PROVISIONAL DEACONS HANDBOOK

Board of Ordained Ministry

2025-2026

SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE OF THEUNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Introduction

You are beginning or continuing a wonderful journey from readiness to effectiveness. This Handbook is meant to help you navigate the many requirements, deadlines, and expectations.

Commissioning and Provisional Membership in the Susquehanna Annual Conference is the last significant step as you move towards Deacon's Orders. You have shown proficiency in worship and preaching, your theology has been examined and you have created and lead a Bible study. You have also shown a healthy balance in life and the ability to create a realistic plan for making disciples in the local church. This is a tremendous start to ministry in the United Methodist Church.

Now the Board is looking to see how you grow as you put into practice all that you have learned in seminary. This will be demonstrated by your ability to serve in your local ministry setting in a way that produces compelling and convincing evidence of fruit so that you will be effective as an ordained Deacon in the United Methodist Church.

During your provisional membership years, you will be a Resident in Ministry (RIM). Now is the time to deepen and broaden your gifts, skills, knowledge, and experience to effectively apply them to the real and complex world of ministry. Your ability to put your proficiency in the components of ministry into the practice of ministry will be affected by your individual gifts and calling, and by your home/family life, opportunities, and local setting. Time is needed to demonstrate consistent effectiveness.

This call of Jesus Christ through the United Methodist Church is offering you unprecedented opportunities and challenges. It is beckoning your best spirit of effective clergy leadership to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Board of Ordained Ministry is also on a journey with the church to continue the ongoing development of this residency program so we can offer a life-giving experience that uniquely fits your call, gifts, and needs to offer our best to the world.

The Book of Discipline 2020/2024, ¶326 and our Board of Ordained Ministry allows ordination after a minimum of two years if a resident

demonstrates effectiveness. Those who are not ordained after two years have not failed. It does not mean that he or she does not have the gifts and graces for ordained ministry. It is best understood as an opportunity for a resident to grow in ministry rather than a requirement that must be quickly met. In fact, there is no expectation that you will complete the provisional process in two years. The amount of time in provisional membership only becomes crucial when a resident nears the end of the eight-year period of opportunity. (The Book of Discipline 2020/2024 ¶327)

Contacts

We are here to serve you! Contact us if we can help!

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Important Dates

Theology Study Day for Ordination	Aug 13, 2025
Deadline to submit Church to World Project	September 1, 2025, 11:59pm
Fall Gathering	September 23, 2025 Mt Nittany UMC 10am-4pm
Deadline to given materials to Mentor to Read	January 8, 2026
Deadline for all paperwork	January 10, 2026, 11:59pm
On-Site Consultations Snow date	Saturday, Feb 7, 2026 Saturday, Feb 21, 2026
Interview Dates with BOOM Check-ins and Redo's	March 9, 2026
Spring Provisional Retreat	April 21-22, 2026 (tentative)

The Four Components of Provisional Membership

There are four components of provisional membership that work and flow together to produce healthy ministry. This process is highly relational. It is only when all these relationships are open to the spirit of God that this process can work optimally. Our goal is to offer a life-giving experience that best prepares you for professional ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church.

1. Mentoring: Of the four components, good mentoring can offer the strongest influence in a resident's ministry. There is a growing need for effective leadership in the church. There are leadership skills that can be taught, but it is the heart of a leader that is best "caught". Leadership in the church should come from a deep spiritual foundation. The mentor/resident relationship is completely confidential, except for mandated child abuse reporting or the threat to harm self or others. Your mentor will report only the dates that you met (or that you haven't met). You are expected to meet at least six times a year with your mentor. It is your responsibility to contact your mentor and be faithful in keeping appointments. The goal of mentoring is to listen, respond, guide, challenge, model, and encourage.

2. Supervision: Supervision is provided by your District Superintendent and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Your District Superintendent is responsible for professional supervision, and the Board of Ordained Ministry is responsible for credentialing supervision. Your District Superintendent will evaluate your ministry performance in your local church appointment with the assistance of your local Staff Parish Relations Committee or other appropriate group. The Board of Ordained Ministry will evaluate the spirituality, skills, knowledge, articulation, and maturity needed for ordination credentials. While the superintendents and the Board will have areas that overlap, the different viewpoints help provide a more complete picture of your ministry.

