

SAMPLE ORDINATION INTERVIEW PLAN

This sample ordination interview plan presumes the Committee on Ministry has read the candidate's ordination paper, has completed an assessment of competency on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers of the United Church of Christ, and has reviewed the candidate's Preparation and Formation plan. The questions below are not intended to limit the scope of the interview. Rather, it provides a means of having consistent questions that may be asked of each candidate. Additional questions may be formulated by the COM either before or during the ordination interview. This plan may be followed by each COM member taking turns asking questions, and each making notes of the candidate responses. After the candidate is excused from the interview, the COM may discuss the responses, share their impressions, and reach a decision to proceed to an Ecclesiastical Council (or similar customary practice) by consensus or vote. The decision options are "Yes." Recommendation for an Ecclesiastical Council (or similar customary practice); "Yes, but." Continued discernment and/or reassessment of skillsets must be completed by a specified time.; "No." The COM does not recommend the Member in Discernment for ordination in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ and the discernment process is completed and member in discernment status is terminated. The outcome of each decision is to be communicated to the Member in Discernment in writing, added to their file, and recorded in the UCC Data Hub.

Member in Discernment Name: _____ Date: _____

COM Chair: _____ Association: _____

Opening prayer:

Holy God, as we become an expression of your presence in our midst, we ask that your Spirit be present with us as we discern your call in our lives. Guide and strengthen us in the ways we serve your name with our gifts and passions. May we sense your Spirit moving within our efforts to raise up and support leaders for your Church's ongoing work in the world. In your name we pray. Amen.

1. Tell us your call story.
2. How has the Member in Discernment process influenced your understanding of ministry? What surprises did you encounter in your journey? What frustrated you the most and how will you handle similar issues in your ministry?
3. Now that you have successfully completed your preparation and formation plan and have demonstrated competency in the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers of the United Church of Christ, how has your understanding of your call changed since you began the Member in Discernment process? What scripture or biblical person guided your perspective?
4. In your own words, what is ordination? What function does ordination serve in the United Church of Christ? How do you see yourself fulfilling that function? What aspect of ordination challenges you the most? How are you responding to that challenge?

5. Share with us your theological perspective on the sacraments, the Trinity, sin and salvation, and the Bible. How do you intend to witness to or teach about these tenets of Christian faith in your ministry?

6. Over the course of this time of discernment, what has your walk with God led you to surrender? What has your walk with God led you to embrace?

7. In what ways have your spiritual gifts been sharpened or amplified? What do you recognize as your growing edges?

8. How do you intend to manage the competing demands of ministry, self-care, and family? How will you model a Sabbath way of living?

9. You have undergone a preparation and formation process for ordination in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. What in your view does nurturing UCC identity entail? Explain your understanding of covenant as it is lived out in the UCC. In what ways will you honor that covenant?

10. Are there any reason(s) that you are aware of that would warrant discontinuing your ordination process?

Concluding prayer:

Holy and wise God, you call women and men into your service in this world that you created. Some of us you call into the sacrificial work of ministering to your beloved ones through the Church. We are humbled by and often frightened of your call upon our lives. Yet we are comforted in recalling Jesus' promise to be with us, and that you are Emanuel, God with us. We thank you for guiding us to where you would have us to go and equipping us for the tasks and service you created for us to complete. Bless, we pray _____ who has said yes to your call. Help them to listen ever more closely for your still, small voice to direct them on the path of your choosing. In the name of the Obedient One, Jesus of Nazareth, we pray. Amen.