

## 2020 Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates

Western North Carolina Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

Answer all of the following questions thoughtfully and carefully. Be faithful to the Scriptures. Review all previous educational work and readings. Read *The 2016 United Methodist Discipline* thoroughly (especially The Ministry of the Ordained, ¶301ff and ¶¶332-336). Explain your answers to give depth to your thoughts, feelings and convictions. The interview discernment team will use your answers as the starting point in your conversations with them.

**A primary emphasis of these papers must focus on how the practice of ministry during your provisional period has affected your answers to these questions. We are most interested in how you have incorporated your experience in ministry with your academic training to influence your perspective today. Ministry stories are encouraged.**

### Written Papers:

Your entire written submission will be one large file (Word or PDF) submitted electronically to the Chair of the Discernment Team to which you will be assigned in the fall (not Kim Ingram).

Include:

- A general cover page for all of your work stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and include "Candidate for Elder in Full Connection – 2020."
- Number all your pages - either consecutively throughout the document or each section can be numbered individually. The page count for each section does not include the cover page for each section.
- Add a footer on each page that includes your name and "Elder in Full Connection."
- Create individual cover pages for each section. Instructions for each section are included within. Include: Vocation, Disciplined Life, Theology, Proclamation, and Bible Study.
- A bibliography which is not included in any of the page counts.
- Throughout your paper, restate the entire question before providing your answer.
- No question may be answered simply "Yes" or "No."
- Acceptable font types are 12 point Times New Roman or 12 point Cambria with 1-inch margins.
- Double space all of your written work with exception of your footnotes.
- Footnotes (not endnotes) should be in a clear style that clearly provides your sources.
- Candidates submitting late or incomplete papers will not be granted an interview.

If you are returning to the board, you should only do the assignments indicated in your follow-up letter. If you have any questions, contact Kim Ingram or Adri Bullard-Rogers in the Office of Ministerial Services.

Assignments are due by **Monday, January 6, 2020**. You will be notified in the fall to whom you should send your materials. The interviews will be held in Gastonia, NC on **Feb. 18-20, 2020**.

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates - 2020 Vocation**

For this section, your total answers should be at least 7 but no more than 9 pages. Create one document for this "Vocation" section with consecutive page numbers. Create a cover page for this section stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and "Candidate for Elder in Full Connection – 2020 – Vocation."

1. Describe how your experience as a Provisional Elder has shaped and informed your call to ministry. How has the practice of ministry strengthened, challenged, or changed your call?
2. Based on your provisional period, describe your strengths for ministry. How do you now perceive yourself, your gifts, and your commitment as an elder in full connection in The United Methodist Church? What is your understanding and experience of the collegiality of the orders of deacons and elders? Elaborate on areas in which you need further maturation.
3. In what ways did your Fruitful Leadership in Ministry draw upon your strengths for leadership? How did your Fruitful Leadership in Ministry aid you in understanding more about your leadership style and the ministry of all baptized Christians?
4. Change and conflict are a reality in ministry. Describe an instance where you led through change in your ministry setting. How did you respond? How did you manage any conflict that arose? Reflect on your leadership during this period of change. What were your leadership strengths and challenges?
5. How has the practice of ministry during the provisional period affected your understanding of the expectations and obligations of the itinerant system? Do you offer yourself without reserve to be appointed and serve as the bishop may determine?

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates - 2020**

### **Disciplined Life**

For this section, your total answers should be at least 7 but no more than 9 pages. Create a cover page for this section stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and "Candidate for Elder in Full Connection – 2020 – Disciplined Life."

1. You are called to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life. Discuss your personal habits and disciplines to fulfill these highest ideals. Include:
  - a. Physical health (exercise, diet, physical exams)
  - b. Intellectual, emotional, and mental health (reading, continuing education, counseling)
  - c. Social justice
  - d. Spiritual disciplines and means of grace
  - e. Integrity in pastoral and personal relationships
    - i. Confidentiality in counseling
    - ii. Appropriate boundaries in family and work
    - iii. Celibacy in singleness and fidelity in marriage.
2. Discuss how you have taught financial stewardship and generous financial giving in your ministry setting.
3. Discuss how you are setting an example and providing leadership for connecting your worshipping community with the world through engaging your congregation in servant ministry in your community. How was your Fruitful Leadership in Ministry work received by the congregation/population you are serving? Where do you find yourself challenged most as you connect the worshipping community with the world?
4. Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry. How do you relate to and serve all persons without regard to race, color, ethnicity, national origin, social status, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic condition, or disability? How have you in your ministry, taught and encouraged your congregation/ministry setting to be welcoming and inclusive to all people? How would you prepare the congregation/ministry setting to receive your successor in the same ways?

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates - 2020 Theology**

For this section, your answers should be of sufficient length to state your position clearly and represent your best theological thinking. Your answers reflect your academic studies in historical and systematic theology, scripture, your understanding of *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, and your own perspectives. Carefully review all sections of *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* that are related to these topics.

**A primary emphasis of these papers must focus on how the practice of ministry during your provisional period has affected your answers to these questions. We are most interested in how you have incorporated your experience in ministry with your academic training to influence your perspective today. Ministry stories are encouraged.**

The length of this section should be no less than 12 and no more than 18, double spaced pages utilizing footnotes appropriately. Create a cover page for this section stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and "Candidate for Elder in Full Connection - 2020 - Theology."

