



Mountain Sky Conference District Committees of Ministry:

At the 2012 General Conference, a requirement was established that all candidates for licensed or ordained ministry attend an “Orientation to Ministry” (OTM) session.

An orientation to ministry is required for all candidates for licensed and ordained ministry. Attendance at the orientation and becoming a certified candidate may be sequential or concurrent. This common ministry preparation experience is for the purpose of building collegiality and understanding among the varieties of set-apart ministry (deacons, elders and local pastors). (BOD Para. 312)

The goals of this orientation are to be:

- To build collegiality among the various forms of ministry
- To help candidates understand and appreciate each other’s roles
- To learn more about the ministry to which one is called
- To build relationships with colleagues in ministry
- To be able to clearly verbalize the roles of set-apart ministries in the UMC
- To be able to verbalize how one’s call fits into one of those roles

Our MSC BOM created an outline and process for each of our District Committees on Ministry to offer annually or semi-annually to candidates who are just entering the process, with the objective of a candidate having participated in the orientation prior to a first appointment as a licensed or ordained minister.

Several of our DCOMs already try to meet with candidates as soon as they hear about them in the process, well before the meeting for certification. This is a practice that is helpful for the candidate and the DCOM to form a fuller relationship with each other. This would also give plenty of time for each DCOM to offer the Orientation to Ministry prior to an appointment.

This orientation outline attached asks for you to do a few things. One is to set up a time at least annually (depending on your volume of incoming candidates) to offer the OTM, possibly in conjunction with a DCOM interview/meeting. The second, and optional, thing would be to arrange a space where you could view the video, “Ordained Ministry in the United Methodist Church, Part 1” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53FT1Xy9vp4&t=136s>) . . other various videos can be found on YouTube as well. The third thing would be to recruit one local pastor, one ordained deacon and one ordained elder to speak a few minutes on their particular ministry *if at all possible*.

Please let me know what questions you have.

Peace,

Rev. Sandi Dillon
BOM Chairperson
revsandi@outlook.com
307-256-8577

Orientation to Ministry Outline/Resources Rocky Mountain Conference of the UMC

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While the requirement and goals were decided at GC2012, the method for the orientation was left to each conference’s Board of Ordained Ministry to develop. Our RMC BOM created an outline and process for each of our District Committees on Ministry to offer annually or semi-annually to candidates who are just entering the process, with the objective of a candidate having participated in the orientation prior to a first appointment as a licensed or ordained minister.

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I. Welcome

- a. Introductions (Name, ministry setting, hopes for ministry)
- b. Goals of this session (as stated in Chapter 6 of the Board of Ordained Ministry Handbook)
 - i. To build collegiality among the various forms of ministry
 - ii. To help candidates understand and appreciate each other's roles
 - iii. To learn more about the ministry to which one is called
 - iv. To build relationships with colleagues in ministry
 - v. To be able to clearly verbalize the roles of set-apart ministry in the UMC
 - vi. To be able to verbalize how one's call fits into one of the roles

II. Orientation Introduction

- a. *Handout: Candidacy Checklist, found on mtnskyymc.org, under Administration/Forms/Clergy and Candidacy Forms*
- b. You have discerned a call to ministry either to licensed or ordained ministry. Discerning a call to ministry isn't the end of your discernment process—prayerful consideration of your call to ministry should continue every step of the way.
- c. Philosophy behind the process
 - i. The process toward licensed ministry and ordination is just that: a process. As is any worthwhile pursuit, the destination isn't the point, it's the journey.
 - ii. This process is not supposed to be easy, and you might find yourself tested in various ways. This is partly because the process itself is formational; it is also because ministry is not easy, and skills to deal with difficult situations can be formed and honed during this process.
 - iii. The process itself is important because the "process" doesn't end at ordination or after receiving an appointment—this is just the first of many processes. This process is not just a series of hoops to jump through for the sake of making hoops to jump through—it is meant to help you develop skills to deal with the many, continued processes that you will handle after licensing or commissioning/ordination.
 - iv. "If you can do anything else, do it"—this was a helpful and formative statement one of our ordained clergypersons heard during this process. The process is hard, it can be frustrating

and will be difficult for your family in many ways. This is not meant to be discouraging, but to speak to the reality of working with people who are frail, broken and in need of God's grace (this includes every one of us, clergy and lay).

- d. At this point, you will continue to work with the District Committee on Ministry, whose role is to come alongside you to discern spiritual and vocational calling. We have an understanding that while all Christians are called to ministry, not all are called to licensed or ordained ministry in the UMC. We are here to help you navigate this discernment process.
- e. If you are discerning a call for ordained ministry, you will eventually be sent on to the Board of Ordained Ministry, who will further discern your spiritual and vocational call with you on a deeper level. While the BOM takes great care with those who come under its supervision, it is not to be understood that approval and continuance are guaranteed at this level.

III. Introduction to Licensed and Ordained Ministry

- a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53FT1Xy9vp4>
(Ordained Ministry in the United Methodist Church, Part 1)

IV. Ordained Ministry as an Elder

- a. A Short Presentation (10-15mins) from a local Ordained Elder, or use this link if no Elder is available - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hhoWYI_w34
Touch on some of these points:
 - i. An Ordained Elder is usually appointed to a local charge, but sometimes there are extension ministry appointments.
 - ii. Itinerancy—In the Rocky Mountain Conference, itinerancy means that you could be appointed ANYWHERE within the bounds of the conference, including Wyoming and Utah. Also, with the increased relationship with Yellowstone Conference, cross-conference appointments are also a possibility.
 - iii. Ordained elders have “guaranteed appointment”, but according to discipline, there are responsibilities for the elder as well as the cabinet (see ¶334, BOD).
- b. Address Questions

V. Ordained Ministry as a Deacon

- a. A Short Presentation (10-15mins) from a local Ordained Deacon, or use this link if no Deacon is available -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqWhYbFmE8E>

Touch on some of these points:

- i. An Ordained Deacon has an appointment either in the local church or beyond the local church
- ii. The call and ministry of a Deacon is not inferior to, but just different from, the call and ministry of an Elder.
- iii. A Deacon is ordained but is non-itinerant. A Deacon seeks their own appointment in consultation with Bishop's approval.
- iv. The landscape of ministry for Deacons is changing along with all the ministries of the church. In the Rocky Mountain Conference we have seen many churches have to cut positions traditionally held by Ordained Deacons. This has called upon Deacons to be creative and proactive in their search for suitable appointments (ex: Sacred Stones Ministry).

- b. Address Questions

VI. Licensed Ministry as a Local Pastor

- a. A Short Presentation (10-15mins) from a local Licensed Local Pastor, or use this link if no LLP is available -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQrB1MsLmZE>

Touch on some of these points:

- i. A Local Pastor is licensed to pastoral ministry to perform the duties of a pastor (derived from the elder) in a local church setting
- ii. Local Pastors serve and have authority only within the setting and during the time of the appointment.
- iii. Supervision of a Local Pastor is by the District Committee on Ministry, who meets with the Local Pastor once a year to recommend continuation of the license for pastoral ministry.

- b. Address Questions

VII. Next Steps and Follow Up

- a. Your next step from here is to confirm with your DCOM representative that you have an appointment scheduled to meet with the DCOM. This is your process and you are expected to know what steps you need to take next. However, the DCOM and mentors are

available to help you when it seems overwhelming—ask lots of questions to make sure that you know exactly what’s going on and what happens next. It’s also very important keep copies of all of your paperwork and correspondences!

- b. Address any additional questions.
- c. Offer time to connect with other candidates and guest speakers

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