you at your workplace? Yes No Send e-mail to you at work? Yes No

Reflections on the Past Year

Please attach a separate sheet of paper if additional space is necessary.

Over the past year, what have been your **most significant challenges/concerns** in your studies and/or work?

What gives you the **most satisfaction or sense of accomplishment** in your studies/work?

How are you involved in the life of your local church? In this Association? In the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference?

Are you involved in any other religious or secular **volunteer activities**? Yes No If yes, please explain:

Do you have a **field placement** planned for the coming year? Yes No If yes, **what are your objectives** for that placement?

Are there any **issues or concerns** that you feel the Committee on Ministry of this Association needs to be aware of?

Please return this Member in Discernment Application to:

Chair of the COM: _____

Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Member-in-Discernment - Annual Review (20__)

Question: Does this person show promise for becoming an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ? Is that potential being developed so it is likely that ordination can be granted at the conclusion of the process?

Date of **Notification** to Member in Discernment of **Annual Review**
(with Annual Review Form attached/enclosed): _____

Date of **Annual Review**: _____

Member-in-Discernment Subcommittee/
COM Members present:

Current Academic Status and Institution

(e.g., College Junior, M.Div. Middler, D.Min. Cand., etc.): _____ at _____

If applicable, were **Transcripts/Grade Reports Provided**: Yes No

Did Member-in-Discernment provide completed **Annual Review Form**? Yes No

Was **Member-in-Discernment Process Checklist** reviewed and updated? Yes No

Were **PSEC Guidelines For Ordination** reviewed? Yes No

If applicable, was **Scholarship Information** disseminated? Yes No

If applicable, notified of any mandatory trainings (MID Days, etc.)? Yes No

Was a **Covenantal Agreement/Action Plan** previously developed?
If yes, is the Member-in-Discernment compliant? Yes No

Comments:

Concerns or questions voiced by Member-in-Discernment:

Decision to Renew person's Member-in-Discernment status for another year: Yes No

Mentor assigned for upcoming year: _____

APPENDIX E: CHART FOR EDUCATIONAL FORMATION PLANNING

Adapted from <i>Ministry Issues Draft</i> 3.1 The Marks	<i>Options for Educational Content or Experiences to Promote the Marks (EFP Possibilities)</i>		<i>Conference Church & Ministry Committee's Recommended Educational Content or Experiences to Promote the Marks (Actual EFP)</i>	<i>Date Completed</i>
<i>SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION FOR MINISTRY</i>				
1. A lived faith showing a love of God, trust in Jesus, and openness to the Holy Spirit.				
2. Devotion to the word of God as revealed through scripture and Christian traditions.				
3. Commitment to life-long spiritual growth and practice, individually and in community.				
4. A sense of being called by God and the community to authorized ministry in the church.				
5. Openness to continuing discernment of one's call in community.				
<i>UCC IDENTITY FOR MINISTRY</i>				
1. Acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as sole Head of the church.				
2. A passion for the oneness of the body of Christ as expressed in the work of ecumenism, justice, and the full embrace of all				

persons in God's radical hospitality.				
3. Active membership in a local church of the UCC.				
4. An understanding of the concept of covenant and how it informs the nature, purpose, and polity of the United Church of Christ.	Courses in UCC theology and polity			
5. A willingness to live in the covenants of mutual accountability that characterize authorized ministry in the UCC.				
6. Ongoing demonstration of commitment to the United Church of Christ.		See Resources on UCC Identity		
7. Stewardship of resources, including financial support of the church in all its settings.				
8. Participation in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including the conference/ Conference and local church.		See Resource on UCC Identity		
	The Ability:			
9. to articulate diverse histories that comprise the United Church of Christ, to situate them in the broader evolution of faith traditions, and		Courses in UCC history, church history		

