

**Louisiana Conference  
Board of Ordained Ministry  
Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members  
Policy Number 400  
Requirements for Election as an Associate Member  
2016 Book of Discipline**

**Conference Board of Ordained Ministry Policy**

Local pastors may be elected to Associate Membership by vote of the Clergy Members in Full Connection, upon the recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, when they have met the following conditions:

**¶ 322.1 Requirements for Election as Associate Members**

They shall have:

- 1) Reached age forty;
- 2) Served four years as full-time local pastors;
- 3) Completed the Course of Study in addition to the studies for license as a local pastor, up to one half of which may be taken by correspondence or online/distance learning courses, or received a Master of Divinity degree that includes the basic graduate theological studies from a school of theology listed by the University Senate;
- 4) Completed a minimum of sixty semester hours toward the Bachelor of Arts or an equivalent degree in a college or university listed by the University Senate;
- 5) Been recommended by three-fourths majority vote by the district committee on ordained ministry and the board of ordained ministry;
- 6) Declared their willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment;
- 7) Satisfied the board regarding their physical, mental, and emotional health (the annual conference shall require psychological reports, criminal background and credit checks, and reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry);
- 8) For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of his/her influence as a clergy member of the annual conference, be willing to make a complete dedication of himself/herself to the highest ideals of the Christian life; and to this end agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God;
- 9) Prepared at least one written sermon on a biblical passage specified by the board of ordained ministry and given satisfactory answers in a written doctrinal examination administered by the board of ordained ministry. (Consideration shall be given to the questions listed in ¶ 324.9.)

10) In addition to the requirements stated in the 2016 Book of Discipline, the Louisiana Conference Board of Ordained Ministry will require the candidate to:

- a. Receive the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) recommendation for Associate membership. The DCOM will submit the Associate Membership Recommendation Form to the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members by January 15<sup>th</sup> for consideration of the “probationary associate member process.” The DCOM will also contact the registrar of the CBOM, to confirm the candidate’s file has the necessary documents to become an Associate Member within The United Methodist Church (i.e. medical report, psychological assessment report, criminal background check, consumer credit report, reports of sexual misconduct and/or child abuse, and other additional information required by the current UM Book of Discipline or the CBOM).
- b. Attend the first spring interview scheduled with the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry at which time the recommendation and materials necessary (i.e. written statement of call and why the candidate desires to become an associate member, official letter of recommendation by the District Superintendent, and the paperwork in their conference file is up to date) for consideration to become an Associate member will be reviewed to determine the eligibility of the candidate entering the Probationary Associate Member process.
- c. Receive approval at the initial meeting with the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members. The candidate will then be given the first year assignments. These assignments are to be completed within a coaching relationship with a clergy mentor assigned by the District Superintendent. Assignments include:
  1. turning in five (5) typed copies of a sermon manuscript (double-spaced 12 pt. font) on a scripture text assigned by the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members, along with five (5) audio or video copies of the sermon, and five (5) copies of the bulletin on the Sunday from which the sermon was preached to the CBOM Registrar by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  2. turning in five (5) copies of answers to the Doctrinal Examination Questions in the current (2012) UM Book of Discipline Paragraph 324.9 a-p (see below) to the CBOM Registrar by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  3. participating in an in-parish visit (in the fall) with representatives from the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the District Superintendent, the senior pastor (when applicable), the Pastor-Parish Relationship Committee, and the candidate.
- d. Attend the second spring interview, scheduled with the Division of Local Pastors and Associate members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, at which time the material submitted and the interview will provide the basis for which a decision will be made about either continuing, delaying or discontinuing the probationary associate member process with the candidate.
- e. Following the second spring interview, the next year’s assignments will be distributed which include:
  1. turning in five (5) copies of a teaching plan and outline for a four-week Bible study on a book assigned by the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members to the CBOM Registrar by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Keep in mind: we should be able to tell from your plan and outline what you are teaching, and where you are going with your study. (In such a way that a substitute could pick it up and teach it.) You are to teach at least one of these sessions, and receive feedback from the participants.
  2. creating one video or DVD of a sermon on a scripture text of the candidate’s choosing plus submitting five (5) typed copies of the sermon manuscript (double-spaced 12 pt. font) and five (5) copies of the bulletin on the Sunday which the sermon was preached to be sent to the CBOM Registrar by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  3. completing any additional work required by the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members as a result of the submitted materials, interview from the previous year, and the in-parish visit.

¶ 322.2 Upon recommendation of the board of ordained ministry, an annual conference may equate part-time service to the requirement of full-time service. Such equivalence is to be determined in light of the years of service involved, the quality of that service, the maturity of the applicant, and other relevant factors.

## ¶ 324.9 Doctrinal Questions – 2016 Book of Discipline

Each candidate shall respond to a written and oral doctrinal examination administered by the conference board of ordained ministry. The examination shall cover the following:

- a) Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological, and historical sources.
- b) What is your understanding of evil as it exists in the world?
- c) What is your understanding of humanity, and the human need for divine grace?
- d) How do you interpret the statement Jesus Christ is Lord?
- e) What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers, and in responsible living in the world?
- f) What is your understanding of the kingdom of God; the Resurrection; eternal life?
- g) How do you intend to affirm, teach and apply Part III of the Discipline (Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task) in your work in the ministry to which you have been called?
- h) The United Methodist Church holds that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason. What is your understanding of this theological position of the Church?
- i) Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today?
- j) Discuss your understanding of the primary characteristics of United Methodist polity.
- k) Explain your understanding of the distinctive vocations of the Order of Elders and the Order of Deacons. How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a provisional deacon or provisional elder in The United Methodist Church?
- l) Describe your understanding of *diakonia*, the servant ministry of the church, and the servant ministry of the provisional member.
- m) What is the meaning of ordination in the context of the general ministry of the Church?
- n) Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry.
- o) You have agreed as a candidate for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of their influence as ministers, to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, and to this end agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God. What is your understanding of this agreement?
- p) Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.

**Policy adopted March 7, 2005 by the Division of Local Pastors and Associate Members**

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**Revised wording to be consistent with the 2016 Book of Discipline on January 19, 2017**