

**California-Pacific Conference
Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM)**

PAPER B

**WRITTEN RESPONSE QUESTIONS
FOR RECOMMENDATION FOR
ASSOCIATE OR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

Deadline: November 2, 2026, ON OR BEFORE 2:00 p.m. (Pacific Time)

Part 1 – Doctrine & Theology Questions – 17-page limit

Part 2 – Mission and Ministry Questions – 14-page limit

Appendix A - Sermon Transcript or Alternative Proclamation Project

Appendix B – Order of Worship

***Before beginning your work, please read the detailed instructions
for completing Paper B included at the end of this document***

PLEASE NOTE:

- Maximum word counts listed after each question. Any text beyond that limit may be ignored by readers. You are required to indicate the word count at the end of each response.
- United Methodist Book of Discipline citations are noted using the format (§ ###). All citations are from *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*.
- All candidates for Associate or Provisional Membership — whether on the Deacon or Elder Track — must complete all questions in Parts 1 and 2, as well as the applicable Appendixes. Papers missing any responses will be considered incomplete.
- Guidelines for formatting the paper and directions for submission are found at the end of this document.
- You must properly indicate and cite your sources using footnotes.

PART 1 – DOCTRINE & THEOLOGY QUESTIONS

Part III of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church is entitled “Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task.” This section provides an encapsulation of our denominational theological foundations and values and are the focus of the following questions.

1. Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological, and historical sources. (§ 324.7a). (400 words)
2. What is your understanding of evil as it exists in the world? (§ 324.7b) (250 words)
3. What is your understanding of humanity and the human need for divine Grace? (§ 324.7c) (250 words)
4. How do you interpret these statements? (500 words)
 - a. “Jesus Christ is Lord.” How might you explain this profession of faith to a lay person? (§ 324.7d) (250 words)
 - b. “Jesus Christ is Savior.” How would you answer a lay person who asked, “What does it mean to be saved?” (250 words)
 - c. What is your understanding of the Incarnation? Include Jesus, the church, and creation. (250 words)
5. Christian theology offers multiple ways of understanding the meaning and significance of Christ's death on the cross. (e.g. atonement theories, theology of the cross, etc.). (700 words)
 - a. Provide a brief description of three different theological approaches to the meaning and significance of Christ death on the cross. What are some of the strengths and challenges of these three approaches? (500 words)
 - b. Which understanding of the cross is most meaningful to your personal faith, and why? (200 words)
6. What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers, and in responsible living in the world? (§ 324.7e) (250 words)
7. What is your understanding of the following: (§ 324.7f) (600 words)
 - a. The kingdom of God (200 words)
 - b. The Resurrection (200 words)
 - c. Eternal life (200 words)
8. How do you intend to affirm, teach, and apply Part III of the Discipline (Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task) in your work in the ministry to which you have been called? (§ 324.7g) (250 words)

9. Discuss your understanding of the primary characteristics of United Methodist polity. (§324.7j) (300 words)
 - a. How are congregations related to one another? (100 words)
 - b. Who is recognized as having authority in the United Methodist connection? (100 words)
 - c. How are decisions made regarding general policies, practices, and positions at the denominational level? (100 words)
10. Describe your understanding of *diakonia*, the servant ministry of the (local) church, and the servant ministry of the provisional member. (§ 324.7l) (250 words)

PART 2 – MISSION AND MINISTRY

1. Mission and Outreach (500 words)

- a. Reflect upon your understanding of the relationship of the Gospel to social justice.
- b. The Book of Discipline (§120) states, “The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Describe the role of ordained clergy in effecting the “transformation of the world.”
- c. How are you presently living out your commitment to mission and outreach in your life and ministry?

2. Christian Education and Spiritual Formation (500 words)

- a. How does your theology of servant leadership influence your pastoral ministry in the formation of disciples?
- b. What are your personal practices of spiritual formation which help you to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ?
- c. Share an example of an instance when you helped someone to deepen their faith understanding.

