

ORDAINED MINISTRY

MDIV TRACK

OVERVIEW

Ordained ministers are set apart for “leadership in the life and witness of the church.” Ordination into Christian ministry is understood to be for life, and once a minister is ordained in one Region they are recognized by all Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. Requirements for Ordained Ministry are described in detail in the Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Criteria for Ordained Ministry (TFPCOM, pg. 18-23):

- All Ordained Ministers and candidates for becoming an Ordained Minister must be a baptized member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation;
- Maintain an ongoing relationship with the Regional Commission on Ministry;
- Successful completion of a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from an institution of higher education accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS);
- Theological study and competence in 16 general areas of ministerial practices as defined in the General Commission on Ministry (GCOM) document “Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)” (TFPCOM);
- Supervised field experience in the work of ministry, exhibiting competencies in the area of ministry in which the candidate desires to serve;
- Comply with other reasonable expectations established by the Region including (but not limited to) continuing education, and yearly standing requirements; and
- Agree to adhere to the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Additional Information:

- Ordained Ministers must meet requirements for standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Standing as an Ordained Minister within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is credentialed by the Region in which the minister serves and is reviewed annually.
- Any minister from another denomination seeking recognition and standing must meet the same qualifications and standards of preparation for Disciples of Christ ministry set forth in the Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry. Provisional or temporary standing may be granted upon fulfillment of certain requirements.
- Referenced and Related documents are available at www.disciples-ne.org.

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CANDIDATE CHECKLIST

This checklist is to aid the potential candidate for Ordained Ministry. As a potential candidate, it is critical you read all the documentation in the “Ordained Ministry Packet” and “Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church” as part of completing this checklist. The items listed below will usually be completed in this order, however there are times when the Center on Church Leadership (CCL) may adjust or add tasks as appropriate. If you have any questions about or during this process, please contact the Regional Office at any time.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Step One: Preliminary Inquires	
☐ Review Center for Church Leadership Page on disciples-ne.org	_____
☐ Download Ordained Ministry Packet from disciples-ne.org	_____
☐ Schedule a meeting with the Regional Minister	_____
Step Two: Initial Approach/Contact with the CCL	
☐ Candidate Form	_____
☐ Attach current transcripts (if applicable)	_____
☐ DOC Discovery Part 1: Independent Exploration (800-1200 words)	_____
☐ Church Visits	_____
☐ Learn about the General church—disciples.org	_____
☐ and Region—disciples-ne.org	_____
☐ Visits with ministers	_____
☐ DOC Discovery Part 2: Personal Reflections (1200-1500 words)	_____
▪ Communion	
▪ Baptism	
▪ Christian Unity	
▪ Why DoC?	
☐ Comprehensive (at least 3-5 page) statement paper: “Why I feel called to ministry and want to be ordained into the Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)?”	_____

<u>Task</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
Written support for candidacy highlighting your personal gifts and skills for ordained ministry from:	
☐ Ordained Disciples Minister	_____
☐ Elder Chair/Moderator of Sponsoring Congregation	_____
☐ Request Initial Interview with the CCL	_____
☐ Initial Interview	_____

Additional interviews may be requested by either the candidate or the CCL.

Step Three: Period of Candidacy (under care)

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| ☐ Agree to the Ministerial Code of Ethics | _____ |
| ☐ Receive guidance through ongoing relationship with the CCL, including regular meetings with the assigned Nurture Team and yearly check-ins with the CCL to discuss progress | _____ |
| ☐ Actively participate in the life and work of a Disciples congregation and other manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) | _____ |
| ☐ Broad theological study leading to the completion of a M.Div. degree or equivalent from an ATS accredited seminary | _____ |
| ☐ Supervised Field Education in a congregation or other ministry setting and/or Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) with supervisor evaluation | _____ |

Specific course requirements as part of or in addition to a M.Div. or equivalent degree program:

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| ☐ Disciples History, Polity, and Theology course (seminary or CCL approved) | _____ |
| ☐ CCL approved Clergy Healthy Boundary training
<i>(Clergy Healthy Boundary Training is required every three years after your first training)</i> | _____ |
| ☐ CCL approved Anti-Racism / Pro-Reconciliation training
<i>(AR/PR Training is required every three years after your first training)</i> | _____ |

Step Four: Final Preparation

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| ☐ Complete Ministerial Profile <i>(with required background)</i> | _____ |
| ☐ Submit a comprehensive (at least 3-5 pages) statement paper outlining your personal theology and understanding of ordained ministry following Ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) | _____ |
| ☐ Submit a complete or updated transcript and/or Letter of Expected Graduation | _____ |

<u>Task</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>
☐ Request a letter of recommendation from sponsoring congregation proposing to partner with the Region in the candidates Ordination	_____
☐ Request a letter of recommendation from congregation in which membership is held, if different from sponsoring congregation	_____
☐ Sermon Manuscript and Link to listen online	_____
☐ Ordination Interview	_____

The CCL will: review the candidates academic record; assess the candidates spiritual, personal, and professional growth including self-assessment of progress in relation to the 16 areas of ministerial practice; consider relevant feedback from the sponsoring congregation, others within the region with whom the candidate has been involved, and evaluation by the minister(s) of the sponsoring congregation; and consider the candidates “fitness and fit” for ordained ministry.

At the completion of Step Four, the CCL will determine whether to recommend the candidate for ordination or to recommend additional steps before completion:

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| ☐ Ordination; | _____ |
| ☐ Additional steps needed before Ordination | _____ |

In the case where a candidate does not demonstrate fitness for ministry the CCL and the Region maintain the right to terminate candidacy.

Step Five: Act of Ordination

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| ☐ Create a committee from the recommending congregation(s) and the CCL to plan the Ordination service | _____ |
| ☐ Sign the Ministerial Code of Ethics | _____ |
| ☐ Ordination Service | _____ |

Yearly, ordained clergy are required to complete the following to maintain standing.

- ☐ 10 Hours of Continuing Education
- ☐ Submit a completed annual Ministerial Standing Form (*due November 30th each year*)