3. Continuing Theological Education: It will be our goal to continue to provide experience and learning that develops your applied theology. We will be intentional in listening to your needs and offering resources and experiences that will build upon your academic knowledge. We will focus

on offering practical training and experiences that you did not receive in seminary. Part of this is learning from colleagues. We can't stress enough the value of relationships within your Provisional Membership class. As sometimes there are only a few provisional members, you may need to reach out to your local cluster, recently ordained Deacons or seminary friends. Our Provisional Membership process will create space and opportunity for those relationships to form and grow. Effective Deacons in the United Methodist Church know that continued spiritual, personal, and professional formation is vital. The Provisional Membership program is designed to help you develop this desire and form good habits now so that continuing formation becomes natural.

4. Guided Peer Mentoring Group (GPM): Provisional members will be expected to participate in intentional clergy mentoring groups, comprised of other current provisional candidates. The group meetings will provide Spiritual Direction, Professional Development and the presence of one or more Board members who are available to answer questions and provide guidance. These groups will be organized and scheduled by the Board of Ordained Ministry. Candidates should expect to participate in four (4) meetings between the months of September and May. These meetings may be held in person or online, depending on the location of the provisional members.

STUDY DAYS

Study days are offered for your benefit. They are not required but they have proven to be helpful in the sharing of ideas and information that can be useful in the preparation of your materials. Questions are welcomed and addressed at this time. An open dialogue provides much help. This day is most helpful if you bring a draft of the questions you have already prepared.

Theology Study Days – August 13, 2025 10am-12pm (those applying for ordination)

Contact Person: Rev. Suzanne Elliot selliott@susumc.org

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PAPERWORK SUBMISSION

You must serve a minimum of one full annual conference year as a Provisional Member before you may petition for ordination through submitted paperwork. You have a maximum of eight years as a Provisional Member.

1. All work submitted is to be original work
2. You are expected to use outside sources in your work
3. Material used from other sources should be properly marked and sources cited
4. Read and sign the Plagiarism Policy and submit it to the registrar by the deadline for all submissions
5. Your Mentor must read your paperwork before it is submitted.
    a. You must provide your materials to your mentor by Wednesday, January 8, 2026.
    b. Your mentor must send an email to the Registrar indicating that he/she has read the material
        i. This is simply an acknowledgement that the mentor has read the material
        ii. This does not signify approval or non-approval by the mentor
6. Your mentor should include the dates that you and your mentor have met
    a. You are to meet six times per year
    b. This can be included in the same email as number 5
7. The deadline to submit your paperwork is Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 11:59pm
8. Your mentor and/or others may review and offer feedback on your work using these guidelines:
    a. Give general observations rather than "coach" the candidate to make specific statements
    b. Give appropriate feedback concerning
        i. Organization of material
        ii. Appropriate use of (or lack of) personal examples

iii. Completeness of candidate's answer
iv. Thoughts that are incomplete or not clearly articulated
v. Points that need to be clarified or defined

9. Other reminders
    a. The Bible is a book title, please capitalize it appropriately
    b. Be attentive to the use of inclusive language when writing and presenting your work
    c. Check your papers for grammar and spelling
    d. Do not write to "please" the Board; rather the material should reflect your personal understanding

You will be sent specific instructions with a website and password to upload your documents. Please follow the naming protocol and other instructions carefully. Once your work is submitted, it may not be edited or revised in any way. Uploaded material in the Boom Portal will be time stamped upon submission.

The Forms and references that are submitted via hard copy or email must be received in the registrar's office (not postmarked) by 11:59 pm, Friday, January 10, 2025. If you are using the US postal system, mail early! Please remember that sending mail overnight or express does not necessarily mean it will get to the Registrar when the post office says it will. Please, plan ahead! Arrangements to deliver materials in person are to be made with your Registrar.

The deadline for all paperwork to be Uploaded to the BOOM Portal is Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 11:59pm.

Provisional Member

Once commissioned, you are a Provisional Member of the conference. Provisional Members may also be referred to as Residents or Residents in Ministry (RIM). During the years of residency (two to eight years), all Residents will take part in the following resources.

