

# SECUCC ORDINATION PROCESS

## Person in Exploration (PIE) Discernment Process

### *STEP ONE*

- The PIE must be an active member for at least a year of a local church through which he/she begins the MID process.
- The PIE interviews with the local church's Discernment Committee, to present and review the following documentation (which will become part of the PIE and MID file):
  - A letter indicating the person's desire to become a Member In Discernment in preparation for ordained, licensed or commissioned ministry.
  - A statement of the person's pilgrimage of faith
  - A statement of the person's understanding of his/her call at this time
  - A complete resume
  - Complete undergraduate and graduate transcripts or alternative pathway documentation
- The Discernment Committee and Pastor of the local church write letters of support and recommendation of the person to be a Person In Exploration and Member In Discernment, including:
  - A description of the process used by the church to interview and recommend the person.
  - An agreement by the church to pay 1/3 of the cost of a psychological evaluation for the person, if recommended by the Commission on Ministry.
  - Explicit agreement by the church and the pastor to enter a Covenant of Discernment with the person and the Commission on Ministry. The Covenant of Discernment will be a minimum of one year, and is not to exceed five years.
  - The letter should be addressed to the Preparation for Authorized Ministry Team Chair of the Commission on Ministry.

- At some time before Step Two, the person should submit a Commission on Ministry application to the Southeast Conference as well as copies of the documents provided to the local church discernment committee, three letters of reference including one from your local church pastor, transcripts (or regional theological education program records), Resume, and local church membership letter.

#### *STEP TWO*

- The person attends an MID retreat to become familiar with the process of discernment.
- Following the retreat, the person will be interviewed. This interview team will:
  - Pray with and for the person
  - Review the file and documentation
  - Explain the MID process:
    - Developing a portfolio, using the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministry
    - Studying UCC history and polity
    - Applying for scholarships, as needed.
    - Undergoing a psychological evaluation
    - Participating in semi-annual meetings with MIDs
    - Meeting regularly with an assigned mentor.
  - Either recommend or not that the person proceed to Step Three

#### *STEP THREE*

- The person initiates a psychological evaluation by a psychologist recommended by the Commission on Ministry.
- The evaluation will be reviewed by the PAM Team's Psychological Review subcommittee, which may require a meeting with the person. The Psychological Review Committee has two options:
  - Recommend that the person proceed.
  - The termination may not be appealed. However, the person may initiate the PIE process again after three years.

## Members In Discernment (MID) Discernment Process

### *STEP ONE*

- A letter of recommendation and PIE file is received from the PIE subcommittee by the MID subcommittee.
- The MID subcommittee reviews the file, may interview the PIE, decides whether or not to approve the application for MID status.
  - If the PIE and the local church disagrees with the decision, it may be appealed by letter to the Commission on Ministry within one year. A decision of the Commission on Ministry to uphold the decision is final. However, after one year the person may initiate the PIE process again.

### *STEP TWO*

- The MID attends the semi-annual meetings of the MIDs conducted by the MID subcommittee.
- The MID works with her/his assigned mentor to complete a portfolio which reflects well the MID's formation for ministry based on The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers.
- Each year, the MID and her/his mentor will complete an annual MID renewal form, which will all be included in the MID file.
- The MID subcommittee will review the renewal form and the Covenant of Discernment, and approve renewal or not, for up to five years.

### *STEP THREE*

- Once the MID and mentor are satisfied that the portfolio is ready for assessment, the mentor will complete a portfolio assessment form.
- The MID will meet with the Portfolio review team.
  - The portfolio review team will consist of the Associate Conference Minister and at least three members of the COM, including the PAM Team leader or a designated member of the PAM Team.
- The review team will review the portfolio and the assessments of the mentor. The team will make one of the following recommendations:
  - Proceed to Step Four

- Further discernment for the MID for a specified period of time and with a clear statement of needed additional preparation. Following this period of preparation, the MID may request another review.
- Specific revisions to the portfolio. The portfolio may then be resubmitted to the team for review within three months, and may be approved to proceed to the next step.
- Discontinue the discernment process. The PAM Team recorder removes the person from the MID list as of that date.
  - If the MID and the local church disagree with the decision, it may be appealed by letter to the Commission on Ministry within three months. A decision of the Commission on Ministry to uphold the recommendation is final.

#### *STEP FOUR*

- After consulting with the Conference Minister, the MID completes the UCC Ministerial Profile.
- The MID completes a Criminal Background Check.
  - The results of the Background Check are shared with the MID Committee. The MID committee can either request to move the individual to Ecclesiastical Council or remove from process.

#### *STEP FIVE*

- The Commission on Ministry calls an Ecclesiastical Council for review of the MID's readiness for ministry. Ecclesiastical Councils are not restricted to actions by the Commission on Ministry but open to the church at large.
- Approval for ordination. When a MID already has a call and is approved for ordination, a service of ordination is scheduled by the Commission on Ministry in consultation with the Conference Minister, the candidate, and the local church.
  - The PAM Team recorder removes the person from the MID list upon ordination.
- Approval for ordination pending a call. A person may be ordainable pending call for up to five years. After 5 years the MID will no longer be approved for ordination.