3. Pastoral Care (1000 words)

- a. Regarding pastoral care: (300 words)
 - i. When have you provided an empathetic, supportive presence to someone?
 - ii. How do you incorporate theological/scriptural resources into your practice of pastoral care?
- b. Regarding personal and professional boundaries: (250 words)

- i. What is your understanding of personal and professional boundaries in a ministry setting and why are they important?
 - ii. What practices would you employ to help you maintain those personal and professional boundaries in your ministry?
- c. Regarding self-care: (450 words)
- i. In what ways do you presently provide for your self-care? What spiritual disciplines have been most effective for you?
 - ii. What did you learn about yourself from your psychological assessment?
 - iii. What areas of concern and need for growth did the Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS) identify? How have you addressed the MAS's specific recommendations and what areas do you still need to address?
 - iv. What persons or groups do you look to for support? Describe the nature of this support.

4. Administration (500 words)

- a. How have you provided leadership for the financial, decision-making, or staffing functions of a group or program? Choose one area — financial management, decision-making, or staffing — and describe a specific example of how you have provided leadership in that area.
- b. How have you participated in recruiting and training volunteers and/or staff in your church, work, or voluntary organizations?
- c. Describe a time in which you have led or participated in a process to re-assess and implement change in response to new circumstances?

5. Sermon and Worship:

All Elder candidates must submit a recording of a preached sermon. Deacon candidates may submit either a preached sermon or an Alternative Proclamation Project (APP) — whichever best demonstrates their calling and practice of ministry. Deacon candidates who choose the APP must submit a proposal by September 15, 2026. See the instruction packet for proposal submission guidelines.

a. Sermon Video:

- Sermons must be preached and recorded in front of a live congregation during a worship service—ideally on a Sunday.
- You may preach the sermon in your native language, but the accompanying transcript must be in English.
- Sermons must be preached between May 15, 2026-November 1, 2026
- Only include your sermon in the video. Do not include any other parts of the service.

- We advise having a back-up video recording method just in case there is a problem with the primary recording, livestream, etc.
- The Scripture text for your sermon must be one of the texts from the Revised Common Lectionary or the Narrative Lectionary, AND it must be the lectionary reading for the Sunday that you preach the sermon. If the sermon is not intended for a Sunday, the text should be for the Sunday preceding the date of service.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Exam papers will be considered *incomplete* if an ineligible scripture is chosen as the subject of the sermon, and you will not be given an interview. If you have any question about the text selection, please check with the Provisional Membership registrar to make sure you are using the correct text **BEFORE** you preach the sermon.
- Videos must be submitted using the **Video Submission Instructions** at the end of this document.

b. Sermon Transcript

- Provide a full written transcript of your sermon in English and attach it as “Appendix A” to this paper. The transcript does not need to include a word count and is not part of the page limit for your paper.

c. Written Order of Worship

- Create a complete Order of Worship for the service at which you preached and attach it as **Appendix B**. This should reflect your own creative and liturgical work — not a pre-printed bulletin or form provided by your church. Include the full text of all elements you authored or selected, such as a Call to Worship, prayers, and liturgical readings. You must cite any sources for items you did not create. For music, list the hymns or songs chosen and include any original lyrics or liturgical texts.
- If you did not have the opportunity to create the Order of Worship for this service, write a complete Order of Worship you would have created if given full responsibility for the service.

d. Provide an exegesis of the text employed (400 words).

6. Share your understanding of Christian worship: (500 words)

- a. What are the scriptural, traditional, and theological foundations for Christian worship?
- b. What are the theological implications of virtual worship and its relationship to in-person worship?
- c. How have you incorporated the gifts and voices of laity in worship?

Alternative Proclamation Project (APP) Instructions (for Deacons Only):

Because a deacon may proclaim the Word in ways other than a preached sermon, a deacon applicant may submit a one-page proposal for an APP by September 15 of your application year. BOM members will determine whether to approve your proposal and will respond to you by September 20th. If your proposal is approved, you may submit your project according to the regular exam deadline schedule.