to relate them to the theology, polity and practices of the Member's local church, Conference, and conference.				
10. to explain and work within the current polity of the UCC and its denominational structure, and to describe the covenantal relationships among the General Synod, national setting, conferences, Conferences and local congregations of the UCC.		Courses in UCC polity		
11. to share key elements of the UCC's statement of faith, constitution with its preamble and by-laws regarding the governance, mission and theologies of the UCC and their implications for the life of the church.		Courses in UCC theology and polity		
12. to articulate the UCC's commitment to being a united and uniting, multiracial and multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all, and just peace church.		Courses in UCC polity; courses in social justice issues related to the UCC's commitments		
13. to envision how the UCC in its various settings may respond to religious, social, economic, and political trends, changing		See Resource on UCC Identity		

demographics, and other emerging factors.				
14. to use and promote the informational and educational resources available through UCC publications and websites.		Courses in UCC polity		
PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FORMATION FOR MINISTRY				
1. A healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community and personal experience.				
2. A sense of theological identity and authority, while being responsive to the opinions and values of others, including those whom the MID will serve.		Courses in constructive theology; courses in theological method		
3. A healthy awareness of strengths, weaknesses and limits, and assumption of responsibility for one's body, mind and spirit.		Units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE); supervised practice of ministry		
4. Knowledge and observance of personal and professional boundaries in interpersonal, congregational, and community settings.		A basic course in pastoral care; courses in pastoral ethics, courses in ministry; courses in ministerial practice/leadership		
5. A commitment to continuing education,				

professional development and life-long learning.				
6. Demonstrated moral maturity, including integrity in personal and public life and responsibility to self, family, church and community.		Courses in Christian ethics help one think about this, but do not necessarily produce the practice		
The Ability:				
7. to affirm the identities of others, including others very unlike the one's own self.		A basic course in pastoral care		
8. to engage in self-reflection and to seek and use feedback from others appropriately.		Courses in pastoral care, CPE		
9. to engage productively in public discourse, expecting to grow and be transformed through the exchange of viewpoints.		Courses in speech, writing and critical thinking could help		
10. to take initiative in leadership, and to frame and test a vision in community.		Courses in pastoral leadership could help; contextual or field education with appropriate supervision and reflection		
11. to listen empathically, communicate appropriately, and keep appropriate confidences.		A basic course in pastoral care		
12. to function as part of a team, to give and receive supervision, and to mutually equip and motivate the community of faith.		Courses in leadership and/or administration; supervised practice of ministry		

13. to be resourceful and adaptable, and know where to locate additional resources and seek consultation when needed.		Courses in leadership and/or administration; supervised practice of ministry		
14. to accept and promote diversity, to inspire others to do so, and to minister in a multi-cultural, multi-racial, open and affirming, just peace, accessible-to-all, united and uniting church.		Courses in UCC history, theology and polity will educate on these specific commitments; courses on ethical issues related to the named commitments; courses in nurturing and leading multicultural, multiracial congregations may impart more specific skills.		
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR MINISTRY				
General Knowledge and Skills				
The Ability:				
1. to understand and appreciate a variety of perspectives on life.				
2. to understand the profound differences that physical, psychological, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, class, cultural, racial, and ethnic factors make in the ways that human beings experience the world.		Psychology courses, cultural studies courses		
3. to comprehend the impact of historical change upon the thoughts, feelings, and actions of individuals and societies.		Survey courses in history		
4. to perceive how a person's perspectives and interests shape		Literature courses, communications courses,		

communication, and to appreciate the virtues and limitations of those perspectives and interests.		writing courses, courses in critical thinking		
5. to grasp and evaluate the justifications that people give for their opinions.		Writing courses; courses in critical thinking, philosophy courses		
6. to apply basic concepts of psychology to the understanding of oneself, others, and human interactions.		Basic psychology courses		
7. to appreciate the importance of symbols and images in human culture(s).		Art appreciation courses, cultural studies courses, literature courses		
8. to understand the various meanings and purposes of the arts.		Arts appreciation courses, art history courses		
9. to analyze social, political, and economic dynamics, using the tools of the social and natural sciences.		Sociology courses, political science courses, economics courses		
10. to use respectfully and relationally a basic knowledge of specific human cultures.		Cultural studies courses, anthropology courses		
11. to communicate clearly and cogently with appropriate media and technologies.		Communications courses, writing courses, speech courses		
Knowledge and Skills Specific to Authorized Ministry				
1. A thorough knowledge of, and		Courses in Old Testament literature, history and theology;		

