PROVISIONAL ELDERS HANDBOOK

Board of Ordained Ministry

2025-2026

SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE OF THEUNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Table of Contents

Introduction	2-3
Contacts	4
Important Dates	5
The Four Components of Provisional Membership	6-7
Study Days	7
General Guidelines for Paperwork Submission	8-9
Provisional Member	10-11
Yearly Check-in Paper	12
Petitioning for Ordination and Full Membership	13-14
Theology	15
Worship	16-18
Discipleship Plan	19-20
Evidence of Effectiveness	21-22
After the On-Site Consultation	22-23
Required Seminars	23-24
A Word to Mentors	24-25

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 Elder'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 elder 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!

Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Rev. Mira Hewlett

bomchair@susumc.org

Vice Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Rev. Steve Salisbury

bomvicechair@susumc.org

Chair, Provisional In-service Committee, BOOM

Rev. Ryan Gephart

bomrim@susumc.org

570-850-6637

Elder's Registrar, BOOM

Rev. Brian Lucas

102 Lower Market St.

Milton, PA 17847

bomregistrar@susumc.org

570-351-1619

Important Dates

Theology Study Day for Ordination	August 13, 2025 10am-12pm
Deadline to request On-site Consultation for Ordination	September 1, 2025, 11:59pm
Fall Gathering	September 23, 2025 Mt Nittany UMC 10am-4pm
Deadline to given materials to Mentor to Read	Wednesday, January 8, 2026
Deadline for all paperwork	January 10, 2026, 11:59pm
On-Site Consultations	Saturday, Feb 7, 2026
Snow date	Saturday, Feb 21, 2026
Interview Dates with BOOM	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 elders or seminary friends. Our Provisional Membership process will create space and opportunity for those relationships to form and grow. Effective Elders 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

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, 2025.
    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, 2026, 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. Participation in Theology or other Study Day is encouraged but not required
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 16801
    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 Pages
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 Elder/Deacon if mentor is unavailable) should be a silent, prayerful presence at the interviews
8. Participate in the Resident In Ministry Retreat
    a. Tuesday, April 22 - Wednesday, April 23, 2025, place TBD.
    b. The retreat begins with lunch at Noon Tuesday and wraps up after lunch at 1:00 Wednesday
    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
    a. Familiarize yourself with the Discipleship Plan requirement for Ordination
    b. Implement your plan in your ministry setting
    c. Make adjustments to facilitate consistency, effectiveness, equipping of laity and a clear process for making disciples
    d. 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. Notify the Registrar of your intention to Petition for Ordination and request an On-site Consultation by the 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, worship, discipleship plan, and evidence of effectiveness
        iii. Complete all other required forms and provide references
        iv. Follow the General Guidelines on Page 7
2. Materials to be submitted by 11:59pm, Friday, January 10, 2025
    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

g. You will host an onsite consultation
    i. Instructions and guidelines will be provided by the vice chair
    ii. This will be scheduled on February 7, 2026. Snow date February 21, 2026
    iii. Keep both dates open on your charge's calendar

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 ¶ 335 (pages 268-270) 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 FME 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?

Worship Assignment

Plan, design, and conduct a worship service using 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c as the basis for your sermon.

The style of worship should be reflective of typical worship service(s) in your appointment. If it is customary to use a liturgist, please do so. The Board will be looking at

a) theme
b) continuity and flow of worship
c) your ability to lead worship
d) appropriate choice of hymns
e) the content and delivery of the sermon

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 Elder 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, rather than at an occasion which might cause you to shorten the sermon.
2. Prepare a cover sheet for the worship service
    a. Briefly describe the congregation and the setting in which you preached the sermon
    b. Include a "Theme Sentence" which sums up the sermon.
3. Include an electronic copy of the Sunday worship bulletin.
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
    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 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 FME 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 2025: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

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

Discipleship Plan Assignment

The Great Commission of Jesus, to make disciples, is central to your call to ordained ministry. This commission is personal, in the ways you plan to grow individually as a follower of Jesus, and public, seen through the ways you live your life in ways that make disciples of others. Your call to ordained ministry requires you to understand, live, and promote this commission in the lives of those in the community you serve.

Please submit the plan for making disciples in your local setting(s). This plan should demonstrate your ability to effectively adapt and implement the academic understanding of your commissioning discipleship plan, "A Process for Making Disciples," to a specific local setting. It should show a sensitivity to the individual culture of your local church community. Please do not simply import an arbitrary plan, but rather demonstrate how you have been able to take the key components of your academic understanding, of how churches can be intentional in making disciples, and adapt that knowledge to your local setting.

This paper should include the process that resulted in the current plan, and how your leadership was helpful and effective in its development and future areas of growth. Also, please demonstrate how this plan has been fruitful in making disciples of Jesus.

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word or compatible
- Name the outline: 2025 Lastname, Firstname FME Proposal
- Name the main document(s): 2025 Lastname, Firstname FME Discipleship Plan
- Double-spaced (average 3-6 pages)
- 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:

- How did you identify what was needed in regards 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 are areas of future growth for your local church's discipleship plan?
- What have you learned through this process that will help you in the future?

Evidence of Effectiveness Assignment

As you petition for ordination, you have already demonstrated your proficiency in the key components of ministry (Worship, Theology, Healthy Life Issues, Bible Study, and the understanding of a Process for Making Disciples) through your work in the commissioning process. Your "Evidence of Effectiveness" paper should demonstrate your ability to effectively implement and adapt these key components of ministry to a local, and unique, setting in a way that bears fruit for the Kingdom of God.

Write a paper that describes the compelling evidence of fruit that you see in the body of Christ where you serve. Be sure to make note of how your leadership and presence as Pastor have been helpful in aiding this spiritual growth.

Please format your written work using the following guidelines:

- MS Word (compatible)
- Name the main document(s): 2025 Lastname, Firstname FME Evidence of Effectiveness
- Double-spaced (average 4-8 pages)
- 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:

- How am I discerning, casting, and implementing vision?
- What's the next step toward achieving our vision?
- How has God used my leadership to empower laity and raise up leaders?
- Is my ministry growing, stable, or declining, and how do our Vital Signs help tell this picture?
- In looking at our Vital Signs, where are they accurate? And, what are they not telling us?

- What are the specific challenges and opportunities for disciple-making in our community?
- What are the two biggest challenges in my ministry, and what am I doing to address them?
- What have been my most recent measurable goals, and how have I met them? What are my measurable goals for the next phase of my ministry?

After the On-site Consultation

After the Board has had the opportunity to hear from those who participated in the On-site consultation, the Board will deliberate and vote. After the vote, you will receive a phone call followed by a written outcome of the interview and on-site consultation process.

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 most likely meet with the Bishop
    c. The date and format will be at the convenience of the Bishop
    d. 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.
    e. 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 2026
    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