

WRITTEN RESPONSE FOR RECOMMENDATION FOR TRANSFER AS ASSOCIATE OR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP (PAPER A)

Maximum word counts listed after each question.

Deadline: January 15, 2026
Part 1 – Call and Discernment – 9-page limit
Part 2 –Theology Questions – 10-page limit

Discipline citations are noted using the format (§ ###). All citations are from *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, 2020/2024.

Read the complete instructions for completing this paper in the “Instruction Packet for Associate or Provisional Membership” before beginning work.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Transfer candidates complete Parts 1 and 2.
- Guidelines for formatting the paper and directions for submitting it are in the instruction packet.

PART 1 – CALL AND DISCERNMENT

1. Write about your call to ministry. Include information about family background and present family situation, church participation and Christian experiences, educational history, and work experience (§324.11). (750 words)
2. Describe your personal goals and visions for your future in ordained ministry. (250 words)
3. Reflect on your strengths for ordained ministry and on areas in which you need more training and experience. Provide a frank self-assessment on your administrative and organizational skills. (250 words)
4. Summarize your participation in church and church-related activities during the last five years, beginning with details of your current involvement and then listing participation in past years (§324.11). (250 words)
5. Explain your understanding of both the distinctive vocations of the Order of Elders and the Order of Deacons. How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as clergy in The United Methodist Church? (§324.7k) (250 words)

6. What is the meaning of ordination in the context of the general ministry of the Church? Include your understanding of the roles of laity and clergy (§324.7m). (250 words)

7a. FOR DEACON APPLICANTS ONLY:

Deacons are not in the itinerant system and do not have guaranteed appointment. (250 words)

- What are the potential assets and liabilities of being outside of the itinerant system?
- How does this affect individual and family considerations?

7b. FOR ELDER APPLICANTS ONLY (250 words):

- What is your understanding of the expectations and obligations of the itinerant system?
- What are the potential assets and liabilities of such a system?
- Do you feel confident that you can offer yourself without reservation to be appointed and to serve as the appointive authority may determine?
- What are the individual and family considerations that need to be made within the itinerant system?

PART 2 –THEOLOGY QUESTIONS

Present your understanding of the following theological concepts. Provide specific, concrete examples where possible.

1. What is the Wesleyan understanding of grace? (200 words)
2. Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today? (§324.7i) (200 words)
3. The United Methodist Church holds that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason. (§324.7h)
 - a. How do you define and understand each of these four elements? (150 words)
 - b. Demonstrate their application in at least one current issue facing the Church. (150 words)
 - c. Discuss how you would address faithful Christians who arrive at different conclusions? (150 words)
4. What is your theological understanding and response to the basic pattern of worship found on pg. 3 of The United Methodist Hymnal? (250 words)
5. Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry (§324.7n). (250 words)
6. The role and significance of the Sacraments (§324.9.p) (650 words)
 - a. How do you understand the sacrament of baptism from a theological perspective? What role does it play in the community you serve? (250 words)

- b. How do you understand the United Methodist commitment to and practice of infant baptism? (150 words)
- c. How do you understand the sacrament of Holy Communion from a theological perspective? What role does it play in the community you serve? (250 words)