personal engagement with, the Bible.		courses in New Testament literature, history and theology		
2. Skill with methods of biblical interpretation, including the historic interpretive traditions of the church and contemporary methods, particularly those from historically underrepresented communities.		Courses in Old Testament interpretation; courses in New Testament interpretation; courses in Biblical interpretation		
3. A deepening familiarity with the global history of the Christian churches through the ages and across cultures, including the newest Christian populations, and an understanding of the evolution of Christian communities in the United States.		Courses in church history; courses in American church history or religious histories; courses in global Christianity		
4. A deepening familiarity with contemporary theological ways of thinking and with the rich and varied theological heritages, creeds, liturgies, and spiritual practices of the Christian churches.		Courses in historical theology or history of Christian thought; courses in contemporary global theologies; courses in Christian ethics; courses in worship; courses in spiritual practices		
5. An understanding of other religions and their foundational documents.		Courses in world religions; courses in specific non-Christian religions		
The Ability:				

6. to articulate a theological understanding of authorized ministry, and to relate it to the practice of ministry.		UCC history, theology, and polity; course of study about the pastoral office		
7. to analyze, evaluate, and integrate the biblical, historical, theological, and pastoral disciplines and practices in ways that contribute to fruitful and faithful Christian ministry.		Constructive theology courses, pastoral theology courses, integrative courses of various types		
8. to understand the nature, use, and misuse of power and authority, and to exercise them appropriately and effectively in authorized ministry.		Supervised practice of ministry with appropriate reflection; courses in theology, philosophy, social sciences		
9. to engage in community leadership that is collaborative and transformative.		Courses in leadership of religious communities		
10. to engage in respectful ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.		Courses in ecumenics, courses in comparative religions, courses from an interfaith perspective		
11. to celebrate the unique features of local faith communities while encouraging them to be receptive to perspectives from the broader church and world.		Courses in congregational dynamics; courses in contextual analysis; courses in the global diversity of faith traditions		
12. to appreciate, practice, and pass on traditions of faith while interpreting		Courses in historical theology		

them in light of the context of a diverse and changing world.				
13. to adapt the practice of ministry to the unique social, cultural, environmental, and ecclesiastical aspects of particular settings.		Courses in the leadership of religious communities, courses in contextual analysis		
14. to discern God's mission in the world and, in response, to lead ministries of compassion, nurture, justice, and proclamation that support fullness of life for all people.		Courses in mission, courses in leadership of religious communities, courses in contextual analysis		
15. to preach the good news, lead worship and participate in the sacraments in a manner faithful to the broader Christian heritage and appropriate to the characteristics of a specific culture and setting.		Courses in preaching, courses in worship		
16. to provide effective and appropriate pastoral care and Christian education, and to equip and motivate others to share in these ministries.		Courses in pastoral care, courses in Christian education		
17. to organize and implement programs, administer the operations of a complex organization, and		Courses in administration and leadership of religious communities		

initiate change when appropriate.				
18. to read the contexts of a community's ministry and creatively lead that community through change or conflict.		Courses in conflict transformation, courses in contextual analysis		
19. to lead and encourage ministries of evangelism, service, stewardship, and social transformation.		Courses in evangelism, courses in stewardship, courses in social justice advocacy and mobilization, Christian ethics		
20. to understand and participate in the financial administration of a church and other religious organizations.		Courses in organizational finance		

APPENDIX F1: CONFERENCE GUIDELINES FOR ORDINATION
The Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the UCC

The Conference Ordination Examination team recognizes that local Associations ultimately approve individuals for ordination. We seek to help the process providing a consistent format for examining candidates for ordination and providing feedback from those examinations so that Association Ministry Committees might be better able to discern a candidate's preparedness for ministry.

