

Discernment and Ordination in the Metropolitan Association of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ.

PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR THOSE SEEKING ORDINATION IN THE

METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION, NY CONFERENCE

JANUARY 2023

Introduction:

Ministry is a relational art and enterprise. Those who are engaged in ministry and in discernment for authorized ministry by an Association experience this relational nature as they engage complex ecclesiastical relationships. And because ministry is relational, a relational model of the discernment process has been adopted by the Metropolitan Association as it seeks to determine the fitness and qualifications of candidates in discernment for authorized ministry. (Manual On Ministry 2 (MOM2) Section 2 page 3) In the UCC, all ministerial authorization comes through an Association, or a Conference acting as an Association.

The process is designed to support and undergird a Member in Discernment (MID) for authorized ministry by building support, creating an opportunity for authentic self-disclosure, and creating a support network between the candidate, the Association and the local church. By building this relational model of discernment the assessment of those competencies and skills is more likely to be authentic and accurate because of the support network's increased relational opportunity to provide fellowship, counsel, assistance and nurture throughout the discernment process.

The Association is committed to inclusion, diversity, and fairness in the Ordination process as outlined in these policies and in the bylaws of the Metropolitan Association of the NY Conference UCC.

It is our deepest hope that you experience this discernment process as a resource and the relationships you forge over the discernment process will be a blessing to you, the Association and to the Body of Christ. Within the United Church of Christ, first and foremost the local church serves as the "primary place where gifts for ministry are observed, called forth, nurtured and celebrated." That is why throughout the discernment process, the local church's participation is critical in the authorization process. And while the local church is primary, the Association is the body responsible for authorization.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERS IN DISCERNMENT:

1. There is a one-year minimum requirement for a person to be a Member in Discernment in this Association before a person can seek ordination. We encourage you to complete your discernment process within seven years. If you are in discernment for more than seven years, we encourage you to carefully consider your call to ministry and meet with the Committee on Ministry to discuss your journey and your future plans.
2. It is required that a person be a member of a local congregation in the Metropolitan Association for at least one year before they apply to be a Member in Discernment. Extenuating circumstances will be considered.
3. Each Member in Discernment of the Metropolitan Association is expected to remain in close relationship with their local congregation through the church ordination community or committee. Such a committee is expected to meet regularly with the MID during the discernment process.
4. Each MID will have at least one MID advisor. We encourage MID's to have mentors from among authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ.
5. Each MID is expected to attend Association events and meetings, and to participate in the life of the Association and its churches.

6. MID status is reviewed annually.
7. MIDs are expected, especially in their ordination paper, to demonstrate a familiarity with the History and Polity of the UCC and to engage in some form of study of the History and Polity of the UCC during their tenure as MID's.
8. Each MID must have completed a Boundary Awareness training.
9. Each MID must complete anti-Racism and cultural sensitivity training.
10. MIDs are expected to take psychological examinations through Kenwood Psychological Services. It is recommended that the MID engage this process as early as possible in the journey.
11. As a general rule, at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is required for Ordination in the Metropolitan Association. However, the Committee on Ministry will consider and approve compelling alternatives or comparable programs to CPE.

Procedures to Become a Member in Discernment:

1. If you are not already a member of a local Metropolitan UCC church, establish membership at one. We advise that you visit several churches in the Metropolitan area to experience the wide variety of worship experiences and styles. You must have been a member of a Metropolitan Association church for at least one year before applying to become a Member in Discernment or demonstrate a compelling reason why transfer of membership in no more than two UCC churches in the Association who have communicated with one another concerning your transfer is appropriate and necessary.
2. Discuss your desire to become ordained in the UCC with your local pastor, and after one year of church membership ask for a letter of recommendation and reference to submit with your application for MID status.
3. Meet with the local church governing board and ordination committee requesting that they recommend you to the Association as an MID. Discover what they

require to become an MID in the local church.

4. Request transcripts from your college and seminary. These must be submitted with your application along with a check for \$ 55.00 payable to the Metropolitan Association of the NY Conference of the UCC. The fee includes the application processing and the cost of a criminal background check.

