

## CANDIDATING FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY

### G.7 GUIDANCE FOR SUPERINTENDENTS and those who ACCOMPANY a CANDIDATE 2020/2021

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This document highlights the role of the Superintendent in the candidating process. It draws together the information available for candidates on the Methodist Church website, and the requirements of CPD (SOs 710 – 713). If you are fortunate enough to have a candidate for ordained ministry, and this is your first experience, you will find the process demanding on your time and commitment but also enormously rewarding. The better prepared you are, the better the prospects for your candidate.
- 1.2. Completing forms. Please ensure that all forms are sent in Word format, typed in black in font size 12. They will be reproduced on several occasions so it is important that they are all clearly legible.

#### 2. INITIAL CONVERSATIONS AND PREPARATION

- 2.1. Candidates are much better prepared for the discussions at the District and Connexional committees if they have previously had conversations with presbyters, deacons and experienced lay people about ministry, worship, community, and God's work in the Church and the world. It is particularly important that a candidate has opportunities for theologically reflective conversations with their Superintendent to help them appreciate that this is a process of discernment, not a job interview.
- 2.2. Prepare yourself for meeting a potential candidate by reading the following which can be downloaded from the website [here](#) :

##### **G.2 What is a Deacon?**

##### **G.3 What is a Presbyter?**

These will help you and a candidate discern the direction of their call.

**G.4 Selection Criteria for Ordained Ministry** (the revised 2016 Conference document).

**G.6 Steps in Candidating** contains essential information for a candidate.

**G.12 Deadlines for all Participants' and Guidance Form** Many of the forms which need to be returned have a fixed deadline. Each deadline is important because it relates to other stages in the process. Missing a deadline may delay a candidate's application for a year.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS for CANDIDATING

For Presbyteral and Diaconal Candidates SO 710 sets out the requirements. In the SO 'the Church' or 'the Methodist Church' signify 'the Methodist Church in Britain'.

- 3.1. Candidates for the diaconate or the presbyterate in the Methodist Church shall have been baptized and shall have been a member of the Methodist Church in Britain in good standing for at least three years by 30 September 2020.
- 3.2. Candidates for presbyteral ministry shall be a local preacher. They must be fully accredited by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.
- 3.3. Candidates for diaconal ministry shall have completed an approved worship leaders' programme by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021. This means that the diaconal candidate has to have been welcomed as a Worship Leader by September 2017 on the old course or completed (and had assessed) the Worship Leader Portfolio or Portfolio A of the 'Worship Leading and Preaching' course which must be submitted not later than September 30<sup>th</sup> 2020.
- 3.4. Every candidate must be prepared to accept the form and length of training prescribed by the Conference.
- 3.5. Unless an exemption is granted in accordance with clause 3.6 below an offer will not be accepted unless the candidate meets such conditions of availability for stationing as are set out by the Conference at the time of acceptance.
- 3.6. The Connexional Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee shall make recommendations as to exemptions from the requirements of clause 3.5 above to the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee, who shall have the power to grant or withhold such exemptions.
- 3.7. A person who was formerly a candidate for the presbyterate or the diaconate may not re-offer for either the presbyterate or the diaconate in the year following that in which his or her previous offer was declined unless advised to do so in writing by the Ministerial Candidates Selection Committee when communicating the Conference's decision.
- 3.8. There is no upper age limit for candidates but the Standing Orders of the Methodist Church (SO 710 (5)) requires all candidates (unless an exemption is granted) to be willing to serve for at least ten years before retirement. We therefore ask all candidates to indicate in writing that they fully intend to offer at least ten years in active ministry in the Methodist Church in Britain. If your candidate will be 54 or over on 1 September, they should have a conversation with you about the implications of making this offer.
- 3.9. Immigration and Residency requirements. Candidates who are accepted for training must demonstrate that they have a legal right to live and work in the United

Kingdom. The objective in requesting proof of immigration status is to ensure that candidates can legally study and/or work here and at the end of training be lawfully deployed as a Methodist minister. If there are any uncertainties about your candidate's status, please refer to G.14 Immigration Guidance for Candidates.