1. How has your practice of ministry shaped and refined your understanding of these theological ideas:
  - The Triune God
  - Nature of humanity
  - Sin and evil
  - The role of Jesus Christ
  - The activity of the Holy Spirit
  - Grace
  - The means of grace
  - The sacraments
  - The kingdom of God, the resurrection, and eternal life
  
2. How do you understand the following traditional evangelical doctrines based on the writings of John Wesley including:
  - Repentance
  - Justification
  - Regeneration
  - Sanctification
  - Marks of the Christian life?
  
3. Illustrate how you have used the Wesleyan Quadrilateral to respond to an ethical issue in your practice of ministry.
  
4. How has the practice of ministry informed your understanding of the nature and mission of the church? How is the nature and mission of the church reflected in your Fruitful Leadership in Ministry? Reflect theologically on the primary challenges today facing the universal Church and our United Methodist Church? How do you respond to those challenges?

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates - 2020 Practice**

There are many “Practices” that you are expected to master as a leader in the church. The following three requirements are specified in *The United Methodist Book of Discipline – 2016*:

Proclamation

Bible Study

Fruitful Leader in Ministry

Follow the instructions carefully and submit your work for these assignments for evaluation.

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates – 2020 Proclamation**

Prepare a sermon and worship service. Plan, design, lead, evaluate, and video record one entire service of worship in your ministry setting.

For this section, your total answers should be at least 8 but no more than 10 pages (not including your sermon). Create a cover page for this section stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and “Candidate for Elder in Full Connection – 2020 – Proclamation.” Include the link to the Vimeo account and the password on the cover page. Send the worship bulletin as part of the attachment. The video recorded worship service will be submitted using a Vimeo account.

- Choose one Scripture text as your sermon focus from a given Sunday between the dates of July 1 and December 31, 2019 from the Revised Common Lectionary. You do not need to preach the selected text on the assigned Sunday but you do need to preach the sermon between July 1 and December 31, 2019. Include a copy of the scripture text, noting its day in the Revised Common Lectionary.
  - Work with at least one non-musical layperson in planning and implementing your worship service.
  - Work with your church musician(s) to plan the music.
1. List and describe any training, courses, workshops, and practical experience you have had in the area of preaching and worship (1/2 page).
  2. Describe the setting of your service such as the nature of the congregation and why you chose the primary theme addressed (1/2 page).
  3. State and explain the central emphasis of the text.
  4. In one sentence, what is the message you seek to convey in this sermon?
  5. Plan, record, and submit the worship service (2 pages). Select and/or write the liturgy: readings, responses, prayers, hymns, songs. You are encouraged to utilize your creativity and to use multi-sensory materials. The Board of Ordained Ministry intends to evaluate your worship planning and leadership. It is essential that you plan worship and preach the service that you record. Include a copy of the worship order/bulletin in the pdf. Record the entire worship service.
  6. Prepare a 15-30 minute sermon to be delivered and video recorded in your planned worship service. Do not submit a funeral eulogy or communion meditation or short homily for a special day. Share a ‘regular’ Sunday sermon and order of worship. Include a manuscript OR transcript of your sermon. The manuscript/transcript does not count in the total pagination for this section, but must be 12 point font, double spaced.
  7. Preach. There is no one sermon model. If you preach from a manuscript, include it. If you do not use a full manuscript, include a transcript of what you actually preached. You may preach behind the pulpit, or down among the people, with or without manuscript, as long as it is among a local church congregation during a regular worship service. Deliver the sermon in the way that you normally would on a typical Sunday.

8. After the service, evaluate the worship service (2 pages), providing congregation members a way to give feedback. Reflect on planning, designing, and leading the service; how the theme and goals of the sermon and worship were or were not realized; the experience of the other leaders and participants; and how effectively your worship helped to shape the members of the congregation.

## **Elder in Full Connection Membership Candidates – 2020 Bible Study**

Teach an original Bible Study to give evidence of your training to research biblical books and passages and your ability as a teacher of scripture. The focus of the study is the Bible. Create, plan, design, lead, evaluate, and video record a Bible Study in your ministry setting. Evidence of exegesis is expected.

For this section, your total answers should be at least 8 but no more than 10 pages. As possible, scan and include any handouts and other materials. Create a cover page for this section stating your name, address, contact phone number, email address, date and “Candidate for Elder in Full Connection – 2020 – Bible Study.” Include the link to the Vimeo account and the password on the cover page.

1. List and briefly describe any training, courses, workshops, and practical experience you have had in the area of teaching/Bible study (1/2 page).
2. State your personal view of the importance of teaching/Bible study (1/2 page).
3. Create a Bible study that demonstrates your ability to teach.
4. Describe the setting such as the nature of the congregation and why you chose the primary theme addressed (1 page). If the study is part of a series of lessons, describe the series.
5. In one sentence, what is the message you seek to convey in this study?
6. Discuss the various Bible study methods you considered and why you chose a particular method in your teaching. The Bible study must essentially be your own original work (1 page).
7. Prepare the Bible study to be taught and video recorded. We encourage creativity and use of multi-sensory materials. Work with at least one lay person in planning and implementing your Bible study. Include copies of any handouts distributed (not included in the number of pages allowed).
8. Lesson Plan. Include lesson goals, material list, activities, suggested questions, and handouts. If the lesson is part of a series, only include the written lesson plan that coincides with the video recorded lesson (2 pages).
9. Teach. There is no one teaching model to follow. Video record the class. Submit 30 minutes of video including 5 minutes at the beginning, 5 minutes at the end, and 20 consecutive minutes during the study. Submit notes or outline you use (not included in the number of pages allowed).
10. After the Bible study, evaluate the class. Reflect on planning, designing, and leading; how the theme and goals of the study were or were not realized; the experience of other leaders and participants; and how effectively your study helped to shape the members of your congregation or ministry setting (2 pages).