5. After you have met with your local church and received their support, please complete the attached application to become an MID with the following supportive material:

a. Three letters of reference including one from your pastor, one from your faculty advisor and one from someone who knows you and your journey towards ministry.

b. A letter from your local church ordination committee or governing board, supporting your application and pleading support

c. A journey paper, biography, and resume

d. Transcripts from college and seminary

6. A psychological assessment will be required. The fee is \$750. 00 and payment is shared between the Association, the Church and the MID. When you are ready to take the psychological examination, call the Metropolitan Executive Director Rev. Kris Watson at 646-523-1936 and she will advise the testing company and you will be contacted to schedule an appointment. Do not initiate this on your own; it must be done through the office. Once payment is received from you and the church, the office will initiate contact with Kenwood.

7. All materials must be submitted to the Registrar who may be reached at 718-898-0001, extension 202 or Registrar@metrouccnyc.org and once received, an interview with the Metropolitan Committee on Ministry will be scheduled.

If your application is accepted there are expectations during your time as an MID, which lasts until you are ordained, or a decision is made that authorized ministry is not appropriate at this time.

EXPECTATIONS DURING DISCERNMENT PERIOD

As indicated above, your period of discernment is an opportunity to prepare for authorized ministry in the UCC, explore your call to ministry, and build relationships within the Metropolitan Association and broader UCC. Consider this journey to be one in which you have co-pilots. You and your mentor or your mentor team will be responsible and accountable to one another to advance your progress as an MID. Use this time of reflection and discernment to really explore how God wants to use you in ministry and if ordination in the UCC is for you.

1. You will meet regularly with your MID advisor, your pastor, your support team at your local church and with the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry. In these meetings you will reflect on what you are learning about yourself, your call and your relationship with the UCC.
2. You will attend Metropolitan Association meetings.
3. You and your mentor and your pastor will communicate about your progress in the process and your needs and opportunities for growth using the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministry as a guide and tool for ongoing assessment.
4. You will complete the requirements for authorized ministry.
5. You will sign a covenant agreement between your local church, the Association and yourself.

The Covenantal Agreement outlines your ministry and process. It is our hope that this will both address the desire for more opportunities to be involved in specific ministries of the local church but also clarify expectations of the MID process within the church. If you have not already done so, you should meet with your pastor and prayerfully consider what involvement you would like in your local church and how the church might be a source of spiritual help and support to you on your journey towards ordination. This is an important part of your application.

If through this period, you and the network of people supporting you discern you are called to authorized ministry, you may apply for such authorization. Please note that you must be a Member in Discernment for one year before you can begin the

authorization process.

The Committee on Ministry is responsible for determining the policies and procedures for the Association regarding members in discernment and, in so doing, shall consider the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ, the UCC Manual on Ministry and materials made available by the Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization Ministry Team. If during the MID process, the MID believes that the procedures as set forth here and in the Metropolitan Association by-laws are not being properly followed by the Committee On Ministry or that the covenant between the MID, the local church and the Association is not being honored, the MID and/or the MID and the Local church together may provide the Executive Committee of the Board a written request for review of the Member in Discernment process. This request shall specify in reasonable detail the reason for such request. The Executive Committee shall review the request and, after consultation with the Committee on Ministry make a recommendation to the Committee on Ministry as to whether it views the Committee on Ministry's process consistent with the Committee on Ministry's MID policies and procedures and the By-laws. The Committee on Ministry, after consideration of the Executive Committee's recommendation, shall make a final determination with regard to the MID and/or his or her Local Church's request for a review of the covenant agreement and may make such adjustments as necessary.

MATERIALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE REGISTRAR IN SUPPORT OF CANDIDATE'S REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

1. A letter affirming your readiness for authorized ministry and recommending you for licensed, commissioned or ordained ministry from the Pastor and the ordination committee of your Local Church where you hold membership, or two separate letters from these sources.
2. Your ordination paper: The ordination paper is one of vehicles by which the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry will make judgments concerning your readiness for authorized ministry. Please understand it as a theological statement of your current thinking. For details of what to include, please see the Appendix C "Preparing Your Ordination Paper"
3. Four letters of reference — two from seminary and two others from persons who are familiar with your professional work, perhaps field work supervisors. These letters should specifically speak to the issue of your ordination to the Christian ministry. We may call your references.
4. A letter of reference from your Mentor and from your MID advisor
5. One transcript or video recording of a sermon you have preached. If it is a video recording, please record it during a service of worship with a congregation present.
6. Verification of completion of one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, if required and copies of self and supervisor evaluation.
7. Verification of completion of Boundary Awareness, Anti-Racism and Cultural Sensitivity Training.
8. Verification of completion of UCC History and Polity Course approved by the Metropolitan Association Board of Directors.
9. Seminary or other graduate theological school transcripts or documentation of approved alternative educational attainment.

All documentation is sent to the Registrar at the Metropolitan Association office, to the attention of the Registrar. A checklist for your use is attached in Appendix D.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWING SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS

After all necessary materials have been received and reviewed by the Registrar, your mentor and the chair of the Committee on Ministry, the candidate will be scheduled to meet for an interview with the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry. The purpose of this interview (and any subsequent interviews) is to determine your readiness for authorized ministry in the UCC. All materials will be submitted to the full committee for review in order to prepare them for your interview. Your Mentor and your Pastor must be present for your ordination examination. During this examination, you must be able to demonstrate that you possess the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministry. The "Marks" may be found in the Manual on Ministry and you should have reviewed them with your mentor in advance of your ordination examination.

After discussion with the candidate and support persons, the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry will make its decision.

Options before the Committee include:

- "Yes." The Committee believes that the candidate meets the requirements for ordination within the United Church of Christ, and in the Committee's judgment will be an effective and faithful ordained minister.
- "Yes, but..." The Metropolitan Committee on Ordination believes the candidate has the potential for ordained ministry, but it has certain reservations or concerns which must be addressed. The Committee may want to stipulate additional requirements of the candidate before making its final decision.
- "No, but..." "The Committee believes that at this time significant qualifications for ordination in the United Church of Christ are lacking. It may indicate under what terms and conditions it would consider the application again.
- "No." In some cases, the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry may have to say "No" to a candidate if in its judgment the candidate has not fulfilled and cannot fulfill in the foreseeable future the requirements for ordination or will not be an

effective and faithful ordained minister for the United Church of Christ. At this time, the Committee terminates the candidate's status as an MID. In some cases, the Committee may recommend that an alternative to ordained ministry (if one is available according to the Manual On Ministry 2) may be considered by the MID at this time.

Meeting with the Ecclesiastical Council of the Association

If the outcome of the examination is favorable, the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry will recommend you to an Ecclesiastical Council convened by the Association for examination and final approval.

The Ecclesiastical Council (EC) is scheduled by the Registrar, your mentor, your local church and yourself. You and your mentor will coordinate the content of your ordination paper in advance and make copies available to the delegates and clergy attending the EC.

Options before the Ecclesiastical Council are:

- Approval for ordination, if the candidate has received a call to recognized ministry.
- Approved for ordination, pending a call to recognized ministry.
- Not approved for ordination

Further information regarding the procedures to be followed at the Ecclesiastical Council is available from the Registrar.

Ordination Plans

If ordination is approved by your Ecclesiastical Council, and if verification of a call has been received, ordination plans may proceed in the following manner.

- You, the local church, and the Registrar will cooperatively plan a suitable service of ordination. It is strongly urged that the hour of service not be on Sunday morning, but on such a day and hour that would make possible the maximum participation of other lay and clergy in the Association.
- "The Order of Ordination" should be based on the UCC Book of Worship.
- The ordaining officer should be the Associate Conference Minister for the

Metropolitan Association or a person designated by the Association. Additional participants may include members of the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry and other clergy or lay persons of your choosing.

