

**Instructions for Written Materials  
Required for Change of Status for  
Provisional Elder Membership (PE) and Commissioning**  
BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY  
SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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**Introduction**

In the following pages, you will find instructions for the materials you will submit to the Board of Ordained Ministry for change of status. **It is important that you read and follow all the instructions exactly.** You must give attention not only to the instructions having to do with your content, but also the instructions having to do with submitting your materials, because they will affect how your content gets to those reviewing your work and how your content will appear. The paper copies you will send in are only for back-up. The work that will be reviewed by the Board is the work that you will send electronically according to the instructions in this document. This year's deadline for all materials to be submitted is January 4, 2012.

***Your File:*** These instructions include only the written materials required. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure all other documentation is in your file by the deadline (including, but not limited to; credit report, transcripts, divorce petition and decree, criminal record check, etc.). Many of your questions can be answered in the *Policy and Procedures Handbook* found on the Board of Ministry section of the South Georgia Conference web-site ([sgaumc.org](http://sgaumc.org)). If you have other questions about the contents of your file or what is required, it is your responsibility to follow up with the Director of Ministerial Services.

***Contact Information:*** If you need any clarification, feel free to contact Gene Cochran, Director of Ministerial Services (office: 478-742-4766, cell: 478-998-2753, email: [ecochran@sgaumc.com](mailto:ecochran@sgaumc.com)) or Jay Harris, Registrar (478-477-1901, email: [jharris@marthabowman.org](mailto:jharris@marthabowman.org))

***Interviews:*** You will submit work for evaluation by three interview teams: *Called and Disciplined Life, Theology and Doctrine, and Preaching and Teaching*. On your scheduled interview date in March, plan to spend half the day going through the interview process. Each team will take

approximately 30 minutes with you. After you meet with all three teams, the three teams will gather for their overall evaluation. After this process is complete, the entire Board of Ordained Ministry will gather to hear reports from each of the teams. The entire Board of Ordained Ministry will then vote on your change of status. At times, the process takes longer than expected. It would be wise not to make any time sensitive commitments during your interview day.

### **Written Autobiographical Statement**

Every candidate shall prepare an autobiographical statement. Although all the Board of Ordained Ministry members will read your autobiography, your Called and Disciplined Life interview team will use it in their evaluation.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. Write a four (4) to five (5) page autobiographical statement, not including cover page, covering:
  - your age and stage of life
  - physical and mental health
  - family interests and formative events
  - education
  - formative Christian experiences
  - your call to ministry
  - your history of appointments or pastoral service and where you are currently serving
  - how you nurture your spiritual life
  - your plans for service in The United Methodist Church
2. Type and double-space the autobiography. The autobiography should conform to the standards of style and grammar.
3. Number the pages, staple them together, and provide a cover sheet that includes:
  - a. Your name
  - b. Your address
  - c. The words "Autobiographical Statement"
  - d. The words "Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning"
4. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end).

### **Written Materials for Called and Disciplined Life**

Called and Disciplined Life will focus on several major areas: your autobiography, your answers to the Disciplinary Questions related to Vocation and Practice of Ministry, your case study, your psychological profile, your credit background, your criminal background, your call to ministry, your practice of ministry, and other personal development areas. Be prepared to engage the committee about these personal development areas in your interview.

***Questions for Called and Disciplined Life:*** The Called and Disciplined Life interview team will review your answers to the questions related to Vocation and Practice of Ministry found in ¶324.9 of the *2008 Discipline*.

**Instructions:**

1. As you answer the Disciplinary questions include the questions and underline them in your paperwork.
  - a. How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a probationary member and commissioned minister in the United Methodist Church?
  - b. Describe your understanding of *diakonia*, the servant ministry of the church, and the servant ministry of the provisional member?
  - c. What is the meaning of ordination in the context of the general ministry of the church?
  - d. Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry?
  - e. You have agreed as a candidate for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world, the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of your influence as a minister, to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, you agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility and growing in grace and the knowledge and love of God. What is your understanding of this agreement?
  - f. Are you a self-avowed, practicing homosexual?
2. Write enough to express your understanding clearly, yet strive to be concise and cogent.
3. In the oral interview the committee will assess your ability to express your positions verbally.
4. Type and double-space your work. The answers to the questions should conform to the standards of style and grammar.
5. Number the pages, staple them together, and provide a cover sheet that includes:
  - a. Your name
  - b. Your address
  - c. The words “Questions for Called and Disciplined Life”
  - d. The words “Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning”
  - e. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end).