The Ordination Examination Team anticipates meeting with candidates during their final year of seminary. The following expectations are to be met and when all of the written materials have been mailed to the Team convener, a date will be set for the exam.

1. The student will provide a written statement of his/her faith journey and be able to articulate how his/her faith relates to his/her daily life.
2. The student will write an ordination paper in which he/she reflects on the questions contained in the ordination vows for the United Church of Christ. The Exam Team asks that special emphasis be placed on the student's understanding of the covenantal relationship that undergirds who we are as a denomination.
3. The student will craft a liturgy and sermon for a funeral based on a case study provided by the Exam Team. If the student has had an opportunity to actually officiate at a funeral or memorial service, that experience may be used instead.
4. The student will present one sermon with the theme on the cross or the resurrection.

Revised 3/2016

APPENDIX F2: ORDINATION EXAM TEAM DEMOGRAPHICS SHEET

Name:		
Street Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Home Tel. #		
Mobile #		
Email:		
Home Church:		City:
Home Church Pastor:		
Association Mid-Status:		
Association Chair, COM:		
Assigned Mentor:		
Spiritual Director:		
Undergraduate degree from:		
Year of graduation:		
Seminary attended:		
Date of graduation:		
Field Education Site(s):		
Supervisor(s):		
Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)		
Location:		
Supervisor:		
Dates:		
Conference/Association Meetings attended:		
Have you completed a course or had experience in the following? Please check		
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> Preaching	
<input type="checkbox"/> UCC Polity	<input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism	
<input type="checkbox"/> Church Administration		

Revised 3/2016

APPENDIX G: OUTLINE FOR THE ORDINATION INTERVIEW

Outline for the Ordination Interview

1. Introduction of the candidate, the advisor, the local church representative, each member of the Committee on Ministry, and any others who may be present.
2. A time for prayer or worship.
3. Preview of the agenda and procedure to be used in the ordination interview.
4. A statement by the in-care advisor reviewing the member in discernment period and his or her perceptions of the candidate based on that experience.
5. A statement by the candidate about his or her pilgrimage during the member in discernment process and present sense of call to ordained ministry.
6. A statement by the candidate about the type of call being sought (local church pastorate or other type of ordained ministry position) or information about a call if one is being considered or has been extended.
7. Discussion by the COM with the candidate about questions or issues that were raised by the candidate's statement or by any of the documentation provided by the candidate.
8. Candidate and guests are temporarily excused while COM deliberates and votes.
9. COM informs candidate of decision.
10. Closure, including a statement by the COM to the Candidate about next steps.

Guidelines for the Ordination Interview

In conducting its examination, the Committee on the Ministry will use all of the data it has gathered to guide it during the examination and in making its decision. The Committee will be alert both to tangible and intangible evidences of the candidate's fitness for ordained ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. It will recognize that fitness is more than having attained the educational qualifications. Below are samples of questions that may enable the Committee to inquire into the substance of the candidate's fitness for ordained ministry.

- **Faith and Calling.** Is this a person of mature Christian faith? Does this person have a personal spiritual life and practice that can sustain her or him in the rigors of ordained ministry? Does this person understand the meaning of call to ministry and give evidence of an authentic call to ordained ministry? Can this person clearly articulate her or his theological perspective?
- **Church Loyalty and Commitment.** How does this person understand the polity of the United Church of Christ and the role and expectations of an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ within this polity? Is this person committed to the United Church of Christ? Will this person be a respected representative of the United Church of Christ? How does this person understand the ecumenical commitments of the United Church of Christ and what are his or her ecumenical understandings and commitments?
- **Knowledge and Skills.** Does this person have a general liberal arts education and give evidence of being an educated person? Is this person adequately educated in Bible, theology, church history, worship, pastoral care and counseling, administration, church education, and so on? Is there documentation that this person has acquired the skills necessary for ordained ministry? Does this person give evidence of knowing the norms of the United Church of Christ in these areas? Can this person do the work of an ordained minister?
- **Character and Personal Qualities.** Is this a mature person with a sense of integrity? Is this a person others will be able to trust and on whom they will be able to rely? Will this person be dependable? Will he or she continue to grow?
- **Understandings of Ordained Ministry.** Does this person have a realistic understanding of the expectations, requirements, and demands of ordained ministry? Has the person received or is the person seeking a call to a particular type of ordained ministry? How does the person see herself or himself functioning in that particular type of ministry and particular setting for ministry?