Each resident in Provisional status shall:

1. Ensure that State Police Report, Child Abuse Screening, FBI fingerprints, Safe Sanctuaries (MinistrySafe), and Boundaries Training are current
    a. Background checks and MinistrySafe are required every 5 years
    b. Boundaries Training is required every 4 years
    c. See https://susumc.org/safe-sanctuaries/ for information on obtaining clearances, MinistrySafe and upcoming Boundaries Training
2. Participate, if you wish, in Theology Study Day
3. Attend a Seminar or Conference as required on page 29 during the Provisional time
4. Participate in the Fall Gathering
    a. Tuesday, September 23, 2025, 10am to 4pm with lunch provided at Mt Nittany UMC, 1500 East Branch Rd, State College PA
    b. The Gathering may include educational topics, spiritual renewal, & a Review of this Handbook
5. Participate in the Guided Peer Mentoring Group
    a. Four meetings between September and May, arranged by Board
    b. Spiritual Direction
        i. A spiritual director will meet with the group
        ii. The goal is to grow spiritually and provide group support
        iii. No Board member will be present during this time
    c. Professional Development
        i. Candidates should be prepared to share a struggle or question

        ii. The goal is to provide practical advice and application to ministry in a collegial setting
    d. Board Member access
        i. One or more Board members will be present for a segment of time
        ii. The goal is to answer questions and hear concerns
6. Submit all required materials on or before the deadlines noted on Page 4
    a. Specific requirements for Check- In Interviews can be found on Page 10
    b. Specific requirements for Petition for Ordination can be found on Page 12
7. Interview with the Board of Ordained Ministry with dates as noted on Page 4
    a. Specific times and any necessary instructions will be provided in January
    b. Mentors (or other Deacon/Deacon if mentor is unavailable) should be a silent, prayerful presence at the interviews
8. Participate in the Resident In Ministry Retreat
    a. April 21 - April 22, 2026 (tentative), place TBD.
    b. The retreat begins with lunch at Noon and wraps up after lunch at 1:00 the following day
    c. Those who are approved for Ordination will not participate in this retreat
9. Meet at least every other month (6 times per year) with your Mentor
    a. Mentors are assigned by the District Superintendent.
    b. Mentoring may be done as a group or one-on-one
    c. You are responsible for scheduling the meetings
10. Implementation of Discipleship Plan within your Church to World Ordination Project
    a. Implement your plan in your ministry setting
    b. Make adjustments to facilitate consistency, effectiveness, equipping of laity and a clear process for making disciples
    c. You will need to demonstrate the journey not just the result

Please be sure to communicate with the Registrar if there is a change in your contact information. Also, please respond in a prompt manner to emails, phone calls, and written letters from the Registrar.

YEARLY CHECK-IN PAPER

Please format your answers:

- MS Word (compatible)
- Name the document: 2025 Lastname, Firstname Check-In
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Margins should be no less than 1 inch or greater than 1.5 inches
- Insert your name in the header and page numbers in the footer
- Footnotes or Endnotes and Bibliography as appropriate
- Check grammar and spelling (remember that spell check does not catch all typographical errors)

Provisional members who are not petitioning for ordination will submit a check-in paper and be interviewed by the Board. This helps the Board keep in touch with the resident's life and ministry. The assignment and interview are required for continuing as a Licensed Pastor. Good work and participation in the interview are essential to maintain good standing.

Assignment

Write a paper that describes your current situation. Be sure to include pertinent information such as:

- How are things going in your appointment?
- Are there particular issues or concerns?
- Is the church/charge being emotionally/spiritually supportive?
- How are things going in your personal/family life?
- Are there particular challenges that you are facing?
- What are your sources of emotional and spiritual support?
- What is your perception of your ability to continue towards ordination?
- What is your projected time frame?
- What needs to happen for you to be able to move forward?
- Where do you see God at work in your life? In those around you?
- How are things going with your plan for making disciples?
- What have you learned?
- What are your struggles or concerns?
- Is there anything else the Board should know about you?

