



Ministry of ENDORSED CLERGY

Ministry Outside Church Walls

Apart from serving God in the local church, ordained or licensed clergy may also be appointed to ministries in specialized settings which extend Christ's love and justice into the world. These settings are usually institutions with the primary purpose of education, international security, peacekeeping, incarceration, or healthcare in nonprofit and for profit agencies. To serve in these settings, clergy are expected to have ecclesiastical endorsement.

Endorsement is the Church's process to ensure clergy possess the skills and capabilities needed for a particular setting, and that they are appropriate representatives of the denomination. The Church then endorses those who they affirm to serve in specific ministerial settings.

Chaplaincy and Government Employment

The U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protects and accommodates the religious beliefs and practices of citizens. When citizens are entrusted to the care of the government (e.g., military, healthcare, prison), their life needs are the state's responsibility. Chaplains are employed with primary oversight responsibility of religious/spiritual accommodation for these individuals.

The specialized needs of these government settings make ministry challenging. Each requires a chaplain with a strong pastoral care skill set which includes: an understanding of and ability to work with the population; counseling and critical incident stress management; leadership in worship and religious education; and active community outreach. All government settings necessitate the chaplain's ability to function within structured protocols and government systems.

Healthcare Chaplaincy

Chaplains who serve in healthcare organizations (e.g., hospital, palliative care, hospice) help patients, families, and friends cope with sickness, disability, dying, and death. They work on a team with doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and social workers.

Chaplains assess the patient's spiritual needs and provide pastoral care for patients, families, and healthcare staff. They frequently conduct worship, offer sacraments, and are involved with critical incident stress management. In addition, healthcare chaplains serve on ethics committees that address complex issues in modern medicine.

Pastoral Counseling

Pastoral counselors have received specialized training to bring together the resources of scripture, faith, and the insights of behavioral science. They serve in counseling centers, healthcare institutions, or on the pastoral staff of a local church. Counselors work with individuals, families, and groups where treatment is integrated within the tradition, beliefs, and resources of the faith community.



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Endorsement Settings of GBHEM's United Methodist Endorsing Agency

- Children's Home
- Clinical Pastoral Education
- General Hospital
- Hospice
- Life Coach
- Marriage and Family
- Mental Health
- Military (Air Force, Army, Navy)
- Pastoral Counseling
- Law Enforcement/Prison
- Retirement Home
- Specialized Settings
- Spiritual Direction
- Substance Abuse
- Veterans Affairs
- Workplace

Requirements for Ecclesiastical Endorsement (¶1331.4; ¶1337.3; ¶1421.5)

Those seeking endorsement to a specific setting must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Local pastor, associate member, provisional deacon or elder, or ordained deacon or elder.
- 2) Degrees from an accredited college and a University Senate-approved seminary.
- 3) Additional requirements as specified by the ministry setting.

The Application Process (¶1421.5)

To receive an application, contact the United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA). Applicants are responsible for providing materials requested on the application to UMEA:

- Names and addresses of two personal references and your district superintendent. UMEA will contact your bishop for a reference report.
- A succinct life history and statement of your understanding of ministry as it pertains to ministry in the setting for which you are seeking endorsement.

When all materials have been received and requirements met, an interview will be scheduled.

The Interview

The interviewing committee is made up of endorsed chaplains and pastoral counselors. The interview's purpose is to understand the applicant's perception of Christian faith as it relates to the desired ministry. Upon completion of the interview, recommendations are made for consideration by the Endorsing Committee. Areas examined include:

- 1) Moral and emotional stability
- 2) Self-evaluation
- 3) Theory of Christian ministry
- 4) Motivation
- 5) Continuing education
- 6) Sense of humor
- 7) Cooperativeness/diversity
- 8) Balance
- 9) Institutional vs. congregational ministry
- 10) Evidence of a pastoral support system

Endorsement Decisions

Endorsement is conferred or denied by the Endorsing Committee which is comprised of Higher Education and Ministry Board Members.