APPENDIX H: THE ORDINATION PAPER

An ordination paper is a requirement of all MIDs seeking ordination and is to be prepared after the MID has completed the program of education and training as previously agreed upon with the COM. The paper will be written in three parts.

Part one is the candidate's theological perspective. This paper is to be seen as a setting forth of one's own theological perspective, not as an academic term paper. There are many ways in which a candidate could go about writing this part. One way would be to state what one believes in the context of or in relation to the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith, or in the context of, or in relation to, paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. The purpose of part one of the commissioning paper is to provide a way for the candidate to share her or his present grasp and understanding of the teachings and traditions of the Christian Church and relate this to her or his own theological perspective.

Part two of the commissioning paper is intended to provide an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate his or her knowledge and understanding of the history, theological roots, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ. The student could write an interpretation of the history and theological roots of the United Church of Christ, referring to and commenting on key dates, persons, events, and documents that illustrate his or her interpretation in addressing the polity and practice issues. The candidate could identify and define some key words and use them to characterize the polity and practice of the United Church of Christ (e.g., covenant, unity, autonomy, congregational, etc.). The candidate then could illustrate how these understandings make claims on the way he or she will practice ministry as an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. Another approach would be to write an interpretation of paragraphs 6, 9, 16, 17, and 18 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

Part three of the commissioning paper is intended to be an integrating statement that invites the candidate to relate the faith and practice of the Church to her or his own pilgrimage of faith and understandings of and intentions for her or his ministry as a person ordained by the United Church of Christ. Following are suggestions for subject matter for part three of the commissioning paper:

- a. The person as a person of faith. What has been your faith pilgrimage? How has your understanding of yourself as a person of faith changed and grown during the time of preparation for ministry?
- b. The person as one called to commissioned ministry. How has your understanding of call changed or grown during the period of preparation? What is your understanding of ordination? church? mission? ministry? What is the challenge and vision you have for your ministry?
- c. The person as one called to a particular type of ordained ministry. Describe how you see yourself functioning in the type of ministry and setting for ministry for which you have been preparing.
- d. The person as one called to ordained ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. How do you understand yourself as an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ? What are your commitments to the United Church of Christ and the Church Ecumenical? What are those aspects of the history, tradition, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ that are most valued by you, and how will these shape the way you engage in the tasks of commissioned ministry?

APPENDIX I: THE COMMISSIONING PAPER

A commissioning paper is a requirement of all MID seeking Commissioning and is to be prepared after the MID has completed the program of education and training as previously agreed upon with the COM. The paper will be developed in three parts.

Part one is the candidate's theological perspective. This paper is to be seen as a setting forth of one's own theological perspective, not as an academic term paper. There are many ways in which a candidate could go about writing this part. One way would be to state what one believes in the context of or in relation to the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith, or in the context of, or in relation to, paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. The purpose of part one of the commissioning paper is to provide a way for the candidate to share her or his present grasp and understanding of the teachings and traditions of the Christian Church and relate this to her or his own theological perspective.