Petitioning for Ordination and Full Membership

1. When there is clear and compelling evidence of effectiveness in your ministry:
   a. Submit your proposal for your Church to World Project deadline noted on Page 4
   b. Complete the assignments required by the Susquehanna Conference by the designated deadlines
      i. Follow the instructions and guidelines in this handbook
      ii. The assignments include theology, sermon, Church to World Project, and evidence of effectiveness
      iii. Complete all other required forms and provide references
      iv. Follow the General Guidelines on Pages 8-9
2. Materials to be submitted by 11:59pm, Friday, January 10, 2026
   a. District Superintendent evaluation (with Vital Signs)
      i. You must request this from your Superintendent
      ii. Superintendent will email this to the registrar
   b. Form 102 Biographical Information
   c. Form 103 Medical Information
      i. Required if it has been 5 or more years since your last submission
      ii. Required if there has been a major change in your health within the past five years
   d. Form 105 Application for Clergy Relationship to Annual Conference
   e. Personal Reference Forms – Please give a reference form to the following
      i. A lay person who knows you very well and who has worked with you this past year in ministry
      ii. A pastor other than your District Superintendent who knows you well
      iii. The Staff/Parish Relations Chair of your current appointment
      iv. Be sure to fill in your name on the form
      v. Each person should email the completed reference form to the registrar
      vi. Form can be found at https://susumc.org/dcom-resources/#candidate-docs

f. Submit all assignments according to the guidelines and instructions that follow

Forms 102, 103 and 105 can be found here: https://www.gbhem.org/bom-library/candidacy-resources/ and are to be uploaded to the BOOM portal. Instructions for accessing the BOOM portal will be sent to you by the registrar.

Petitioning for Ordination and Full Membership Assignments

Theology Assignment

Answer all questions in ¶ 330.5 a (pages 256-257) found in the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline.

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word or compatible
- Name the document: 2025 Lastname, Firstname FMD Theology
- Double-spaced (suggested length is 20-30 pages, plus bibliography)
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Margins should be no less than 1 inch or greater than 1.5 inches
- Insert your name in the header and page numbers in the footer
- Footnotes or Endnotes and Bibliography as appropriate
- Check grammar and spelling (remember spell check does not catch all typographical errors)
- Type each question, followed by your answer
- Submit your paper as one file, not one file for each question.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

The sense of the Discipline's questions for those seeking full membership is "How has the practice of ministry affected …"

1. Have I given examples and reflected on how my experiences have helped my understanding?
2. In the answers given, in what ways do I demonstrate knowledge of the biblical foundations and the theological processes of our United Methodist tradition?
3. Have I shown the ability to articulate doctrines and issues important to the situations described?
4. Have I shown the ability to make connections between theology and pastoral practice?
5. Have I shown understanding of God's grace in both theory and practice?
6. What sense of me and my call as an ordained clergy person is revealed in the assignment?
7. Are my answers clear and concise?

LIFE ISSUES ASSIGNMENT

1. Please respond to each question set forth in Paragraph 330.5. b) and c) (page 257)

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word or compatible
- Name the document: 2025 Lastname, Firstname FMD Life Issues
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Margins should be no less than 1 inch or greater than 1.5 inches
- Insert your name in the header and page numbers in the footer
- Footnotes or Endnotes and Bibliography as appropriate
- Check grammar and spelling (remember spell check does not catch all typographical errors)

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Have I addressed the various aspects of the questions in regard to my current and future circumstances?
2. Have I given examples and shown how I am already implementing measures of self-care and spiritual discipline?
3. What sense of me and my call as an ordained clergy person is revealed in the assignment?
4. Have I given examples reflective of my practice of ministry?
5. Have I looked at myself honestly in discussing my strengths and areas to be strengthened?
6. Are my answers clear and concise?

Sermon Assignment

Preach a sermon in your church or other ministry setting using 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c.

The style of worship should be reflective of typical worship service(s) in your appointment. The Board will be looking at the content and delivery of the sermon as well as the appropriateness of its context.

While you may not often preach from an Old Testament text, the Board believes that demonstrating an ability to preach from an Old Testament lection is an appropriate challenge for Deacon candidates. We trust that you will prepare and preach a sermon which is good news for the people, a sermon which lifts up the grace-filled promises of God and is also faithful to the context and content of this lection.