**The Case Study:** The case study which will be reviewed by the interview team is your written account of a pastoral care concern or a specific administrative situation that challenged and broadened your understanding of the Gospel in human relationships.

**Instructions:**

1. Write a four to six page case study, not including the cover page, based on a real (actual) situation in your current ministry setting.
2. Divide the case study into three parts:
 

**Part 1:** Provide the background of the situation or encounter. Do not use real names of persons involved.

**Part 2:** Provide a description of the situation and how you responded to it.

**Part 3:** Provide an evaluation of insights that you gained through the experience. This should include a reflection on: a) theological insights, b) how it affected you as a person in ministry, and c) how it affected your understanding of the nature of the church.

3. Type and double-space the case study. The case study should conform to the standards of style and grammar.
4. Number the pages, staple them together, and include a cover page that includes:
  - a. Your name
  - b. Your address
  - c. The words "The Case Study"
  - d. The words "Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning"
5. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end).

### **Written Materials for Theology and Doctrine**

***Questions for Theology and Doctrine:*** The Theology and Doctrine interview team will review the answers to the questions related to theology contained in ¶324.9 of the *2008 Discipline*.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. Provide detailed responses. Include and underline the questions in your paperwork. State your positions clearly and represent your best theological thinking and judgment as one being called to ordained ministry. Write enough to express your understanding clearly, yet strive to be concise and cogent. You can satisfactorily answer the questions in twenty-five (25) to forty-five (45) pages, not including a cover page.
  - a. Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological and historical sources.
  - b. What is your understanding of evil as it exists in the world?
  - c. What is your understanding of humanity and the human need for divine grace?
  - d. How do you interpret the statement, "Jesus Christ is Lord"?
  - e. What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers, and in responsible living in the world?
  - f. What is your understanding of (1) the kingdom of God, (2) the Resurrection, and (3) eternal life?
  - g. How do you intend to affirm, teach and apply Part II of the Discipline (Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task) in your work in the ministry *to which you have been called*?
  - h. The United Methodist Church holds that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, verified and vivified in personal experience and confirmed by reason. What is your understanding of this theological position of the Church? Demonstrate your understanding by applying the quadrilateral to a doctrine or practice of our church: i.e., infant baptism, the Trinity, sanctification, etc.
  - i. Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today?
  - j. Discuss your understanding of the primary characteristics of United Methodist polity.
  - k. Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.

2. The expectation of probationary members is to show your theological understanding of the core competencies of our faith and denomination. Your theological formation and education should give clarity to your theological positions and beliefs. You may use outside resources only to defend your understanding of the theological issues. Cite all resources in footnotes. The Board of Ordained Ministry desires to see your theology revealed through the written work.
3. In the oral interview before the Board of Ordained Ministry, you will summarize and clarify your answers. This is an important part of the process. The committee will assess your ability to express your positions verbally.
4. Type and double-space your work. The answers to the questions should conform to the standards of style and grammar.
5. Number the pages, staple them together, and provide a cover sheet that includes:
  - a. Your name
  - b. Your address
  - c. The words “Questions for Theology and Doctrine”
  - d. The words “Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning”
6. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end).

### **Written Materials for Preaching and Teaching (and Video for Sermon)**

There are two main parts to your evaluation by the Preaching and Teaching interview team: your sermon and your Bible study. The material you will submit includes your written material and a DVD recording of your sermon.

#### ***Part One: The Sermon:***

The interview team will review a sermon that you prepare, preach and video record on any lectionary text between August 1 and December 31 during the year you are completing your work. For example, if you are submitting your work January, 4, 2012, your sermon would be on any lectionary text between August 1 and December 31, 2011.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. Deal fairly and faithfully with the text. The sermon should share the gospel of God that comes from the text.
2. Preach as you normally would. If you preach from a manuscript, use one. If you preach from notes, or an outline, use those. Even if you preach extemporaneously, be sure to tape and transcribe your message to written form for us to read.
3. Present yourself well. We advise you not to attempt anything that is not your standard style.
4. We recommend you preach on a normal Sunday to give the teams an opportunity to see your standard style. Special and unique services may not transmit well in video. You may wish to stay away from Tenebrae, Christmas Eve, and other unique services.
5. Direct the sermon to your congregation and your context. You are not preaching to the Board of Ordained Ministry members.
6. Record your sermon while you are preaching to a congregation. If you do not have a pulpit, please arrange to preach in another congregation.

