

In-Discernment Manual For Ordination

Central Southeast Ohio Association
of the
United Church of Christ

Prepared by:
Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry
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- F.....Marks Assessment Worksheet
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- H.....Annual Mentor Reflection Form
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- J..... Ethical Self-Disclosure Form
- K.....Application for In-Discernment Status
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- MGuidelines for Planning Your Ordination Service
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Table of Revisions

No.	Date	Description
0	02/02/03	Original Issue of Revised In-Discernment Manual
1	03/10/04	Update on Midwest Candidacy Assessment
2	04-14-04	Update on Language in several areas
3	06-09-04	Further Language Updates and Addition of Ordination Section
4	07-12-06	Further Language Updates and Ministry Assessment costs explanation
5	05-12-10	Further Language Updates
6	01-01-13	Further Language Updates, i.e., from In Care to In-Discernment
7	10-09-13	Updated and Combined all In-Discernment Manuals
8	09-08-21	Align with Manual on Ministry (2018)

A Word of Introduction

We rejoice and celebrate that you have sensed a call upon your life and are considering taking the next step. The mission of the Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry (DPAM) is to help you to discern that call and to prepare you for ordination in the United Church of Christ (UCC). It is our responsibility to advise, challenge, and evaluate your fitness for ministry. We have prepared this manual as a road map for the discernment process. The definitions and requirements listed here for ordained ministry describe our foundational expectations to assist you as you enter this process. We understand the discernment process as a covenant (Appendix I) and will endeavor to meet you in the special circumstances of your life. We ask that you be open to our concerns for your professional development. Our goal is your success in ministry.

1. Definitions

The **Central Southeast Ohio Association (CSEOA)**, acting for the whole of the UCC, Ordains persons for Ministry.

Association – For the purposes of this manual, the Association is the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Association Contacts

Administrative Minister – email: melodie.cseoa@heartlanducc.org

DPAM Chair – email: mike.cseoa@heartlanducc.org

Postal Address - CSEOA, P. O. Box 5, Baltimore, OH 43015

Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry (DPAM) – Under the auspices of the Central Southeast Ohio Association, the Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry is responsible for authorizing ordained ministers in the UCC. DPAM is comprised of both clergy and lay members.

DPAM Advisor - The DPAM Advisor is a current member of the Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry. A detailed description of the DPAM Advisor's responsibilities can be found in Appendix B.

Local Church Governing Board – The governing body of the Local Church of which the Member In-Discernment is a member.

Local Pastor – The Local Pastor is the pastor of the church of which the Member In-Discernment applicant is a member.

Marks for Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, hereafter referred to as “**Marks**” (Appendix E) is a key document in faith formation toward ordination.

Member In-Discernment (MID) is:

- A member of the UCC who has been called by God;
- Preparing for authorized Christian ministry;
- Taken In-Discernment by the Central Southeast Ohio Association;
- A member of a UCC church in the Central Southeast Ohio Association.

Mentor - DPAM will assign a mentor for the Member In-Discernment from outside of the Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry. A detailed description of your mentor's responsibilities can be found in Appendix C.

Ordained Minister

An Ordained Minister of the UCC is one of its members who has been called by God and Ordained to:

- Preach and teach the Gospel;
- Administer the sacraments and rites of the Church;
- Exercise pastoral care and leadership.

2. Important Things You Need to Know

- **The discernment process requires a minimum of two years but not more than seven years.**
- **Each Member In-Discernment (MID) will meet with DPAM at least annually.**
- **Review meetings need to be scheduled at least four months in advance.**
- **All Authorized Ministers, including MIDs, in the Association are required to attend Boundary Training every five years and Anti-racism as required by the Department of Church and Authorized Ministry.**

3. Steps in the Process to Become a Member In-Discernment

The Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry realizes that for various reasons, the first few steps of this process may not take place according to plan. For example, you may not have been aware

of this manual or you and your Local Church may not be aware of the intricacies of the process. However, the process works best when persons are taken In-Discernment at the beginning of their (seminary) education. **A person is to be In-Discernment a minimum of two years, beginning with acceptance as an In-Discernment applicant and ending with Approval for Ordination.** It cannot be over emphasized that you need to start the In-Discernment process as soon as possible as Ordination dates are influenced by time spent In-Discernment. The discernment process should last no longer than seven years.