Directions and Guidelines

1. Preach the sermon during a typical worship time in the church or other setting
2. Prepare a cover sheet for the worship service
    a. Briefly describe the congregation and the context in which you preached the sermon
    b. Note if you prepared the worship experience or it was prepared by someone else (only the sermon is being considered)
    c. Include a "Theme Sentence" which sums up the sermon.
3. Include an electronic copy of the Sunday worship bulletin, if applicable
4. Include a full manuscript of the sermon with footnotes
    a. You may prepare the manuscript before or after you preach the sermon
    b. If you transcribe the sermon after it has been preached, please edit and format it appropriately
5. Include a bibliography of references
6. Provide a video of the entire worship service, if applicable
    a. Upload the video directly to the cloud via a BOOM Portal upload link that will be provided to you

b. Acceptable file formats are .mov, .mpeg4, .mp4, .avi, or .wmv. The maximum file size is 10 GBs.
c. When uploading material please do it early because in some situations it can take a long time.

Suggestions for a good video recording:

It is suggested that you do a practice recording of a service before you record for the Board. Review the file and make any technical adjustments necessary. If possible, have someone operating the camera. It is helpful to pan the congregation during the service and use the zoom when appropriate. The entire worship service is required to be recorded if it is a local church setting. If announcements are made prior to the beginning of worship, do not include them in the recording.

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word or compatible
- Name the document: 2025 Lastname, Firstname FMD Worship
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Margins should be no less than 1 inch or greater than 1.5 inches
- Insert your name in the header and page numbers in the footer
- Footnotes or Endnotes and Bibliography as appropriate
- Check grammar and spelling (remember spell check does not catch all typographical errors)

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- What evidence is there in my sermon that I have done exegetical and theological background work in preparing the sermon?
- Have I created a sermon which is clearly related to the text?
- Can I state the theme of the sermon in one sentence?
- How does this sermon bring the text alive for the hearer?
- Is there an answer to the questions, "So what?" and "What's next?"
- Have I proof-read the manuscript I am providing to the Board?
- Does the sermon stay relatively close to the manuscript? The Board is not looking for "exact," but if you depart greatly from the written manuscript, such as adding two or three illustrations, skipping large portions, etc., consider rewriting the manuscript.
- Do I appear to be reading the manuscript or am I able to make eye contact and deliver the sermon with appropriate energy?

- Have I applied the Biblical Text to the Community, and to the World?
- Is my work clear and concise?
- Have I included the required attachments and worship bulletins?

Biblical Text for Worship Assignment by Ordination Year

Interview Year 2026: 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c

Interview Year 2027: Exodus 32:1-14

Interview Year 2028: Job 23:1-9, 16-17

Interview Year 2029: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

Interview Year 2030: Isaiah 25:1-9

Interview Year 2031: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

Interview Year 2032: 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c

Interview Year 2033: Exodus 32:1-14

Church to World Ordination Project

The Ordination Project is to be a new ministry that will demonstrate your leadership skills in your appointment setting, your understanding of your community and your ability to work with others to bring the project to fruition. Throughout years of ministry, we are constantly seeking ways to address community concerns in the name of Christ. This project should exemplify the type of ministries that we will continue to be involved in as we serve as Deacons. Those who are ordained as Deacons are to lead the people of God in Word, Service, Compassion and Justice, to both the community and the congregation in a ministry that connects the two. That's what this project should demonstrate.

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word or compatible
- Name the proposal: 2025 Lastname, Firstname FMD C2W Proposal
- Name the main document(s): 2025 Lastname, Firstname FMD C2W Project
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font
- Margins should be no less than 1 inch or greater than 1.5 inches
- Insert your name in the header and page numbers in the footer
- Footnotes or Endnotes and Bibliography as appropriate
- Check grammar and spelling (remember spell check does not catch all typographical errors)

Assignment

1. Design a Church to World ordination project
    a. It should be a NEW ministry rather than an existing one
        i. It can be in conjunction with an existing ministry, such as adding a clothing bank to a food pantry
        ii. It can be an expansion of an existing ministry such as a second location for services
    b. It should involve church members and community outreach
    c. It should respond to the needs of the community that aren't currently being met
    d. It should be something you are passionate about
    e. There should be a distinct difference between what you are doing and a project that might be done by any social club – that is, your project should visibly be a ministry of Christ
    f. It may be a one-time event, short series of events or an on-going ministry
        i. If it is a one-time event, the event must be completed prior to your interview with the Board and ideally should be completed before the written work is submitted

ii. If it is a short series of events, it should be completed if possible prior to your interview. If the series of events is spread out significantly (such as every 3 or 6 months for 2 years), you must consult with the In-Service Coordinator to determine what must be completed prior to the interview.
iii. If it is an on-going ministry, it must be "up and running" so that the Board has sufficient evidence to evaluate; again, you must consult with the In-Service Coordinator to determine what must be completed prior to the interview

g. It should involve laity
    i. You need not be the "star" of the project
    ii. Involve as many people as possible and practical
h. It may be an ecumenical, cross-cultural or a cooperative ministry