Part two of the commissioning paper is intended to provide an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate his or her knowledge and understanding of the history, theological roots, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ. The student could write an interpretation of the history and theological roots of the United Church of Christ, referring to and commenting on key dates, persons, events, and documents that illustrate his or her interpretation. In addressing the polity and practice issues, the candidate could identify and define some key words and use them to characterize the polity and practice of the United Church of Christ (e.g., covenant, unity, autonomy, congregational, etc.). The candidate then could illustrate how these understandings make claims on the way he or she will practice ministry as a commissioned minister of the United Church of Christ. Another approach would be to write an interpretation of paragraphs 6, 9, 16, 17, and 18 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

Part three of the commissioning paper is intended to be an integrating statement that invites the candidate to relate the faith and practice of the Church to her or his own pilgrimage of faith and understandings of and intentions for her or his ministry as a person commissioned by the United Church of Christ. Following are suggestions for subject matter for part three of the commissioning paper:

- a. The person as a person of faith. What has been your faith pilgrimage? How has your understanding of yourself as a person of faith changed and grown during the time of preparation for ministry?
- b. The person as one called to commissioned ministry. How has your understanding of call changed or grown during the period of preparation? What is your understanding of commissioning? church? mission? ministry? What is the challenge and vision you have for your ministry?
- c. The person as one called to a particular type of commissioned ministry. Describe how you see yourself functioning in the type of ministry and setting for ministry for which you have been preparing.
- d. The person as one called to commissioned ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. How do you understand yourself as a commissioned minister of the United Church of Christ? What are your commitments to the United Church of Christ and the Church Ecumenical? What are those aspects of the history, tradition, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ that are most valued by you, and how will these shape the way you engage in the tasks of commissioned ministry?

APPENDIX J: THE ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL

When a candidate has successfully completed the ordination examination by the Association Committee on Ministry, the next step in the approval process is an ecclesiastical council. (Please check with your Association to see if they require an ecclesiastical council.) Depending on the Association's policy, the ecclesiastical council could be held before or following the point at which the candidate has received a call to an ordained ministry position recognized by the Association.

The Association COM arranges for an official meeting of an ecclesiastical council and decides with the candidate what type of presentation the candidate will make to the ecclesiastical council and how all or a portion of the candidate's ordination paper will be made available to the delegates to the ecclesiastical council.,

Ideally, distribution of the candidate's ordination paper to the delegates in time for their reading before the ecclesiastical council is encouraged. If this is not feasible, perhaps certain sections of the paper or a summary of the paper could be made available. In any case, the complete paper should be available to the delegates at the time of the ecclesiastical council.

There are a variety of options available for the candidate's presentation to the ecclesiastical council. Among these are for the candidate to read all or portions of the ordination paper, to present a summary of the ordination paper, or to comment on the ordination paper.

The purpose of the ecclesiastical council is to authorize the ordination of the candidate. Please see page 10 of Section 3 (Ordained Ministry) in the Manual on Ministry.

APPENDIX K: THE MARKS OF FAITHFUL AND EFFECTIVE AUTHORIZED MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

EXHIBITING A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION AND ONGOING SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

- 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 authorized ministry by God and the Church.
- Continuing discernment of one's call in community.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the church.
- Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit working through silence, language, art, music, ritual and symbols across generations and contexts.
- Knowing the elements and purpose of Christian worship in nurturing a life of faith.
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual nurture and development.

NURTURING UCC IDENTITY

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the body of Christ reflected in Scripture (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 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.
- Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships of the United Church of Christ.

BUILDING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Empowering the Church 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 effectively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Understanding community context and navigating change with a community.
- 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.
- Nurturing effective proclamation and preaching.
- Understanding the history of the Christian church, from biblical times forward.
- Bringing life to the 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.

CARING FOR OTHERS

- Nurturing care and compassion for all God's creation.
- Maintaining a basic understanding of mental health and wellness.
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span.
- Providing hope and healing to a hurting world.
- Attending to one's own spiritual and pastoral care and engagement in supervision, as appropriate.

PARTICIPATING IN THEOLOGICAL PRAXIS

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity.
- Experiencing and appreciating a variety of theological perspectives.
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching, and ecclesial and community leadership.
- Articulating a theology of ministry consistent with one's ministerial practices.