This guideline represents the minimum requirements to qualify for ordination in this Association. The applicant or DPAM may request additional interviews or impose additional requirements when circumstances warrant.

3.1.1 Explore Call with Local Church and Secure Local Pastor Support

Your first step is to approach the pastor of the UCC congregation in which you hold membership. Together, you will prayerfully seek to discern your call to ministry. The pastor will listen to and counsel with you regarding your sense of call. If you decide to move ahead, your Local Pastor will provide the information you need to make contact with the Association.

3.1.2 Meet with a Member of DPAM

You and/or your pastor will contact the Association and arrange to meet with a representative of DPAM to obtain a copy of the *In-Discernment Manual* and review the process described in this manual. When you and your Local Pastor are both in agreement that you are prepared to enter into this covenantal relationship, you will be presented to your Local Church Governing Board by the pastor.

3.1.3 Secure Local Church Recommendation

You will request that your Local Church Governing Board recommend you to DPAM for In-Discernment status leading to Authorization for Ministry. You must be an active member of your church for at least one year so that together you may discern this call. A Local Church discernment committee is recommended to listen and provide feedback. To aid their discernment process, please provide the following documents:

A. A written paper that tells about:

1. Your spiritual journey;
2. Your sense of call;
3. What the United Church of Christ means to you;
4. Your current theology, including your understanding of God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, and Church and its mission.

B. Documentation of formal education (including your high school diploma), all post-high school academic transcripts, and your plans for seminary education, if applicable.

By this time, you should have received and reviewed a copy of this manual and have confirmed with your Local Church that there is a good expectation that you can complete the process for Approval for Ordination.

It is only with the recommendation of your Local Church's Governing Board that you will be presented to DPAM to be considered for In-Discernment status. However, the relationship with your Local Church does not end at this point. It is important that an ongoing supportive relationship between the applicant and the Local Church be maintained throughout the In-Discernment experience. The responsibilities of your church are detailed in Appendix D.

3.1.4 Schedule and Complete the Midwest Ministry Development Evaluation

All candidates for In-Discernment status are required to participate in a psychological/career evaluation. The Association utilizes Midwest Ministry Development. The assessment results will aid you and the Association in determining your readiness for ministry. The process is both challenging and, we hope, illuminating for you. The final report of the evaluation process received by the Association will be shared with DPAM and will be kept as part of your confidential file. It could be several weeks before you can obtain an appointment at Midwest, and the process of releasing the final report to the Association takes four to six weeks or longer. **It could be four to six months before this process is complete and you will be able to schedule a meeting with DPAM to apply for In-Discernment status.**

The Association pays a significant fee toward a group assessment and recommends funds for the rest be paid half by the applicant and half by the Local Church. An individual assessment will also be accepted by DPAM with applicant bearing the additional cost. Please contact the Association Administrative Minister for current fees and contact information.

3.1.5 Self-assessment of Marks (Appendix F)

It is important for you to become familiar with the Marks, as summarized in Appendix E. The complete booklet, *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ* (including rubric) is available as a free downloadable booklet from UCC Resources. You may also purchase a printed booklet from UCC Resources.

The assessment rubric is available in pdf format through the UCC Resources. This link should take you there: <https://www.uccresources.com/products/the-marks-rubric?variant=35848196495>

This assessment or rubric on page 6 of the Marks booklet will be used to ascertain your base at the time of your application for MID status. Once a MID, it will be used to develop your faith formation plan and to assess your growth through regular interviews with DPAM. Hopefully it will continue as a tool for life-long learning. The Marks are a way of identifying faithful and effective ministers. The emphasis is on growth in competency rather than perfection. Over the time in discernment DPAM will be looking for signs of movement indicating integration and growth.

Your current assessment is due with your application. Please contemplate the Marks and the place where you believe you are now (A, B, C,D) as you complete the rubric. The outer layer (A) indicates *experience with a particular mark*. The second layer (B) shows *deep understanding of a particular mark*. the third layer (C) demonstrates *integration of a mark with other marks and areas of ministry*. The core (D) represents *passion and love for the mark*.

These are aspects of discipleship; all Christians may exhibit any of the individual marks at any layer of growth. No minister is at the deepest level of passion and love in all Marks. Please plan to explain to DPAM your assessment of yourself in regard to the Marks.