2. Submit your Church to World Ordination Proposal
    a. Create and submit a proposal for your project.
        i. It MUST be approved no later than September 15, 2024
        ii. It may be submitted for approval any time after you have been commissioned
    b. The written proposal should include
        i. Setting
            1. What is the community setting for this project?
            2. What church(es) will be involved?
        ii. A Purpose Statement
            1. A scriptural inspiration or basis for the project
                a. What scripture verse or verses might be lived out in this project?
                b. What is the faith foundation of this project?
            2. Why is this being done? What need is being addressed?
        iii. Goals/Objectives
            1. What do you hope to accomplish?
        iv. Detailed Plan (should include "nuts and bolts" of the project)
            1. What will be done?
            2. How will you proceed?
            3. Who will be involved?
            4. What will be the timeline?
            5. What resources will be used?
            6. What is the projected outcome?
            7. What will be the "fruit" of this project?
        v. Submit the proposal to the In-service Coordinator
        vi. When you have received approval, forward the approval email along with your proposal document to the registrar.
        vii. The proposal should be uploaded when you upload your other materials
        viii. Suggested Length (3-5 pages)
3. Carry out the Project
    a. Use your proposal to carry out the project
    b. Revise and adapt as necessary

4. Written reflection
    a. Write a reflection of the project addressing these topics
        i. Write a brief description of the project including how things went and what changed between the proposal and the reality of what took place
        ii. Discuss whether the project accomplished the goals/objectives that were set
        iii. What was the fruit
        iv. What worked/is working well?
        v. What might you change if you were to do this project again?
    b. Reflect on the spiritual aspects of the project
        i. Where did you see Christ at work?
        ii. How did you grow?
        iii. How did this help others grow/make disciples?
        iv. How was the community impacted?
    c. Include Bibliography and resources used
    d. This written reflection AND the proposal document are to be uploaded by the January deadline
5. Presentation
    a. As part of your interview, you are to make a presentation (no longer than 15 minutes) regarding your project
        i. Computer based multi-media must be used in a creative way – it can involve PowerPoint, Video, Music, Slide show, etc.
            1. A tv/projector will be available with HDMI input. Please bring your own computer and HDMI/connector so you know the presentation will work
            2. Additional media – posters, banners, etc. may also be used
        ii. The presentation should allow the Board to see the project in action
            1. May include planning stages or "process" of the project
            2. The "fruits" should be showcased
    b. The presentation does not need to be submitted prior to the interview
        i. Additional materials may be presented (such as handouts), bring 5 copies if applicable
        ii. These materials must be directly related to the presentation

Addendum

How do I choose and plan a Church to World Ordination Project?
Look at the needs of the community or your congregation. What needs are not being met? Ask yourself what you are passionate about. Are there seminars that might "jump start" some ideas? How can I help my people "re-think" church? How might we show some radical hospitality?

Ideas that might be developed into a Church to World Ordination Project:
Ministry to single moms/dads; Local prison ministry; Food pantry/clothing ministry; develop a VIM project; radical Hospitality during community events; Respond to a political/cultural difficulty in your community; "Change the World"

Your plan might include:
Attendance at a seminar or continuing education event; teaching; service; networking or coordinating individuals or groups; gathering resources; resourcing others; media; developing resources

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- How did you identify what was needed in regard to your local setting and their plan for making disciples?
- What adaptations or changes were needed to be made to more effectively make disciples?
    - How did those changes come about?
    - How was your leadership effective in walking the congregation through those changes?
- What has been the fruit of your leadership as it pertains to an intentional plan for making disciples?
- What barriers were/are people facing in their journey to Jesus and in growing with Jesus in your local setting?
- What has your local church done, through your leadership, to help shepherd them closer to Jesus?
- What have you learned through this process that will help you in the future?