ENCOUNTERING THE OTHER WITH 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 implicit bias in all ministry settings and in the life of the church.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Embodying the United Church of Christ Ministerial Code of Ethics.

STRENGTHENING INTER- AND INTRA- PERSONAL ASSETS

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Respecting the dignity of all God's people.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.
- Practicing self-care and life balance.

APPENDIX L: GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR SEMINARIANS

PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR SEMINARIANS POLICY

Changes approved September 10, 2012 by the Church and Ministry Council -
This policy replaces any and all other policy statements made previous to this date.

For a number of years the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference has provided scholarships for members in discernment of the seven Associations. These scholarships have been funded by the income from the Arcadia Make-a-Difference Endowment of the PSEC. Most recently we have been able to support full-time students at the rate of \$500/semester; part-time students have received half that amount.

In order to make the best use of Conference resources and support our students in an equitable way, the following refinements to the scholarship program (Student Grant Assistance) were recently approved by the Church and Ministry Council on September 10, 2012:

- Grants will be provided to each student enrolled full-time in an accredited seminary not to exceed \$3000 over the course of study (based on six semesters of full-time coursework).
- Grants will be provided for part-time students enrolled in an accredited seminary at the rate of half the amount granted to full-time students.
- The dollar amount of assistance in any given year may vary depending on investment income.

STUDENT GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR SEMINARIANS

Guidelines and Application Procedures

GUIDELINES

The Conference Student Grant Assistance Program for Seminarians is administered by the Church and Ministry Council in collaboration with the Committee on Ministry of the Associations.

1. The Conference Student Grant Assistance Program for Seminarians seeks to provide assistance to persons enrolled in an accredited seminary who are members of the United Church of Christ and officially enrolled as a Member in Discernment of an Association or Conference and who are preparing for a church-related occupation.
2. Awards under the Conference Student Grant Assistance Program for Seminarians are supplemental to all other resources available to the seminarian, whether from a college, seminary, local church, family, scholarships and other sources.
3. The awards are made payable directly to the student.
4. Awards are made semi-annually for the school year.
5. All applications must first be approved by the Association Committee on Ministry in which the seminarian has Member in Discernment status and recommended by that committee or its appointed officer.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

1. Application forms will be made available by the Conference to Association Committee on Ministry chairs to pass on to the seminary students in their association.
2. The application forms should be completed in their entirety and be returned to the Association Committee Chair or its appointed officer for review, approval and recommendation by the following dates:

(Please note, incomplete forms will not be reviewed.)

Fall Semester: Forms to COMs by May 1st ; due to the Conference Office by June 15th

Spring Semester: Forms to COMs by August 1st ; due to the Conference Office by September 15th

3. The target dates for the distribution of awards are July 1st and October 1st. Checks will be mailed directly to the students.

STUDENT GRANT ASSISTANCE APPLICATION – Fall 2017

for those enrolled in M Div. studies August-December, 2017

Student Instructions:

- complete this form in full (can be completed on computer)
- print, sign, and forward it, as soon as possible, to the Ministry Chair of the Association with which you are in-care. *Please note incomplete forms will not be reviewed.*

Ministry Chair Instructions:

- review and indicate approval of this request, by signing in the appropriate space below
- return the form, as soon as possible to Brea Rarick, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, 1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464

NAME: _____
HOME STREET ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

HOME CHURCH: _____ LOCATION: _____

SEMINARY ATTENDING: _____
YOUR STREET ADDRESS AT SEMINARY: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

YOUR PHONE AT SEMINARY: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

DATE TAKEN IN-CARE (month/day/year): _____ EXPECTED GRAD YEAR: _____
(DATE MUST BE ENTERED)

IN CARE ASSOCIATION: _____

I hereby apply to the Church and Ministry Council of Pennsylvania Southeast Conference for student grant assistance. By signing this application, I certify that I am duly enrolled as a:

full-time student in my _____ year part-time student in my _____ year

in an accredited seminary preparing for leadership in the church.