3.1.6 Complete Ethical Background

When applying for standing as a MID in the United Church of Christ, you must make a conscientious assertion as to your moral and ethical fitness for the work of one called to ministry.

3.1.6 a Ethical Self-Disclosure

The Ethical Self-Disclosure Form, Appendix J, should be completed and emailed to the Administrative Minister.

3.1.6 b Criminal Background Check

A Multi-State Criminal and Sex Offender Background Check is required to become a MID. CSEOA does this through the Heartland Conference as a member of the UCC Insurance Board through Presidium at a substantial discount to you. Payment is due to the Heartland Conference at the conclusion of the report and must be paid to become a MID.

Contact Jill Frey, Executive Director of Outdoor Ministries of the Heartland Conference, jill@heartlanducc.org with your first and last name and email address.

Initiate your request when you are ready to complete all forms when you receive Presidiums' email (usually within one week).

Your background check once completed, which may take several weeks, will be available to CSEOA, DPAM.

Your payment should be sent to Heartland Conference, PO Box 1230, Worthington, OH 43085 with "CSEOA background check" on the memo line.

3.1.7 Apply for In-Discernment Status and meet with DPAM

Once all of the following paperwork is in your file, you may schedule a meeting with DPAM to formally apply for In-Discernment status. Your Local Pastor and a representative of the Local Church Governing Board are urged to attend this meeting with you. The paperwork includes:

- A. Verification of membership in a UCC church in the Association;
- B. Verification of receipt of *In-Discernment Manual* and introductory meeting with a member of DPAM;
- C. A letter from the Local Church Governing Board requesting In-Discernment status for you;
- D. Three letters of reference, including one from a pastor of your Local Church;
- E. Copies of the four written statements described in Section 3.1.3 of this manual;
- F. Transcripts from college and seminary as described in Section 3.1.3 of this manual;
- G. Midwest Ministry Development evaluation or equivalent;
- H. Self-assessment of the Marks (Appendix F);
- I. Criminal Background Check;
- J. Completed In-Discernment Application (Appendix K).

The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether you and the DPAM are ready to proceed to In-Discernment status. We will discuss what DPAM has learned about you. If questions need to be entertained, they will be. Your concerns and DPAM's concerns will be discussed. This is a two-way interview. You should take this opportunity to ask questions regarding the In-Discernment relationship and any special concerns you may have.

If DPAM approves, you will be given In-Discernment status. If approval is denied, DPAM will discuss the reasons with you. You may choose to work on the problem areas and to reapply to the DPAM for reconsideration no earlier than one year from the date of denial. Depending on the reasons for denying In-Discernment status, DPAM may waive the one-year waiting period.

3.1.8 Member In-Discernment (MID), Local Church, and DPAM Covenant Together

Once you have been approved for In-Discernment status, a covenant among you, your Local Church and DPAM will be discussed and signed (Appendix I).

3.1.9 DPAM Assigns Advisor and Mentor

Once you have been approved for In-Discernment status, DPAM will assign you a DPAM Advisor and a Mentor. The Department Advisor will be a current member of DPAM (Appendix B). The Mentor will be an ordained person who is not a member of DPAM (Appendix C). DPAM will strive to assign individuals who are compatible with the MID's interests and needs.

3.1.10 Grant and Scholarship Information

The following are grants and scholarships available to MIDs. Further information on these is found in the *Scholarship and Grant Brochure* or on the Heartland Conference website at <https://heartlanducc.org/generosity-and-mission/>.

Scholarships for Ministerial Preparation through the National Ministries of the UCC:

- Make A Difference! Scholarships
 - ✚ Make A Difference! Seminarian Scholarship
 - ✚ Make A Difference! Educational Support Award
 - ✚ Make A Difference! Doctoral Studies Award
- The Adrienne M. and Charles Shelby Rooks Fellowship for Racial and Ethnic Theological Students
- Garrett Trust Fund Scholarship
- Cannon Endowment Scholarship
- Richard and Helen Brown Pastoral Scholarships
- UCC Seminarian Scholarship Administered by the Seven Seminaries of the UCC
- UCC Seminarian Scholarships Administered by COREM
- William R. Johnson Scholarship