- It is requested that an offering be taken at the service of ordination and you may express a desire for how this offering is allocated within the Association, subject to the approval of the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry.

It is hoped that these final steps toward ordination will continue to enrich your spiritual growth and your understanding of your call to ministry in the United Church of Christ.

The members of the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry want to be of help to you during this time. Please call on us.

**APPENDIX A: VOCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
FOR MEMBERS IN DISCERNMENT**

I. Purpose of the Assessment Program

The Metropolitan Association of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ has adopted the vocational and psychological assessment requirement because, 1) it believes the service will be useful to Discernment candidates in clarifying their career goals and better understanding themselves, and 2) the overall profile of the applicant's abilities, interests, motivation for ministry, personality, and intelligence will be a valuable supplement to letters of recommendation and academic records in aiding the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry who must recommend applicants for Member In Discernment, nurture their growth, and eventually determine fitness for ordained ministry.

The number of applicants typically received to be MIDs' or in the process of being prepared for ordination and nurtured through the Discernment process requires reliance on written evaluations if the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry is to do a responsible job. The psychological assessments can provide valuable supplemental information to the recommendations and personal testimony that is gathered. The Committee on Ministry desires as full and complete a picture of a candidate as possible in order to fulfill its responsibility to assist candidates in their formation for ministry.

The Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry and the mentor must be aware of any areas where the candidate needs to develop or which the candidate needs to remedy during this period of preparation for the rigors of ordained ministry. By making appropriate suggestions given by the Mentor and the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry, you will have adequate time to implement their recommendations before appearing before the Committee on Ministry. The Committee on Ministry believes it is a betrayal of their trust to both the denomination and the candidate to recommend persons for the professional ministry whose gifts are seriously

unsuited to the successful exercise of that role.

II. The Clergy Assessment Service

The Clergy Assessment Service is organized to provide high-quality, cost-effective psychological assessment of clergy candidates for use by church judicatories and candidates in the clergy selection and nurture process. The process is intended to identify any issues of a psychological nature that could have an impact on the candidate's professional functioning as clergy and to provide recommendations to the candidate which offer guidance for addressing any problems that surface.

The program consists of a test packet to be completed by the candidate in a monitored setting of their choosing, an individual clinical interview, scoring and interpretation of the results. The profiles include self-image, vocational interests, and intellectual functioning. The test is to be completed at the individual's convenience, and the clinical session can be completed in one day although it may take more time and follow up conversations.

Cost: The cost per candidate is currently \$750.00, to be divided among the applicant and the local church

Arranging for the Assessment: The Metropolitan Association will authorize Dynamic Empowerment Psychological Services to conduct the assessment. A referral to the testing service will not be made until the Metropolitan Association Office has received checks from you and your local church mentioned above.

III. Confidentiality

All inventory results, counseling, and the summary report are confidential between you, the assessment service and the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry and will only be shared with members of the Committee in the event that you come before the Committee for ordination examination. In the event that you choose not to pursue your Discernment application, the report need not be shared with any person or body within the Association or the United Church of Christ. However, those who apply for Discernment status must agree to have the full report sent to The Metropolitan Association and may also include their own comments with their application materials.

To ensure confidentiality and appropriate use of these reports, copies sent to Association will be kept in a separate file in the Association office. The reports will be shared with the respective Committee members when candidates are considered.

You will be required to sign a release that reads as follows:

“I understand and agree to release my psychological report and CPE Evaluations to the Association Committee on Ministry. The content of these reports will be available to and discussed by the Committee on Ministry, and these reports may be shared with others, including, but not limited to, the Association Conference Minister and my MID Advisor. I acknowledge that this report enters my MID file and will be shared with future judicatories which may hold or consider my standing. I acknowledge the MID file and its contents are the property of the United Church of Christ.”

Note: It is the policy of the Metropolitan Committee on Ministry to be open to requests for the use of alternative psychological and vocational assessment agencies. Requests for alternative testing services will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Committee on Ministry and will be contingent on the nature of the testing and the similarity to the Kenwood services and comprehensiveness of the evaluation.

