

Guidelines for SPRCs and Church Conferences Recommending a Person for Certified Candidacy

Every prospective candidate for ministry must seek the recommendation of both the SPRC (or equivalent body as determined by DCOM) and the approval by the charge conference or other approved ministry setting at their supporting local church or comparable UM extension ministry setting. (BOD ¶1310).

Voting on an application for ministry is not a rubberstamp, but a prayerful request of the congregation. Congregations can say no. Congregations can also help a person clarify their call to ministry – are they being called to ordination, which is a ministry set apart? Is there a call to licensed ministry? Or can they fulfill their call as a Lay Person Assigned, Deaconess, Certified Lay Minister, etc.?

If a local church is unaware of how a candidate has used their gifts at their church where they are a member, then the candidate may not be ready to be recommended. If the SPRC does not know the person coming before them for a vote, consider having the candidate get to know the SPRC members at a prior gathering before the SPRC meeting where they are voted on for a recommendation. The local church knows the prospective candidates best which is why, through these two important votes, the Board of Ordained Ministry relies on local churches to first hear, identify and affirm the call of a candidate for ministry.

When a candidate comes before these two bodies, the DSC Board of Ordained Ministry would suggest those in leadership share and lead the bodies of leadership through the following questions so they may prayerfully consider them before taking a vote on the candidate.

- 1) Is this candidate an active member of your church and attends worship regularly?
- 2) Do they personally know the leaders of your church?
- 3) Do you think this candidate would be a suitable pastor?
- 4) Can you see this person as the pastor of your church?
- 5) What gifts does this person have in ministry and how are they displayed in the ministry of the church?
- 6) Does this person hear a call to be clergy, beyond being active as a lay person?
- 7) Does this person show the administrative gifts needed to be a pastor of a church?
 - a. Does this person show up on time?
 - b. Do they follow through?
 - c. Do they volunteer for jobs that are both subtle and behind the scenes as well as prominent and visual?
 - d. Can they budget their time?
- 8) Does this person demonstrate the personal skills needed to pastor a church?
 - a. Can they clearly communicate with others?
 - b. Do people enjoy communicating with the candidate?
 - c. Can they relate to people who are different than their own context (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.)?

If an affirmative vote is taken by the SPRC, then the local church pastor may call for a vote to be taken at the church charge conference. If the charge conference vote is also affirmative, the pastor upon adjournment should fill out Form 104, which can be found on the DSC BOOM website, or found here:

https://dscumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/BOOM104_fillable.pdf



**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY
CHARGE CONFERENCE OR EQUIVALENT BODY RECOMMENDATION
Form 104**

I hereby declare my candidacy for licensed or ordained (circle one) ministry in The United Methodist Church and request the support and recommendation of the Charge Conference or equivalent body as specified by the district committee on ordained ministry for certification as a candidate for:

Order of Deacons: _____ Order of Elders: _____ License as Local Pastor: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____
(Signature of the Declared Candidate)

CHARGE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATION (or equivalent body)

Let those who consider recommending persons for candidacy as ministers in The United Methodist Church ask themselves the following questions which were first asked by John Wesley at the third conference of Methodist preachers in 1746 (*The Book of Discipline*, ¶310).

Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?

Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God's grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

Believing that _____ is called of God and is a suitable candidate for licensed or ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church, _____ (the recommending body) recommends him/her for certification as a candidate to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. In making this recommendation, we attest to the fact that the declared candidate has been a professing member in good standing of The United Methodist Church or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist campus ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one (1) year, has graduated from an accredited high school or received a certificate of equivalency, and has received by written ballot a two-thirds vote of this body.

Name: _____ Date: _____
(Signature of authorized elder, district superintendent, or bishop)

Conference: _____ District: _____