The following are grants and scholarships available through the Heartland Conference of the UCC. A letter along with an application will be sent to all who are eligible for any of these grants or scholarships by the end of March each year:

- The Richard A. and Rachael S. Wolff Fund
- Ministerial Student Aid Fund - Comprised of Alice Dennison Fund, Paul Kershner Fund, Ernest Heinz Fund, and Welsh Congregational Fund, as well as net proceeds from the conference-wide offering “That Seeds May Grow”

Grants and scholarships available through the Association:

- Sonnie Barnett Scholarship Fund
- Central Southeast Ohio Association Student Aid Fund

3.1.11 PROCESS CHECKLIST (Appendix N)

You may use this checklist to track where you are in the In-Discernment Process

Achieve In-Discernment Status	
	Secure Local Pastor Support: Discuss your call with your Local Pastor and secure his or her support of your desire to be taken In-Discernment. (Section 3.1.1)
	Schedule a Meeting with a Member of DPAM: Email the Association Administrative Minister to schedule a meeting with a member of DPAM to receive a copy and go over the requirements in the <i>In-Discernment Manual</i> . (Section 3.1.2)
	Secure Local Church Recommendation: Prepare the In-Discernment Application (Appendix K) and other materials needed to secure Local Church support. With your Local Pastor, meet with your Local Church Governing Board to secure its support of your In-Discernment status. (Section 3.1.3)
	Schedule and Complete Midwest Ministry Candidacy Assessment (Section 3.1.4)
	Prepare to Apply for In-Discernment Status: Prepare all documents required for consideration as a Member In-Discernment including: (Section 3.1.5)
	A. Verification of receipt of <i>In-Discernment Manual</i> and introductory meeting with a member of DPAM.

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	B. Verification of membership in a UCC church in the Association.
	C. A letter from the Local Church Governing Board requesting In-Discernment status.
	D. Three letters of reference including one from a pastor of your Local Church.
	E. Copies of the four written statements described in Section 3.1.3 of this manual.
	F. Transcripts from college and seminary as described in Section 3.1.3 of this manual.
	G. Midwest Ministry Development evaluation or equivalent.
	H. Completed In-Discernment Application (Appendix K).
	I. Marks Self-assessment (Appendix F)
	J. Criminal Background Check
	Meet with DPAM to Apply for In-Discernment Status: Contact the Chair of DPAM and schedule a meeting with DPAM to apply for In-Discernment status.
	Receive Approval for In-Discernment Status: Upon review of all required materials, DPAM will approve, deny, or defer the decision to approve In-Discernment status.
	DPAM Assigns Advisor and Mentor: Once a candidate has been approved, DPAM will assign a DPAM Advisor and a Mentor who is not a member of DPAM. A Covenant Agreement between the MID, the Local Church, and DPAM will be signed. (Appendix I)
	Preparation and Formation Plan: The plan is developed between the MID and DPAM based on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers.
Achieve Approval for Ordination	
	Meet General Requirements for DPAM Reviews: In addition to writing the papers listed below, each year DPAM will ask you to provide certain information documenting your progress to date.
	Write and Discuss First Review Paper: Write the First Review Paper and discuss before DPAM.
	Write and Discuss Second Review Paper: Write the Second Review Paper and discuss before DPAM.
	Prepare for Pre-Ordination Interview: Complete all requirements to be approved for Ordination. Schedule and participate in the Pre-Final Interview.
	Secure Local Church Recommendation: With your Local Church pastor, meet with your Local Church Governing Board to secure its request that DPAM conduct a final examination.
	Write and Defend Ordination Paper before DPAM. (Appendix L)

4. STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION

This guideline represents the minimum requirements to qualify for Ordination in this Association. The Member In-Discernment (MID) or the Department for Preparation for Authorized Ministry (DPAM) can request additional interviews or impose additional requirements when circumstances warrant.