The testing service we currently use is: Dynamic Empowerment Psychological Services

IV: CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK:

At the candidate’s expense, and prior to the examination of any candidate, a criminal background check will have been completed.

V: RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

You will be required to sign a release that reads as follows:

“I understand and agree to release my psychological report and CPE Evaluations to the Association Conference Minister and the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry and my MID advisor. I further understand that the content of the report(s) will be available to and discussed by the Committee On Ministry.

I acknowledge that this report enters my MID file and will be shared with future judicatories which may hold or consider my standing.”

**APPENDIX B: SEMINARY/ALTERNATIVE ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEMBERS IN
DISCERNMENT**

To be approved for ordination in the New York Metropolitan Association, the Member in Discernment must show that he or she has a broad general background in seminary studies, **or acceptable alternative educational attainment**. The following basic curriculum is recommended. Consideration concerning readiness will be taken into account along with the skills, academic and life experiences of persons entering seminary or engaged in alternative educational paths.

I. BIBLICAL STUDIES: A minimum of four semester or six quarter courses is recommended. A background in Biblical studies shall include:

- a. A working knowledge of and familiarity with the Bible and an understanding of the scope of covenantal history and Biblical theology.
- b. An understanding of the impact of the message of the Major and Minor Prophets in their times and their contributions to the social ministries of the contemporary church.
- c. An interpretive study of the gospels taking into account the full sweep of critical investigation.
- d. A study of the New Testament letters for historical context and contemporary application.
- e. A working, critical knowledge of Old Testament apocalyptic literature and the Revelation of John.

II. THEOLOGY: A minimum of four semester or six quarter courses is recommended. A background in theology shall include:

- a. An in-depth knowledge of systematic theology. This would include such doctrines as the Incarnation, nature of God, nature of humanity, authority of Scripture, sin, atonement, resurrection, Holy Spirit, the Church and Sacraments. This would also include the study of a representative theologian from the Early Church period, the Reformation era and a twentieth or 21st century theologian.
- b. The ability to discuss and debate current ethical issues in light of their

theological ramifications.

III. CHURCH HISTORY: A minimum of two semester or three quarter courses is recommended. An understanding of church history shall include:

- a. Pentecost to Constantine, Constantine to the Reformation, the Reformation to the present.
- b. History and Polity of the UCC.

IV. PASTORAL MINISTRY: A minimum of one semester or quarter length course is recommended in each of the following areas:

- a. Worship - focusing on its history and practice
- b. Homiletics
- c. Personal and social ethics
- d. Pastoral counseling

V. PRACTICAL MINISTRY: A minimum of one semester or quarter length course is recommended in each of the following areas:

- a. Christian Education
- b. Church Administration - including developing skills in conflict management, organizational planning, group dynamics, etc.
- c. Clinical Pastoral Education
- d. Field experience: Parish ministry (on full year internship is encouraged) or public service ministry.

VI. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PATHS TO MINISTRY:

The UCC is committed to insuring that there are alternative educational paths for candidates for ministry in the denomination. Many regional conferences have made theological education available online or in a traditional class setting. The Committee on Ministry in the Metropolitan Association will consider all such alternative paths to ministry, together with the practical experience that candidates are able to demonstrate.

1) A candidate must demonstrate competency to interpret the scriptures, understanding both his or her tradition's approach and at least one other tradition's way of doing biblical interpretation. Candidates must be able to discuss how the scriptures are authoritative for you.

2) A candidate should be able to intelligently compare and contrast their particular religious tradition's history with that of the United Church of Christ and its constituent traditions' histories. And should be able to demonstrate some knowledge of non-Western church histories.

3) A candidate must be able to think theologically. That means being able to explain and write out and explain one's own theology in some kind of credo fashion and be able to appreciate and critique at least one other's tradition's way of describing the actions and being of God. And again, we should all be pushed to demonstrate some understanding of a non-Western Christian theology and how it expresses its understanding of God's actions and God's being.