After the Interview

After the Board has had the opportunity to hear from the interview teams, the Board will deliberate and vote. After the vote, you will receive a phone call followed by a written outcome of the interview.

The following are possible outcomes:

1. Approved for Ordination at Annual Conference 2025
    a. You will not participate in the Spring Provisional Retreat
    b. You will meet with the Bishop with the date and format will be at the convenience of the Bishop
    c. You will be recommended by the Board of Ordained Ministry to be approved for ordination and Full Membership by the clergy session of Annual Conference.
    d. You will be given details about the historic questions, ordination service, ministry dinner and other Annual Conference activities closer to Annual Conference
2. Not Approved for Ordination at Annual Conference 2025
    a. You will continue in the Provisional process
        i. You may choose to wait or petition for ordination in the following year
        ii. There is a maximum of 8 years from the time you are commissioned until you are ordained
    b. You will participate in the Spring Provisional Retreat
    c. You will be given instructions based on the Board's evaluation to resubmit some or all written assignments
    d. If there was not clear and compelling evidence of effectiveness within your ministry setting you will:
        i. Develop and follow a plan to address the areas of effectiveness within your ministry identified by the Board of Ordained Ministry
        ii. The Board interview Team Captain and your District Superintendent must approve this plan
        iii. The plan must be submitted to the appropriate Registrar within sixty days of being notified of your continued provisional status

It is not unusual, nor a sign of failure, to not "pass" on the first attempt to be approved for ordination. This can be a life-giving opportunity to grow and fine-tune your ministry. It is always a disappointment, but the Board has frequently heard candidates say, "It was the best thing for my ministry to be held back."

Required Seminar/Conferences

During your time as a Resident in Ministry, you must attend one of the following:

1. The General Board of Church and Society Seminar.
    a. Topic & Dates are announced through QuikLink
    b. The trip is usually in the spring
    c. The cost for this seminar will be fully covered by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
2. A Conference focused on effective church leadership.
    a. Your choice of conference/seminar must be pre-approved by the Provisional In-Service Committee
    b. The cost for a conference will be covered at an amount similar to the cost of option 1
    c. You should submit an itemized budget of anticipated expenses to the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry
        i. The Chair will determine the amount the Board will pay
        ii. You will be responsible for costs beyond what the Board pays
        iii. Submit this as soon as the conference you choose is approved because of the time element involved in processing your request.

It is strongly recommended you complete these in the year following commissioning but must be completed before ordination:

It is recommended that Provisional members seek a cross-cultural experience, especially if you did not gain this kind of experience through seminary. You will find many VIM experiences available through the Annual Conference and the United Methodist connection.

A Word to Mentors

Thank you for generously giving yourself and your time to support a resident in ministry. You are making a significant contribution. You are strengthening the ministry of a resident, and you are developing strong spiritual leadership in our annual conference. Trust is one of the fundamental building blocks of a successful mentoring relationship. A key factor in its development is a shared understanding of the degree to which communication between mentors and residents is considered confidential both by the individuals themselves and the structures of the annual conference. Please be committed to this relationship.

The role of the mentor is non-evaluative in the sense that you will not submit an evaluation of the candidate to the Board or District Superintendent. The only report requested from you is a verification of your meeting times. This reporting of the date and time of meetings needs to be submitted to the Registrar and the resident's District Superintendent. This report should be submitted annually, no later than January 8, 2025. It can be combined with your email to verify that you have read the resident's material. You may simply send an email to the registrar with dates and times of your meetings. We want to encourage the resident to be open with you without fear of repercussions. We ask that you maintain the highest standards of confidentiality, breaking confidence only in a situation where you are legally bound as a mandated reporter, or if the resident threatens to harm self or others.

Good mentors are good role models. We hope that you will model collegiality, spirituality, and a healthy balance of work and rest. Be an encourager and continue to share your knowledge and wisdom.

Mentors are asked to accompany resident(s) during their Board of Ordained Ministry interviews. You are to be a silent, prayerful presence and an extra set of "ears" during the interview. This will help you to assist the resident following the interview and in understanding any recommendations that may come as a result of the interview. If you are serving on the Board of Ordained Ministry, help your resident to choose another Full Member to accompany him/her during the interview.

This resource may be helpful to you: *Mentoring into Vocation; Touchstones for the Journey* by Mark Fowler