- **The discernment process requires a minimum of two years and a maximum of seven years.**
- **Each MID will meet with DPAM at least annually.**

- **The MID shall be responsible for scheduling all review meetings with the DPAM Chair at least four months in advance.**
- **Initial Boundary training and Anti-racism training of at least five hours must be completed before Field Education and/or serving in any ministry setting. Any training sponsored by the United Church of Christ or an ecumenical partner will be acceptable. Trainings from other entities must be pre-approved by DPAM. Once the training is completed proof of completion must be submitted to DPAM via certificate or email from the sponsoring body. It is your responsibility to submit proof of completion.**
- **All Authorized Ministers, and MIDs in the Association are required to attend Boundary training every three to five years and Anti-racism as required by the Department of Church and Authorized Ministry.**
- **Each MID must be familiar with the Marks for Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers and Ministerial Codes found in Appendices E and G.**

4.1.1 Educational Preparation for Ministry Requirements

Educational preparation for ministry or seminary should be broad enough and deep enough to provide experience and understanding of The Marks.

Areas of study should include:

- Biblical studies of both Testaments;
- Exegesis of texts;
- Theology;
- Ethics;
- Worship and sacraments;
- Church history, including pre- and post-Reformation;
- Faith formation;
- Church administration;
- History and Polity of the UCC.

Additionally,

- MIDs must have one academic year of supervised practical education (field education) not in your home church unless exception granted by DPAM. Field Education site should be determined in consultation with DPAM.
- MIDs must have one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education.
- MIDs must have one course for credit on the History and Polity of the UCC.
- MIDs are strongly encouraged to engage in a period of spiritual direction with a trained spiritual director or spiritual guide.

Faith Formation for most ordained ministers will be seminary education. It is a fundamental requirement that seminary education be completed at a seminary approved by UCC's Local Church Ministries. It is important to remember that DPAM may impose additional requirements depending on the student's background (e.g., financial management, conflict resolution, or pastoral counseling). DPAM will strive to define any additional requirements as early as possible in the process.

4.1.2 Meet General Requirements for DPAM Reviews

Regular reviews (usually annual) will be held for the purpose of maintaining contact and improving the supportive relationship between you and DPAM. The review, using the Marks to measure an increasing competency for ministry, will be an opportunity to track progress toward ordination. The review is a face-to-face meeting for which you prepare a reflection paper to be discussed at the meeting. All matters relating to you will be held in confidence. Your Local Pastor, a representative of your Local Church Governing Board, and your Mentor are urged to participate in the reviews. If this is not possible, it is your responsibility to notify the chair of DPAM. During the entire In-Discernment process, it is your responsibility to have all documents to DPAM by the deadlines given. Any concerns or questions about your educational plans, personal issues, or questions of any kind should be directed to your DPAM Advisor directly or through your Mentor.

Written reflections for your reviews should be provided as outlined below depending on your point in the process or any special requests from DPAM. These reflections are to cover the subject adequately in a concise and brief form. **You are strongly encouraged to review each paper with your Mentor and Local Pastor before submitting it to DPAM.** These persons can be valuable and objective resources to assure that the paper is clear and meets DPAM's expectations.

4.1.3 Complete Annual Documentation Requirements

The following documents are to be submitted to DPAM at least two weeks before your review:

- A current transcript
- Annual Mentor Reflection Form (Appendix H)
- A letter from your Local Church pastor, sharing growth s/he has seen on the Marks and areas for continued development
- Evaluation by Field Education Supervisor when Field Ed is completed
- Evaluation by Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor, when CPE is completed

4.1.4 Write and Discuss First Review Paper

The first review meeting is to be held with DPAM no sooner than six months after being taken In-Discernment or at an appropriate time agreed upon between you and DPAM.

The First Review Paper shall:

- Reflect upon your seminary experience or Ministry setting in terms of expectations met and/or surpassed, disappointments, and overall impressions;
- Show how you have grown spiritually in recent months;
- Reflect on your theology paper in your MID application and note your growing edges;
- Describe your understanding of the nature of sacraments, and then write about either baptism or communion. (You will be asked to write about the other sacrament in your second review paper.)
- Review your Marks self-assessment and note growth.

After each review meeting, a vote will be taken whether to renew or to discontinue the In-Discernment relationship. You and your Mentor will be notified of the decision and any recommendations by DPAM. A copy of the notification letter will be added to your MID file. A summary of the discussion will be included in DPAM's minutes.

If DPAM hasn't seen you within a 12-month period, you will be asked to submit a Journey Update paper and to meet with DPAM to share progress since your last visit.