4) A candidate should demonstrate self-knowledge. A candidate may demonstrate such self-knowledge in a variety of ways: psychological training or experience, ongoing therapy, CPE, spiritual direction, participation in non-traditional forms of group spirituality and discernment, marriage counseling, intense directed spiritual retreats, etc,

5) A candidate should demonstrate specific practical skills for ministry.

APPENDIX C: PREPARING YOUR ORDINATION PAPER IN THE METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION, NY CONFERENCE

The ordination paper should include the following:

a. A summary of your personal theological position, with some reflection on, but not limited to the following:

- The UCC Statement of Faith
- The Sacraments, Baptism and Communion
- The Bible: its authority, relevance and application for today.
- The Church: its mission and ministry.
- Your understanding of UCC identity. Why do you want to be ordained in the UCC? Briefly demonstrate how our history and polity influence your understanding of the church and its ministry and mission.
- Mention of the writers, theologians, and/or preachers that you draw on to formulate your theological position and how they have influenced you.
- Brief description of your present ministry and/or call.
- Your understanding of pastoral ethics and boundaries (refer to Section I, pages 14-15 [Ordained Minister's Code] in Manual On Ministry 2.)
- Read the ordination vows in the UCC Book of Worship and reflect upon the promises of these vows in your paper.

b. Please speak about the milestones in your life and how they relate to your Christian experience and your request for ordination. Please do not include personal details about someone else without that person's permission and, if possible, relate how the experience has informed your faith story and discernment of call without giving details that could identify the person.

c. Your understanding of your personal call to ministry, sometimes known as the

"inner call."

d. The paper should be approximately 15 to 20 typewritten pages in length, double-spaced. It will be read by a representative group of the church, and your ability to communicate your beliefs to lay people as well as clergy is important.

e. See MOM2 Section III, step 5 (Documentation), for further suggestions as to how to go about communicating your theological presentation in your paper.

f. Please include your full name and date on each copy of the paper. We strongly suggest that your Mentor, Pastor and other persons read and critique your paper before its submission to the Metropolitan Committee on Ministry. Your mentor must sign off on the paper before it is submitted.

APPENDIX D: CANDIDATE'S ORDINATION DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

Keep a copy of all materials that you send to the Registrar. Please CONFIRM

RECEIPT from the Registrar. This list is for your records only.

Date Sent

or

Requested

Documentation Name and contact information of person sending

Receipt by Registrar

Confirmed?

Recommendation for Ordination from your Local Church

Recommendation for Ordination from your Pastor

Undergraduate Transcripts

Graduate School Transcripts

Academic Reference #1

Academic Reference #2

Professional Reference #1

Professional Reference #2

Ordination paper

Letter from your Mentor addressing readiness for ordained ministry

Video recording or transcription of Sermon delivered in worship context

Verification of completion of Clinical Pastoral Education (copies of Supervisor's and Self Evaluations) or other approved CPE alternative

Verification of completion of UCC History and Polity Course

Verification of completion of Boundary Awareness Training, Anti-Racism and Cultural Sensitivity Training

Verification of Call/Call Agreement

APPENDIX E: MID APPLICATION

METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION
NEW YORK CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

102-19 34th Avenue, Second Floor
Corona, New York 11368
(718) 898-0001 Fax: (718) 898-0081

email: Registrar@metrouccnyc.org

web: www.metrouccnyc.org

Welcome and greetings in the name of our Lord from the New York Metropolitan Association! We are delighted to learn that your process of discernment with your church has led you to this step in your call to ministry with the United Church of Christ. The next step after discernment and affirmation of your call with your local church is formal application to be accepted as a Member in Discernment with the UCC NY Metro Association.

You should be aware that acceptance as a Member in Discernment is not a guarantee that ordination will follow. Ordination is a privilege, not a right; the process of discernment will determine if ordination is the best result for you and the UCC. It is also important to understand that ordination is for the entire UCC and not to one local church.