3.10. Safeguarding and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

3.10.1. Sometimes candidates are concerned that they have things in their past about which they are embarrassed or ashamed, and that they believe may prohibit them from entering ordained ministry. If these are criminal matters, then the appendix 1 of the C.1 Candidate's Application Form lays out the Methodist Church's policy and guidelines in these situations. If these are not criminal matters, it is helpful if candidates feel able to talk about them. If in any doubt about this, please contact the Candidates' Office or [candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk)

3.10.2. There are, in fact, very few things that can exclude someone from offering for ordained ministry, except dishonesty or disingenuousness in the candidating process itself. Selection committees are likely to be more interested in a candidate's attitude to the matter concerned, than in its origins.

3.10.3. All candidates are required to successfully complete a DBS check as a "Candidate for Ministry" prior to undertaking any training. The instructions and login details for completing the Disclosure and Barring Online Application as well as the information on forms of verification will be sent to the candidate via email on 2 December 2020.

3.11. If at any point in the process your candidate wishes to withdraw, it is their responsibility to do so in writing to [candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk). There is no shame in withdrawing. This is a process of discernment so it can become clear that this is not the right step at any point in the process.

#### 4. PROCESS for CANDIDATING

4.1. Please refer to CPD Standing Order 710(1-7). It is important that you check the candidate has read, understood and will agree to 710(3) (a).

4.2. Your candidate will receive C.1 Candidate's Application Form when they express an interest to [candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk)

4.3. Make a preliminary assessment on C.1.1 Superintendents' Assessment of Ability for Training Form of what might be reasonably expected of the candidate's future availability and the terms and conditions under which she or he might serve, see 710(3)(b).

4.4. If the candidate has limited deployability and you and they are considering offering with a view to serving in an appointment in their locality, please discuss the completion of C.1.2 Severely Limited Deployment Form with your District Chair and with the Ministerial Coordinator for Oversight of Ordained Ministries.

- 4.5. The Four-Way Meeting. As soon as a potential candidate indicates that they wish to explore candidating, you need to instigate a four-way meeting with the Candidate, District Candidates Secretary and Regional Learning Officer to design an individual support map (see form G.8 Supporting a Candidate 4-way meeting). At this meeting, the context and supervisor of the candidate's placement should be agreed. Note that the Methodist Diaconal Order can help identify potential diaconal placements.
- 4.6. Instigate the meeting with the Learning Network officer and the District Candidates' Secretary to draw up the candidate's support map.
- 4.7. The C.2 Portfolio is a vital part of the candidating process. As a part of it, the candidate needs to undertake a placement where they observe someone engaging in the form of ministry for which they are offering. The placement should not be undertaken in the candidate's own Circuit and certainly not with the candidate's own minister. It is best practice for it to take place in a circuit context with which the candidate is unfamiliar. Please ensure the minister your candidate is placed with has a copy of the G.11 Guidance for Placement Supervisors and that the candidate's mentor has a copy of G.10 Guidance for Mentors.

## 5. CIRCUIT FORMS

- 5.1. Make sure you are familiar with the information and forms required from you and the Circuit:

### **C.1 Candidate's Application Form,**

#### **C.1.1 Superintendent's Assessment of Availability for Stationing Form**

These forms are sent to a candidate on registering their interest

#### **C.1.2 Severely Limited Deployability Form** (if required)

#### **C.3 Report on Leading Worship Form** (x2)

#### **C.4 Circuit Leadership Team Report Form**

#### **C.4.1 Circuit Meeting Vote Report Form.**

Apart from **C.1**, **C.1.1** and **C.1.2** they will be posted on the website and there is further guidance attached to the various forms.

## 6. ROLE OF THE CIRCUIT MEETING

- 6.1. Letting people know. At the earliest opportunity indicate to the Circuit Meeting the name(s) of the candidate(s) [see SO 711(2)]. Enable presbyteral candidates to preach around the Circuit so that the Circuit Meeting can make an informed decision on the individual's suitability. Enable diaconal candidates to participate in the leading of worship and share publicly in circuit activities (e.g. leading devotions at a circuit event) so that the Circuit Meeting can make an informed decision on the individual's suitability.