4.1.5 Write and Discuss Second Review Paper

The second review meeting shall be held with DPAM no sooner than six months after your first review or at an appropriate time agreed upon between you and DPAM.

The Second Review Paper shall:

- Describe a difficult real-life situation you encountered in the past year and how that situation could develop your understanding of ministry;
- Describe the theological/spiritual conflict that challenged you in this situation;
- Complete your First Review question on sacraments by writing about the other sacrament: baptism or communion. Also update any growth in your understanding of sacraments;
- Review your understanding of “covenant” and how it informs the polity of the UCC;
- Review your Marks self-assessment and note growth.

If DPAM hasn't seen you within a 12-month period, you will be asked to submit a Journey Update paper and to meet with DPAM to share progress since your last visit.

4.1.6 Prepare for Pre-Ordination Interview

No sooner than six months after your second review and at least four months prior to your Ordination interview, you and your Mentor will meet with the DPAM. This is an opportunity for DPAM to offer support to you and your Mentor in preparation for your Ordination interview. The specific goals of the Pre-Ordination review are to ensure that all requirements for ordination will be satisfactorily met and to outline expectations for the interview. During this meeting you and DPAM will:

- Review documents required for Approval for Ordination and address any missing or incomplete documents. Documents include:
 - Evidence of a Master of Divinity degree or equivalent;
 - Letter of request from your Local Church Governing Board to conduct an ordination examination;
 - Final Seminary Transcript;
 - Ordination Paper with sermon and worship bulletin;
 - Review requirements for the Ordination Paper. DPAM encourages authenticity in the paper and presentation. Appendix L describes the process and format for writing your Ordination paper;
- Answer any other questions or concerns raised by you or your Mentor;
- Establish the date for a digital copy of the Ordination paper to reach the Association no less than one month before your Ordination interview.

4.1.7 Secure Letter of Request for Ordination Examination from Local Church

At the end of the In-Discernment process, it is your Local Church that requests to DPAM that you be examined for Ordination. You may bring that letter of request from your Local Church Governing Board to your pre-ordination interview.

4.1.8 Write and Defend Ordination Paper

Your Ordination Paper is a pivotal contribution to DPAM's discernment as to your fitness to be Ordained into Christian Ministry in and on behalf of the UCC. It is, as well, a defining moment for you, one in which you express the substance of your belief and rationale so that others can understand and evaluate it.

DPAM seeks from you a paper that demonstrates informed thoughtfulness, evidence that you are a person of substance when articulating Christian faith and faithfulness and the practice of ordained ministry. Your writing needs to show that you can communicate with clarity as well as with good grammar and spelling. Take the time and space needed to state and elaborate enough so that readers

do not have to guess your intent. When building your assertions on sources that shape your thoughts and add to their credibility, indicate those sources in the body of the text or as footnotes. In effect, even though your paper is not written for academic review, it is a major document that you bring to the Church. It needs to reflect that you have had the benefit of rigorous theological education.

Be sure that you address all of the topics listed below. DPAM will be looking for each to be honored in significant measure. No matter the format you choose to organize your paper, missed topics will detract from favorable consideration of the work you submit.

Your treatment of each topic will not imply that there is only one acceptable answer. A concern of DPAM, nevertheless, is that the **positions you take can reasonably be located within the broad spectrum of theological and ecclesiological outlook to which the Church has witnessed over the centuries and in more recent times.**

DPAM urges you to submit drafts of your ordination paper to your Mentor, your Local Pastor, and others who are not DPAM members. It is hoped that, by making use of their feedback, successive drafts will generate increased clarity, uncovering emerging insights and nuances that add to your understandings. **Whatever your process for writing, the paper submitted needs to be authentically yours and a worthy contribution to the Church's discernment of your fitness for Ordained Ministry in and on behalf of the UCC.**

Please address the following topics:

1. Introduction: This is a chance to write about your starting point or the core of your theology.
2. Your understanding of the nature of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Trinity.
3. Your understanding of theodicy, sin, evil and salvation as you might express it to a questioning, grieving or confused person.
4. Your understanding of Scripture in the life of the Church and how you would use it to inform your Ministry.
5. Your understanding of Baptism as it relates to the Church Universal.
6. Your understanding of Holy Communion. How does it relate to the life of the community and the whole Body of Christ, denominationally and ecumenically?
7. The nature and purpose of the Church and its mission to individuals and society.
8. Please speak to your ordination in regard to:
 - a. The nature of the Pastoral Office;
 - b. Pastoral Authority in the United Church of Christ;
 - c. Your understanding of your call to Ordained Christian Ministry and the central events in your life that have led you to seek Ordination;
 - d. What is your understanding of the phrase "...and set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands..." in the service of Ordination?
 - e. Name two or three ethical standards you hold in highest regard and to which ordained ministers are held appropriately accountable in the practice of ministry. Why are those standards appropriate and to whom is the minister accountable?
9. Demonstrate your knowledge of the history, polity and theological identity of the UCC.
 - a. How has our history shaped who we are as a denomination today? Also place the UCC within the context of church history.
 - b. How has "covenant" shaped UCC polity?

10. What is your understanding of pastoral care and counseling? How did your Clinical Pastoral Education affect your understanding and how did it help to prepare you for pastoral care and counseling?
11. Prepare an Order of Worship (Word and Sacrament) and comment on the components of the service.
12. Submit a sermon that you have preached in a worship service in a Local Church and include the worship bulletin from that Sunday.
 - a. Briefly describe the setting and how you used the scripture text in your sermon.
 - b. What methodology did you employ in constructing the sermon?

4.1.9 Participate in Ordination Interview

The purpose of the Ordination interview is to determine your preparedness and fitness for Ordination in and on behalf of the UCC. Your Mentor and your Local Pastor will accompany you to the interview and support you while you defend your paper before DPAM. **Remember to bring a copy of your paper with you to the interview.**

4.1.9 a Steps Taken by the MID Prior to Ordination Interview

1. Have each draft of your paper read by your Mentor, Local Pastor, and any other person whose judgment you trust;
2. Revise your paper accordingly;
3. When your paper is completed, schedule one or more “practice” sessions with a group of trusted persons. It would be very beneficial to include your Mentor in this session;
4. Email a digital copy of your paper to the Association one month before the interview;
5. Upon your arrival on the day of your interview, take a few minutes to calm your body, mind, and soul. It would be helpful if you could find a quiet corner and pray with your Mentor and Local Pastor;
6. Bring a copy of your Ordination paper to the interview;
7. Supply a copy to your Local Church pastor and your Mentor;
8. Prepare UCC Profile draft.

4.1.9 b Steps Taken by DPAM Prior to the Ordination Interview

DPAM will read your Ordination paper and prepare to examine you about all of its content. DPAM will assess your ability to articulate your thoughts and feelings meaningfully and to be authentic to your own sense of yourself.

4.1.10 Steps Taken by DPAM Following the Ordination Interview

DPAM will discuss the MID and make a decision about authorizing you to the Association for Ordination by the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ, pending a valid call.

Its Options include:

Yes. DPAM believes that you meet the requirements for ordination within the UCC and authorizes you for ordination by the Central Southeast Ohio Association. This decision is contingent upon completion of pending requirements and your securing a valid call.

Yes, but. DPAM believes that you have the potential for ordained ministry, but it has certain reservations or concerns that must be addressed.

No, but. DPAM believes that, at this time, significant qualifications for ordination in the UCC are lacking. It will determine whether to continue or to discontinue the In-Discernment relationship.

No. In some cases, DPAM may have to say no when, in its judgment, you have not fulfilled and cannot fulfill in the foreseeable future the requirements for ordination, or will not be an effective and faithful ordained minister of the UCC. This decision discontinues the In-Discernment relationship.

4.1.11 Association Ordination

A service of Ordination can be held no sooner than one month (30 days) after the date of the DPAM vote to Authorize Ordination.

Once a valid call has been received, DPAM, working through the Association Minister, coordinates the planning of the Ordination Service in cooperation with you, your Local Church of membership, the calling body, and the Association. In most cases, the ordination service will be held in the Local Church where you are a member. A covenant should be established among the partners of the call. (See Appendix M, Guidelines for Planning Your Ordination Service.)

4.1.12 If You Continue as a MID

After authorization, DPAM will hold you as a MID for four years. If you have not received a call within four years from the date of authorization, your status as a MID will be discontinued. During each of those four years, you will be required to submit a Journey Update paper and meet with DPAM annually.