This packet explains the materials you must provide; they include the following:

- 1) A formal letter from you, addressed to the Association stating your request to be accepted as a Member in Discernment
- 2) A Covenantal agreement (outlined in these materials) filled out and signed by you and your local church which outlines your participation in the life of the local church (see details below)

- 3) MID application form (included in these materials)
- 4) MID paper (outlined in these materials)
- 5) Letters of Reference from various individuals (as specifically outlined in these materials)

- 6) Official Transcript from Seminary or Most Recent Educational Institution
- 7) A \$55 application fee.

Materials should be submitted electronically to the Association office at Registrar@metrouccnyc.org The materials as attachments, not in the body of your email. Please read through the requirements thoroughly and follow the directions as noted to avoid delay; if you have any questions, please contact the registrar.

After all your documents have been received by the registrar, they will be distributed to the members of the Ordination and Ministerial Standing Committee for their careful review. Then you will be scheduled for an interview with the Committee. No candidate will be scheduled to meet with the Committee unless all their materials have been received. Please note this process takes a minimum of two months from the time you submit all your documents to the registrar.

Your relationship with your local church is central to this process. It is in the local church where the Christian community helps candidates for ministry discern their call into ministry and can provide a source of vital spiritual support and encouragement. Candidates have asked for more opportunities for practical ministry experience as part of their formation. Since the primary locus of a candidate's discernment is the local church, we are asking you and your local church to formally covenant together a list of expectations for your involvement and process together by filling out a Covenantal Agreement which outlines your ministry and process. It is our hope that this will both address the desire for more opportunities to be involved in specific ministries of the local church but also clarify expectations of the process within the church. If you have not already done so, you should meet with your pastor and prayerfully consider what involvement you would like in your local church and how the church might be a source of spiritual help and support to you on your journey towards ordination. This is an important part of your application.

Please note several letters of reference are required from you as part of the application process; specific reference letters are included in this packet for you to provide to those writing the letters of reference. If you have not enrolled in Field ED and CPE and you are accepted as a Member in Discernment in the Association, you will be required to supply those letters of reference to your MID advisor upon completion of CPE and your Field Ed assignment. Please note the NY Metropolitan Association, strongly encourages completion of one basic unit of CPE as part of your ministry training, though it is currently not required for ordination.

Those applicants who are currently seeking Member-in-Discernment status who are currently serving in a local church are asked to provide a letter of reference from the church's Governing Board regarding your ministry with them; please see specific form, "Letter of Reference from the Governing Board of the Church" included in this packet.

After all application materials have been submitted, you will be notified by the registrar of your scheduled interview with the Ordination and Ministerial Standing Committee. After the interview, the Committee will vote on whether to accept you as a Member I Discernment; within a week the registrar will advise you of the Committee's decision.

May the Lord guide and bless this very important time for you in your spiritual and vocational discernment.

The New York Metropolitan Association
Committee on Ministry

YOUR APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- _____ A formal letter to Registrar requesting application to be accepted as an MID
- _____ Completed MID Application
- _____ MID Paper (Details attached)
- _____ Official Transcript from Seminary or Most Recent Educational Institution
- _____ Written Covenantal Agreement between you and the Local Church (see form attached)
- _____ Letter from Pastor (see form attached)
- _____ Letter from Board of Deacons or Discernment Committee (see form attached)
- _____ Letter of Reference from CPE Supervisor when/if you have taken CPE (see form attached)
- _____ Letter of Reference from Field Ed Supervisor when/if you have taken Field Ed (see form attached)
- _____ Letter of Reference from Academic Advisor (see form attached)
- _____ If you are already working as a pastor, a letter of reference from the Governing Board of your church (see form attached)
- _____ \$55 check made payable to UCC Metro Association

Part 1: A formal letter addressed to the registrar of the Association requesting your wish to be received as a Member in Discernment with the Association.

Part 2: APPLICATION TO BE A MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT WITH THE METRO ASSOCIATION, NEW YORK CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Name: _____

(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Home Address: _____ Home Phone: () _____

_____ Cell Phone: () _____

_____ Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

(City) (Country)

Are you a US Citizen? _____ Yes _____ No

If not a US Citizen, what is your current immigration status?

