

Christian Church in Kansas Supplemental Theological Foundations & Policy & Criteria For the Ordering of Ministry

January 10, 2017

Candidacy for Ordination

The Criteria for Candidacy. The applicant shall be a baptized member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation and shall make application for candidacy to the Region of the candidate's membership or to the Region where she or he is a student through the official Board of that Congregation. In special circumstances and subject to agreement between appropriate Regional Ministers and/or Regional Commissions on Ministry, persons may apply for candidacy in another Region. The applicant shall have a letter of recommendation from a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the candidate's Region of membership.

The Procedures During Candidacy. The candidate shall seek Ordination through a discernment process established by the Region. That preparation may include authorization as a Commissioned Minister. The candidate may complete the educational requirements for either apprentice or seminary tracks without serving as a Commissioned Minister.

Separate from candidacy, Commissioned Minister status authorizes one to perform ministry on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The candidate shall:

1. Respond to the opportunities of nurture and care by the Committee on the Order of the Ministry of the Region and the various General Ministries of the Church.
2. Submit a 2 to 4 page report per year to the Committee on the Order of the Ministry regarding his/her progress toward ordination.
3. Participate in an annual interview with the Committee on the Order of Ministry. The date for this interview will be set by the Committee on the Order of the Ministry with the candidate's confirmation.

The Committee on the Order of the Ministry shall:

1. Counsel and guide the candidate during preparation for ministry;
2. Assist the candidate in discovering avenues for continued personal growth;
3. Hold an annual interview with the candidate as described in number 3 above;
4. Advise the theological seminaries and undergraduate institutions of higher education in which it has candidates, of the standards relating to candidacy, ordination, and commissioning.

A. The institution of higher education related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall:

1. Share with the Region in nurture and guidance of enrolled candidates;
2. Assist potential candidates to relate to a Region;
3. Be aware of the standards for commissioning and ordination applicable to students in that institution;
4. In non-Disciple related institutions, the Higher Education and Leadership Ministries shall seek to discover potential candidates, inform the institution and students of procedures for Candidacy in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and seek to relate the students to a Region for care.

The Act of Ordination. Ordination is a process of the Congregational and Regional Church on behalf of the whole church to commend to Christians everywhere individuals who meet the qualifications and have fulfilled the requirements established by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for Ordination.

1. The candidate shall be recommended for Ordination by:
 - a. a recognized congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the one in which membership is held;
 - b. The faculty of the seminary;
 - c. Two (2) ministers with Standing;
 - d. Two (2) lay persons.
2. The recommendation is to be considered and acted upon by the Committee on the Order of Ministry of the Region, based upon a personal interview with the candidate at least three months prior to the ordination, and on written materials submitted by the candidates at least four weeks prior to that interview. The interview is not a test of orthodoxy but is to determine the candidate's abilities and potentials for ministry.
3. The written material submitted to the Committee on the Order of Ministry shall include the following:
 - a. A written statement from the candidate detailing religious background and personal commitment to the ministry; concepts of the Church in its local, denominational and ecumenical aspects; understanding of the history and polity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); cooperative intent in both denominational and ecumenical contexts; and general theological position.
 - b. Letters of recommendation addressing the candidate's character, ability, and preparedness for ministry from the sources listed above Number 1.
 - c. Sermon.
 - d. Seminary transcript(s).

4. The act of Ordination shall be under the authorization and guidance of the sponsoring congregation and the Region, with a Regional Minister, or the Regional Minister's designee, presiding.
5. The service ordinarily shall be held in a sponsoring congregation.
6. Representatives of the recommending congregation or congregations, the Regional church, the ecumenical church and, where possible, the General church shall participate in the service.
7. After the Ministerial Code of Ethics is signed, the signed Ordination document shall be issued by the Region.

Commissioned Minister Emeritus

1. Criteria
 - a. A person must be at least 65 years of age.
 - b. A person must have been a licensed minister at least five (5) years under the care of the Committee on Commissioned Ministry for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kansas, or an equivalent committee of another Region or another denomination.
 - c. A person who meets the above criteria must make a formal request to the Committee on Commissioned Ministry to be granted "Commissioned Minister Emeritus" [CME] status.
2. Accompanying Privileges
 - a. A CME no longer meets with the Committee on Commissioned Ministry annually.
 - b. A CME is granted a "permanent commission."
 - c. A CME is granted Standing each year, upon completion of the "Annual Ministerial Standing Review" form and upon approval of the Regional Minister/Committee on Standing.
 - d. A CME is formally recognized at the next Regional Assembly following the granting of the new status.