If my enrollment status changes during the term, I must contact the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (at the above address) in writing or by e-mail of this change.

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(Ministry Chair Signature)

(Date)

APPENDIX M: VOCATIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Pennsylvania Southeast Conference United Church of Christ

When COM Chair contacts PSEC Registrar/Asst. for Search and Call about a student interested in assessment, the Registrar/Asst. for Search and Call sends this to student to begin process (along with the Assessment Info Sheet and payment invoice; note that a separate invoice is generated for the home church of the student).

This assessment is an opportunity for growth and insight. We hope that all participants will approach this process with an open mind and willingness to hear those things about themselves that may need attention and support. We are all children of God and as such we have areas of strength and growth that need to be nurtured.

A career assessment—which includes comprehensive personal, emotional, and psychological evaluation—is required for all persons prior to entering the Member In Discernment (MID) Process. Participants will be asked to provide personal and biographical information and take a series of standardized assessments.

The assessment is conducted by trained counselors who are experienced in working with ministry candidates and seasoned clergy. The career assessment program is more than evaluative: it is educational and developmental. It is one discernment tool to evaluate fitness for ministry which is ultimately determined by Committees on Ministry during the entire course of a MID's training program.

This process requires a great deal of preparation and a degree of self-disclosure. The information that is gathered is intended to be used by potential ministry candidates to identify personal strengths, motivation, areas of needed growth, and potential for ministry success. This is the beginning of a self-examination process that is expected to continue throughout a candidate's professional career.

In order to initiate the assessment process, please call the Conference Registrar and Assistant for Search and Call at 484-949-8774 x311.

- Vocational/Psychological Assessment Information Sheet –This form will be emailed to you for completion, to then be signed by your Association Committee on Ministry Chair and returned to the Conference Registrar and Assistant for Search and Call.
- The billing process: The cost of the assessment is shared by the applicant, the applicant's local church, and the Conference, with each party paying one third. You and your home church will receive invoices for payment. Checks should be made payable to: Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, indicating your name and "Vo/Psy" in the memo section. When the two payments have been received, you and Physis Associates, the assessment organization, will be notified. You will be given a contact name and number to communicate directly with Physis Associates to set up your assessment schedule.
- The assessment process: The assessment process normally takes approximately four to six weeks to complete, from initial appointment to final feedback appointment as noted below:
 - 1st visit - in office in Exton; 4 hours of testing.
 - 2nd visit- in office in Exton; 3-4 hours with interview & more testing.
 - 3rd visit- One hour feedback in office or by phone.

PLEASE NOTE: When making the commitment to enter Vocational/Psychological assessment, you need to be able to confirm and keep time commitments with the Physis Associates staff. The Physis staff will make every effort to work with you in scheduling the appointments, and it is expected that you will make those appointments a priority on your calendar. If appointments are not kept, it could cost you an additional fee to Physis Associates.

- Copies of the assessment results will be shared, upon your signature of release, with the Chair of the Association Committee on Ministry and the Conference Minister.

Blessings to you in this process! May it be an opportunity for insight and growth as you continue to discern God's will in your service to the church.

2012; updated 3-25-15; updated 8-11-15

Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
VOCATIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT INFORMATION SHEET

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PH: _____

CELL PH: _____

WORK PH: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS(ES)(Primary)_____

(Alternate) _____

HOME/SPONSORING CHURCH NAME & ADDRESS

ASSOCIATION: _____

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY CHAIR (please print) _____

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY CHAIR ADDRESS (for purposes of mailing Physis report*):

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY CHAIR SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

PURPOSE FOR ASSESSMENT: (check one)

- Ordained Ministry Licensed Lay Ministry Commissioned Ministry Reinstatement of Status

*NOTE: A copy of the report will also be mailed to the Conference Minister, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, 1441 Laura Lane, Suite 100, Pottstown, PA 19464 and to the Committee on Ministry Chair noted above.