- 6.2. Deployability. For presbyteral candidates it is assumed that full-time itinerant ministry is the norm. If a candidate's future availability for stationing, and the terms and conditions under which he or she may be available to serve, falls outside of the norm, you will need to consult with the District Chair and, if there are severe limitations to the candidate's geographical deployability, complete a C.1.2 Severely Limited Deployability Form. Diaconal candidates cannot offer with limited deployability.
- 6.3. Bring the candidate to a Circuit Meeting following the process outlined in SO 711(3). Please note that if any member of your Circuit Meeting is also a member of the District Candidates' Committee, they should not vote at the Circuit Meeting, so that they can vote at the District Candidates' Committee.
- 6.4. Prepare the C.4 Circuit Leadership Team Report Form. There is guidance attached to that form to help you.
- 6.5. Ensure there are two worship services undertaken by the candidate and reported on using C.3 Report on Leading Worship Form. There is guidance attached to that form to help you. One of these should be outside of the circuit and they should be completely different acts of worship (not held on the same day and not using the same lectionary readings or other material).
- 6.6. The C.1 Candidate's Application Form and the C.1.1 Superintendent's Assessment of Availability for Stationing Form must to be completed and returned.

## **7. SUPPORTING AND PREPARING A CANDIDATE**

- 7.1. Accompanying the candidate throughout the process, and offering pastoral support from the beginning is a privilege of ministry.
- 7.2. There is no doubt that candidates who have had time with the Superintendent or colleagues to think about and reflect on what it means to be an ordained minister are much clearer in their responses at the District and Connexional committees. This is especially so when they have been encouraged to reflect on their life and hope for ministry in relation to what God is saying to them. Any encouragement in theological reflection is really helpful to them.
- 7.3. It is important that you discuss safeguarding with your candidate and direct them to any courses available if they have not already attended one.

## **8. CANDIDATES' SELECTION COMMITTEES**

- 8.1. For the District Candidates' Committee (DCC), help the candidate prepare for their creative presentation. See, D.5 DCC Candidate's Creative Presentation Guidance Form. Invite them to present it to you first if that would help them.

- 8.2. Attend the DCC with the candidate. Afterwards, help them to reflect on the experience and the feedback of the DCC. It may be at this stage, that the candidate decides to withdraw. Please be ready to assist them in working through what this means and where their vocation may lie if it is not in ordained ministry.
- 8.3. Encourage your candidate, as they approach the Connexional Selection Committee (CSC), to consider how they will approach the case study, their presentation and the group work. Ensure that your candidate is fully familiar with the selection criteria against which their offer will be judged. Note that the case study and group work exercise are given to the candidate at CSC.
- 8.4. The Methodist Church is committed to creating an inclusive church and welcomes candidates from diverse backgrounds. We are committed to treating all fairly, equitably and with dignity, respect and free from discrimination. The Methodist Church values and respects younger people, older people, single people, couples, people with disabilities, people with or without children, people with extended family households, and people with diverse family arrangements. God calls many to serve in Ministry. Please help us be open to the possibility.
- 8.5. The CSC is looking for as objective and independent a view of the candidate as possible. However, Methodism is a small world and sometimes it can be quite hard for people to be impartial. Consequently, it can be very helpful for a candidate to experience and get feedback from contexts where they are not well known; for example, preaching or leading devotions outside of their own Circuit. It is also essential that individuals signing the various forms are not related to the candidate.
- 8.6. Finally, during the week after the CSC a letter and email is posted to the candidate with the outcome of the CSC. You are sent a copy of this letter precisely so that you can offer support and guidance at what may be a very difficult time. Your pastoral support of a candidate will be necessary in different ways as you rejoice with them, or give them support if they are not accepted.

## 9. APPEALS

If the candidate considers appealing the recommendation of the CSC, offer them guidance as appropriate. The Superintendent may, with the candidate's permission, actively support the candidate in applying for the recommendations of the CSC to be reviewed (see SO 715(1)).

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If you have any other queries or need any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Email: [candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:candidates@methodistchurch.org.uk), telephone 020 7486 5502, or the Candidates' Office, Methodist Church House 25 Marylebone Road London NW1 5JR.