Emergency Contact and Tel. #:

1. GENDER: Male Female Transgender/Gender-Variant 2. Pronoun by which

you would like to be referred 3. Ethnicity.....

EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND

Present Occupation, if not a full-time student:

Company Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____

_____ Dates there: _____

Prior Employment:

Position: _____ Dates there: _____

Company Name and Address: _____

Phone: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____

CHURCH INFORMATION:

Part 2: APPLICATION TO BE A MEMBER IN DISCRNMENT WITH THE
NY METRO ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, pg 2

I have been a member of the following church for at least 1 year:

Name of church and address:

Pastor: _____ Phone #: _____ Date Joined:

Experience, service, responsibilities at this church:

Prior churches of which you have been a member:

Names and location:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Date of Baptism: _____ What church?

Date of Confirmation: _____ What church? _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Current (or last) Seminary (ries):

Name and Location:

Degree Program: _____ Years Attended: _____

Degree Awarded or Expected Date of Graduation: _____

Academic Advisor's Name: _____

Advisor's Telephone #: () _____

Part 2: APPLICATION TO BE A MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT WITH THE
NY METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, pg 3

Other Seminaries Attended:

Name: _____ Dates attended: _____

Name: _____ Dates attended: _____

college/University:

College/University: _____

Years Attended: _____ Years Attended: _____

Degree Conferred: _____ Degree Conferred:

High School(s): _____ Years Attended: _____

_____ Years Attended: _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Plans for Further Education:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Have you ever been found guilty of a criminal charge including but not limited to alleged, actual or attempted sexual harassment, exploitation, misconduct or physical abuse?

Yes: ___ No: ___

Have you ever been found guilty of a civil or ecclesiastical charge, including but not limited to alleged actual or attempted sexual harassment, exploitation, misconduct or physical abuse?

Yes: ___ No: ___

Have you ever terminated your employment or had your employment terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, misconduct or physical abuse by You?

Yes: ___ No: ___

If you have answered “yes” to any of the above questions, please explain:

I hereby authorize the Metropolitan Association, New York Conference of the United Church of Christ to have access to all ecclesiastical, educational, psychological, civil and personal records pertaining to my fitness for the status for which I am applying and agree that any false statements may be cause for appropriate action.

“I understand and agree to release my psychological report and CPE Evaluations to the Association Conference Minister and the Metropolitan Association Committee on Ministry and my MID advisor. I further understand that the content of the report(s) will be available to and discussed by the Committee on Ministry. I acknowledge that this report enters my MID file and will be shared with future judicatories which may hold or consider my standing.”

Your Discernment Paper

Your paper is a significant part of introducing yourself and your understanding of your call to the Committee on Ordination and Ministerial Standing. It is our first impression of you so please take thoughtful care in preparing it and make sure to proofread and spell-check your work. As a general guideline, the paper should not exceed 12 pages.

Please submit your paper in Word format, 12 point font, double spaced format, divided into the following sections:

1. Biographical Introduction
2. Faith Pilgrimage and Personal Statement of Faith
3. How do you understand the meaning of ordination and how does this relate to your sense of calling?
4. How do you understand your call to ministry and what kind of ministry do you feel called to and why?
5. What gifts do you see within yourself for this ministry? What challenges?

Be as specific as you can.

6. Your understanding of the Christian sacraments

Your Paper should be submitted as an attachment to: metroregistrarny@gmail.com

Kindly type the candidate's name in the Subject line.

COVENANT AGREEMENT

The Covenantal Agreement should be filled out by you, your pastor, and Committee Chair/Advisor or Chair of Deacons and hand signed by all three of you; please mail in a copy of your signed covenant to the Association office, keeping a copy for yourself.

CONTACT INFORMATION for the Committee on Ministry:

Committee on Ministry Chairs: Rev. Reginald Brantley, Rev. Charles Buck

Registrar: Ms. Claudette Spence: Registrar@metrouccnyc.org

718-898-0001 ext. 202

Associate Conference Minister: Shernelle Edney Stilley

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