7. While the Board of Ordained Ministry wishes the smallest distraction possible from live worship, the video does need to show your facial expressions and hand gestures adequately.
8. Prepare a manuscript/transcript of your sermon. This manuscript/transcript is to be an accurate, written copy of what you preached. It should reflect accurately the content of your sermon. The written copy should conform to the standards of style and grammar. It should stand on its own as written work. Do not take the written transcript lightly. Think of this written work as your published form of the sermon – what your sermon would look like if you included it in a book.
9. Prepare seven (7) copies of your video recorded sermon on DVD. Include only the sermon not the entire worship service. *Special Note: It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the DVDs function properly. Check all copies before sending.* (See instructions at the end for further sending instructions.)
10. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end). Include a cover page that states:
  - a. Your Name
  - b. Your address
  - c. The words "Part 1: The Sermon"
  - d. The words "Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning"

### ***Part 2: The Bible Study***

Each associate, provisional deacon, provisional elder, deacon and elder candidate is asked to prepare a four to seven session Bible study as part of the evaluation process for orders. The Preaching and Teaching interview team uses the Bible Study component as a way of evaluating your content, style, and methodologies of Christian Education. The interview team is interested in seeing your objectives/goals and pedagogical methods. How you teach is evaluated just as much as what you teach.

#### ***Instructions:***

1. You shall teach at least one session of this study and preferably the entire study prior to appearing before the Board. Sessions should be at least one hour but not more than two hours in length. The study should be of your own composition.
2. You may select from any one (1) book of the Bible you wish to teach. You are NOT required to cover every verse in your chosen book. You may, for example, shape your study around lectionary passages, selected theological themes, or similar literary units (e.g., parables in Luke).
3. Your Bible Study should include the following three sections: Section A. Study Leader's Preliminary Work, Section B. Brief Outline of the Bible Study Sessions, and Section C. Detailed Teaching Plan of One Session. Clearly label each section.

#### ***Section A. Study Leader's Preliminary Work:***

- 1) A brief discussion of the context in which you will offer this study. How would you describe the learners in terms of race, class, social location, gender? Is your church primarily urban, suburban, rural? Are there other contextual elements that will need to be addressed, e.g. accessibility?
- 2) Statement of the rationale for the book selected, the overall purpose and goals for the study. Why this study for these learners?

***Section B. Brief Outline of the Bible Study Sessions:***

- 1) An outline of the individual teaching sessions in the study including goals, themes, and biblical passages to be addressed.
- 2) A brief discussion of the biblical content for each session naming theological themes and/or textual issues you judge most critical for your students. This outline should reflect good exegetical work and theological interpretation in light of your description of learners and their context. Include references to scholarly resources as appropriate.

***Section C. Detailed Teaching Plan of One Session:***

- 1) A detailed teaching plan for one session is required. (You are NOT required to provide a verbatim or transcript as a part of the detailed teaching plan.)
  - 2) This session plan should include: biblical passage(s) to be covered, learning goals for the session, materials required, any handouts to be used, detailed schedule, detailed description of the teaching and learning process, and some means to evaluate its effectiveness. The means of evaluation can be as simple as having participants fill out a form at the end of the study about “the strengths of this Bible study were” and “things I would change about this Bible Study”—or you could visit with a few of the participants who will be honest with you about how you did as a leader of this study.
  - 3) Imagine the teaching plan as a curricular guide. It should be sufficiently descriptive to enable someone other than yourself to teach the session with proper preparation. The teaching plan should describe the different movements you will make plus the supplies and amount of time required for each movement in the session.
  - 4) The teaching plan should include a variety of means of teaching and learning. Possibilities include lecture, creativity with art, journaling, case study, sharing experience, shared practice, or small group discussion. Even though discussion questions are open-ended by design, you should provide examples of the kinds of responses you are seeking to elicit in the discussion questions you pose. Your teaching and learning methods should be consistent with the passage you are studying, your learning goals for the students and the students’ context.
  - 5) Indicate your sources in the body of your paper as footnotes or as endnotes.
  - 6) Include the literature and/or handouts that you expect to use with your class members.
4. Type and double-space your Bible Study: It should conform to the standards of style and grammar.
  5. Number the pages, staple them together, and label each of the three sections.
  6. Include a cover page that states:
    - a. Your name
    - b. Your address
    - c. The words “Part 2: The Bible Study”
    - d. The words, “Candidate for Provisional Elder Membership & Commissioning”
  7. Send this in electronic form to the Board of Ministry web site and one printed copy to the Director of Ministerial Services (see instructions at the end).

