

Candidacy Glossary

As a gift to our brothers and sisters beginning this unique and sometimes strange journey named “candidacy,” we offer this glossary of terms and acronyms specific to candidacy in the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. Although these definitions are not exhaustive or authorized, it is our hope and prayer they will give new travelers at least enough candidacy language to ask for directions along the way!

Annual Conference –A meeting or conference scheduled once each year, as you might have guessed. In this case, however, the term “annual conference” is used to refer both to an annual meeting and the group which meets annually. Specifically, the term “annual conference” refers to the annual meeting of delegates from United Methodist churches in a geographic area and to the United Methodist clergy and churches in that geographic area. Our annual conference (or “Conference,” as it is often called) includes all UM clergy and churches in southeast Texas. The next annual four day meeting of the Texas Annual Conference will begin on Memorial Day 2009, at The Woodlands United Methodist Church in The Woodlands, Texas. See “Texas Annual Conference” below or go to www.txcumc.org for more info.

Apportionments – The money local churches donate to their District and Conference to support District, Conference, and General church (international) United Methodist missions and ministry. Sometimes called “benevolences,” they are usually called “apportionments” because each church is “apportioned” or assigned a specific dollar amount each year according to a formula, which is that church’s “share” of the missions and ministry support.

Bishops – Bishops are elders elected by clergy and lay delegates and consecrated by bishops for general oversight of the United Methodist Church. Bishops are usually appointed to oversee and supervise the UM clergy and churches in one geographic or “Episcopal” area, which is usually called an “annual conference.” Bishops lead laity and clergy in mission and ministry; and consecrate, commission, ordain, and appoint licensed and ordained ministers to serve the church and the world. Bishops are elected for life, and may be assigned to lead an annual conference for up to three four-year terms.

BOM (Conference) Board of Ordained Ministry

Board of Ordained Ministry –The Conference committee responsible for many aspects of ordained ministry, including recruiting candidates for ordained ministry and guiding them through a process of education, training, and ordination. Candidates for ordained ministry meet with the Board during triads and interviews prior to commissioning and ordination.

BOD (The) *Book of Discipline*

The Book of Discipline – A book of law for The United Methodist Church. The product of 200 years of Christians working together, this UM reference book lays out processes which help Methodists govern themselves. It also includes copies of historical documents and doctrinal standards. The laws contained in the book (including policies affecting candidacy) may only be

changed by the General Conference—a group of representative United Methodist clergy and lay delegates which meets once every four years. This book is updated and reprinted every four years after General Conference, and is organized not by page number or chapter, but by “paragraph number.” This United Methodist Publishing House resource is available at www.cokesbury.com.

BOW *(The United Methodist) Book of Worship*

(The United Methodist) Book of Worship – A key UM reference book including basic patterns for worship; services of word and table (Communion or the Lord’s Supper); Baptism; marriage; death and resurrection; healing; and other worship services, blessings, prayers, and resources. Order at www.cokesbury.com.

Cabinet – The Bishop, 9 District Superintendents, 4 Center Directors, and the Assistant to the Bishop comprise the Cabinet of the Texas Annual Conference. The Cabinet’s primary responsibility is the appointment of clergy. They typically meet several days each month, often at the Conference Service Center.

Calling – Traditionally “calling” is used to name the specific ministry or ministries to which God “calls” us. Both lay and clergy are “called” to serve God. However, sometimes licensed and ordained ministers use the term “calling” to name the specific experiences which led them to pursue licensed or ordained ministry.

Candidacy – The process of discernment during which a candidate considers licensed or ordained ministry, and may become approved and equipped for that ministry. “Candidacy” is a specific part of a lifelong spiritual journey of discerning God’s callings in our lives.

Candidacy Road Map – See “Road Map.”

Candidacy Summit – A multi-day event during which all Texas Annual Conference candidates entering the Exploring Phase of candidacy after March 1, 2008, receive accurate information about the entire candidacy process; begin meeting together in small groups with trained Mentors; and have opportunities to worship, share their call stories, meet District Superintendents and other supporters, and take required psychological tests.

Candidate – A person considering licensed or ordained ministry. See also “candidacy.”

Center for Clergy Excellence – One of four areas of Texas Annual Conference Conference-level ministries, Center ministries include clergy accountability, clergy development and spiritual formation, clergy recruitment, clergy pension and group health benefits, and the Board of Ordained Ministry. The other three Conference Centers: The Centers for Congregational Excellence, Missional Excellence, and Connectional Resources (fiscal, communications, and technology ministries.) The Directors and staff of the four Centers office in the Conference Service Center, along with the Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop, and United Methodist Foundation staff.

Clergy –A licensed or ordained minister. Through our baptism, we are all called as “lay” ministers. However, clergy ministers have been called and equipped for the specific ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament and/or Order. See also “deacon,” “elder,” and “licensed local pastor.”)

Conference – See “annual conference” and “Texas Annual Conference.”

Conference Service Center – The Conference “headquarters” building, housing the offices of the Bishop, Center Directors and staff, and United Methodist Foundation offices, and is located in Houston’s museum district at 5215 Main Street, Houston 77002, 713.521.9383
www.txcumc.org.

CLT Core Leadership Team

Core Leadership Team – Much like a “church council” for the whole Conference, this Conference committee acts on behalf of the annual conference in between annual conference sessions.

Charge Conference – A local church charge conference includes every member of the governing body (usually a church council) of a United Methodist Church plus its appointed clergy. This group must meet once each year to review church goals and objectives, elect church leaders, and set clergy salaries. However, charge conference meetings may also be called when needed by a Pastor and/or District Superintendent. Candidates seeking certification will need approval of their congregation’s charge conference during the Exploring phase of candidacy.

(The) Christian As Minister – Reading through this “red book” (as it was fondly called, until it was recently reprinted with a multi-colored cover!) with a clergy or lay guide is required by our Conference during the Inquiring phase of ministry. This GBHEM resource may be ordered at www.cokesbury.com

Deacons – Ordained ministers called to the ministries of Word and Service. A Deacon in full connection is called to connect the local congregation and the community as a minister who “sends forth” the congregation into the world. Their call is to interpret the concerns and hurts of the world through issues of justice and compassion. Deacons are servant leaders who preach and teach the Word of God, and conduct weddings and funerals; however they do not administer the sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion) or order (lead administratively) the church. Deacons are usually appointed as associate pastors at larger churches, usually as administrators, musicians, or educators. However, deacons may also be appointed to serve “beyond the local church” in “extension ministries.” Deacons do not “itinerate” (agree to move or be appointed by the Bishop where needed), but they do serve under appointment. Instead of being appointed by the Cabinet as elders, or local pastors, deacons “find their own” place of service and then request Episcopal appointment.

DCM Developing Connectional Ministries

Developing Connectional Ministries – Mentor-supervised clergy peer groups, retreats, and experiences required for all provisional members. The DCM experience is designed to connect incoming new ministers with colleagues and mentors, and with the resources and expectations of the Conference and the general church. After candidates are commissioned, they become provisional members of the annual conference. After commissioned members complete their educational requirements, they participate in DCM for the two to three year provisional membership period prior to ordination as deacons or elders and full membership in the Texas Annual Conference.

District – One of several smaller geographic areas within a UM annual conference. In the Texas Annual Conference, there are 9 Districts, named Central North, Central South, East, North, Northwest, South, Southeast, Southwest, and West. Districts are supervised by District Superintendents, who usually work out of an office in a church or office building within the District, along with one or more District Administrative Assistant(s.)

dCOM District Committee on Ministry

District Committee on Ministry – Committee responsible for all candidates for licensed and ordained ministry in one District or geographic area. Some dCOMs have “get to know you” meetings with candidates prior to the Candidacy Summit. Candidates who choose to seek certification may meet with their dCOM for a certification interview. Certified candidates must be re-certified by dCOM annually. Candidates ready for commissioning are recommended by dCOMs to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) for additional interviews. District Committees on Ministry also license and re-license all the local pastors serving in the District.

DS District Superintendent

District Superintendent – An elder appointed by the Bishop to the Cabinet, and assigned to oversee the ministry of all clergy and churches in one District or geographic area of the Conference, usually for a term of six to eight years. District Superintendents serve as the key supervisor for all candidates and clergy. Most candidates meet their District Superintendent prior to the Candidacy Summit. Contact info for all DSs follows the road map in your binder.

DAA District Administrative Assistant

District Administrative Assistant – Because she or he is the Administrative Assistant to the District Superintendent and often works hand in hand with dCOM chairpersons and registrars, District Administrative Assistants usually play a key informational role in candidacy. Most candidates meet their District Administrative Assistant prior to the Summit. DAA usually enter candidates’ names into the DOVE and GBHEM systems, and help candidates process Candidacy Summit registration forms. Contact info for all DAAs follows the road map in your binder.

DOVE – Web-based system of record for all candidates for ministry in the Texas Annual Conference, DOVE helps candidates, mentors, District and Conference ordained ministry committees, and District offices track candidates, candidacy requirements, and other data. Candidates need to be able to log on and respond to “alerts” (requests for your attention or action). To log on, go to <https://dove.ytscorp.com>. Questions? Contact your mentor, District office, or Texas Annual Conference Dove Consultant, Stephanie Whitaker, at whitaker@txcumc.org. An optional DOVE help session is scheduled during the Candidacy Summit.

Elders – Ordained ministers called to the ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament, and Order. Elders are servant leaders who preach and teach the Word of God, administer the sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion), and order (lead administratively) the church. Elders are usually appointed as pastors or associate pastors of churches, but may also be appointed to serve “beyond the local church” in “extension ministries”, usually as chaplains, administrators, or educators. Elders agree to “itinerate” (move and be appointed by the Bishop where needed.) District Superintendents are appointed and Bishops are elected from the ranks of elders.

Episcopal – Of or relating to a bishop. So, an “Episcopal area” is an area under the supervision of a Bishop. The Texas Annual Conference is an Episcopal area currently led by Bishop Janice Riggle Huie.