### ***Example of Teaching Plan Template***

*This Teaching Plan Template is given only as an example of a plan; there are many possible plans. Some candidates have indicated it would be helpful if they had a better idea what the committee is looking for.*

#### **Session X: Title**

Biblical Text(s):

Session Learning Goals:

- Learning Goal here....
- Another Learning Goal here... (and so on)

Movement One: Title (e.g., Consider the Meaning of Greetings)

Activity One

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies required: None other than ten participant volunteers

Invite 10 volunteer participants to pair off. Privately assign each pair one of the following gestures of greeting: wave in passing; hand shake; high five or fist bump; chest bump; hug of a returning loved one. Have pairs stand at the front of the group and move into their gestures all at once when you give the signal.

- a. Ask observing participants what the various gestures have in common. (Forms of greeting)
- b. Ask observing participants to assess the more specific meanings embedded in the individual gestures and the different relationships they imply. (More formal/less formal, acquaintance, friendship, intimate, praise, celebration, conquest, etc.)

Activity Two

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies required: Bibles

Ask participants to open their Bibles to Philippians 1:1-11. Invite one student who enjoys reading aloud to read the passage.

Teach verse two to all participants and invite the group to repeat it in unison.

Then ask:

- a. What sort of greeting is this from Paul to the church at Philippi? (Possible responses in light of exercise above or other)
- b. Why does Paul begin his letter this way? (Literary convention, reestablishing relationship, deep affection, etc.)
- c. How does this greeting compare with other of Paul's greetings?

Movement Two

Movement Three (if required)

Movement Four (if required)

Evaluation

## **Instructions and Deadlines for Compiling and Submitting Candidate's Materials**

***Compiling Hard Copies:*** Each candidate will mail in one hard copy of the written materials (see below for address). The following documents are to be included:

*for the full Board:*

1. "Autobiographical Statement"

*for Called and Disciplined Life:*

2. "Questions for Called and Disciplined Life"
3. "The Case Study"

*for Theology and Doctrine:*

4. "Questions for Theology and Doctrine"

*for Preaching and Teaching:*

5. "Part 1: The Sermon"
6. "Part 2: The Bible Study"

***Emailing Work:*** Each candidate will email a copy of written materials to [bom@sgaumc.com](mailto:bom@sgaumc.com). The materials need to be put in a ".pdf" format before emailing. If you do not have this capability, then you need to find someone who does and get them to assist you. For email purposes, please save your documents into four separate files:

1. Save the Autobiographical Statement as: [Last name] Auto
2. Save the Called and Disciplined Life material as: [Last name] CDL
3. Save the Theology and Doctrine material as: [Last name] TD
4. Save the Preaching and Teaching material as: [Last name] PT

Name the documents exactly as listed. If for some reason the document is too large to save in one .pdf file, then label it as directed with the addition of "Part 1" and "Part 2."

***Mailing hard copy of written material and DVD's:*** Each candidate will provide seven copies of their sermon on DVD. You will need 1 bubble mailer envelope approximately 10 ½ x 14 ½ in size to mail one (1) copy of your printed materials and 7 DVDs to the Director of Ministerial Services.

***Deadline:*** Submit all written work no later than January 4, 2012. If you ship your materials, the Director must have them in his office by the deadline. If you hand-deliver your materials, you must call the Director's office to ensure that someone will be present to receive them. The Candidate is responsible for ensuring on-time delivery of all materials. **There are no extensions.** If you are unable to meet the deadline, you may pursue change of status next year.

***Packaging and Shipment:*** Package and mail, ship or deliver written work and DVDs to:  
 Reverend Eugene Cochran  
 Director of Ministerial Services  
 P.O. Box 18149  
 Macon, GA 31209

FAX: 478-742-8012

Send electronic email to: [bom@sgaumc.com](mailto:bom@sgaumc.com)