FAQ Frequently Asked Questions

GBHEM General Board of Higher Education & Ministry

General Board of Higher Education & Ministry – The general (or international) United Methodist Church agency in Nashville, Tennessee, which relates to United Methodist colleges, universities, and seminaries; and trains, supports, and tracks candidates and ordained ministers.

General Conference – This legislative body of the (international) United Methodist Church is comprised of clergy and lay delegates from all over the world and meets once every four years.

IRAI Inventory of Religious Activities and Interest

Inventory of Religious Activities and Interest – The “test-like” interest questionnaire candidates complete on-line after GBHEM registration. Candidates and mentors receive copies of the results to review together during the exploring phase of candidacy.

Journal – A record of the minutes of the preceding annual conference, including a clergy and lay leadership directory and church statistics (membership, apportionments paid, etc.) Available on-line at www.txcumc.org.

Lay – A church member who is not a licensed or ordained minister is a “layperson.” (Through our baptism, we are all called as ministers. However, lay ministers have not been called and equipped for the specific ministries of Word, Order, Sacrament and/or Service.)

Licensed Local Pastors –Certified candidates, who receive a pastoral appointment, attend a two-week licensing school, agree to begin Course of Study (which requires two to four weeks of study at a seminary every year for at least five years) and return every year to their dCOM for approval and re-licensing. Local pastors may be licensed to perform all the duties of a pastor in the particular church or churches to which they are appointed, including Baptism, Communion, marriage, burial, confirmation, and receiving members. Licensed local pastors are not required to earn a Master of Divinity degree or itinerate (move outside a local geographic area; are not guaranteed appointment; and usually serve as sole pastors of smaller congregations.

Mentor – A mentor is a clergy person who guides a candidate or group of candidates through a particular phase of the candidacy process. There are five types of mentors, a “Mentor Chair” for each type, and a “Dean of the College of Mentors” over all.

The Dean of the College of Mentors is to be announced.

- **Inquiring Mentors** encourage and connect candidates prior to the Candidacy Summit.
Mentor Chair: Alicia Coltzer
- **Exploring (or “Candidacy”) Mentors** lead candidates to discern callings and complete selected portions of the Candidacy Guidebook from Candidacy Summit through certification (at least 6 months.)
Mentor Chair: Eric Ryburn
- **Certified Mentors** encourage and connect candidates from certification through commissioning (deacons and elders) or appointment (local pastors); help candidates prepare for commissioning interviews; and encourage and connect certified local pastor candidates not currently under appointment.
Mentor Chair: Mary Tumulty
- **Developing Connectional Ministries Mentors** lead candidates to effectiveness from commissioning through ordination; and help candidates prepare for ordination interviews.
Mentor Chair: Roy James
- **Clergy Mentors** supervise and encourage local pastors from appointment until completion of basic Course of Study.
Mentor Chair: Janice Gilbert

MIP *Ministry Inquiry Process*

Ministry Inquiry Process – Reading through this “purple book” (as it is often fondly called) with a clergy or lay guide is required by our Conference during the inquiring phase of ministry. This GBHEM resource is updated every four years, and can be ordered at www.cokesbury.com.

P/SPRC Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee

Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee – Committee in every United Methodist Church which is responsible for all candidates for ordained ministry. This committee also assists pastor(s) and church staff members as they assess their gifts and set priorities for leadership and service. Candidates seeking certification will need to meet with their congregation’s P/SPRC Committee during the Exploring phase of candidacy.

Road Map – The Texas Annual Conference Candidacy “road map” is one electronic file (printed in your Candidacy Summit binder) which includes a chronological list of everything that should happen during candidacy and who is responsible. This file has been approved by BOM and Cabinet; will be updated annually; and will soon be available on our Conference website www.txcumc.org.

TAC Texas Annual Conference

Texas Annual Conference – “Annual conference” or “Conference” refers to all the United Methodist clergy and churches in one geographic area. The “Texas Annual Conference” is one of about 6 UM Conferences in the state of Texas. It includes all of southeast Texas—Houston, Galveston, Texarkana, Longview, Tyler, Beaumont, College Station, Bryan, and everything in between—9 Districts; over 700 congregations; over 1,200 clergypersons. Our Episcopal leader: Bishop Janice Riggle Huie. Conference “headquarters” is the Conference Service Center, 5215 Main Street, Houston 77002, 713.521.9383; www.txcumc.org

Triad – Simply refers to a meeting of three Board of Ordained Ministry members with a candidate preparing for BOM commissioning or ordination interviews. BOM “triad” volunteers give their time and expertise to help candidates prepare for successful interviews.

UMH *(The) United Methodist Hymnal*

The United Methodist Hymnal – Available at www.cokesbury.com along with a hymnal supplement “The Faith We Sing,” this key UM resource includes traditional hymns, songs, musical responses, Psalters (Psalms,) prayers, and other worship resources.

*To suggest glossary corrections or additions,
please contact the Center for Clergy Excellence.*