Alternative Proclamation Projects must include:

- 1. A written description of your project**

Describe your project's value in proclaiming the Gospel. Ensure that the form and content of your description parallel the work required to create a sermon manuscript (no word count required).

2. Visual illustration of your proclamation

If video footage is not appropriate for your ministry setting (e.g., chaplaincy or counseling), employ alternative visual representation of proclamation in your ministry context (e.g., photographs, slideshow, etc.).

3. Scripture exegesis

Demonstrate the scriptural foundation of the proclamation in your project. Include a thorough exegesis of a Scripture which supports the form of proclamation practiced in your ministry setting. (400 words)

General Instructions for Papers A and B

- Make sure you have the current year's exam questions for all papers.
- **FONT:** Use **Times New Roman - 12-point font**. [Papers MAY NOT be handwritten]
- **MARGINS:** Set margins for one (1") inch on all sides.
- **GENERAL FORMATTING:** Unless otherwise indicated:
 - Type the entire question **single spaced** and in **bold**, including the word limit.
 - Your response should immediately follow the question.
 - Responses must be **double-spaced**.
 - Indicate your word-count at the end of each response.

EXAMPLE:

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 (§324.13). (750 words)

[Sample response — for formatting purposes only] Growing up in a small United Methodist congregation in rural Ohio, faith was woven into the fabric of our family life, and it was there I first sensed a pull toward ministry. After completing a degree in Social Work and spending several... **(694 words)**

- **WORD & PAGE LIMITS:** DO NOT go over the word limit for each question or the page limit for each paper. If your responses exceed the word limit, interview team readers will not read beyond the limit. **Exceeding the word limit will not exclude you from an interview but will provide the readers with an incomplete presentation of your response.* Please note, questions that have sub-questions (e.g. 1.a, 1.b, 1.c, etc.) may have additional word limits for each sub-question.
- **FOOTNOTES:** If you quote or cite another’s work, please footnote it properly. This includes quotations from the United Methodist Book of Discipline or other UMC resources.
- **NAME & PAGE NUMBERS:** Include your name, the letter of the paper, and the page number in the upper right corner (i.e. The Header) of every page (e.g., “Susanna Wesley, B, 1 of 30”).
- **PROOFREADING:** Proofread your papers so that they are free of misspellings and grammatical errors. We cannot stress this enough. You may use grammar tools such as Grammarly to check your work. As all applicants have completed graduate level coursework, we expect the papers to match or exceed that quality of work. Carelessness in your writing will influence the readers’ perception of the overall quality of your work.
- **ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS:** Be sure to answer **ALL** questions and sub-questions. If you fail to fully respond to a question, your paper may be considered incomplete, and your process will be stopped.

PAPER SUBMISSION

- Papers can only be accepted in a PDF format. Save your paper using the following file name format.
 - Date (year-month/day) followed by the paper letter, and your full name.

EXAMPLE:

For a paper submitted on November 1, 2026, the file name should be
2026-1101 Paper B Susanna Wesley.pdf

- Most software will allow you to “Save As” a .PDF.
- All paper submissions must be in a single PDF. Specifically:
 - Paper A** – Combine Parts 1 and 2 into one PDF document.
 - Paper B** – Combine Parts 1, 2, Appendices A and B, and/or APP into one PDF document.

A WORD ABOUT PLAGIARISM

The Board of Ordained Ministry takes plagiarism seriously, and your process may be stopped if you present another person’s work as your own.

You are encouraged to read our Plagiarism Policy at www.calpacumc.org on the Board of Ordained Ministry page under the policy section. We encourage you to check for plagiarism by using a detection program such as Turnitin (turnitin.com) before you submit your papers. This will help to ensure your exam papers are free of content misuse.

Please be aware that your papers will be checked for plagiarism and usage of AI (Artificial Intelligence) using the **iThenticate** system.

iThenticate screens your papers against past Board of Ordained Ministry submissions. Copying or closely echoing another applicant's language — knowingly or not — may result in your process being halted.

Submit only your own work and ideas.

Video Submission Instructions

The Board of Ordained Ministry uses the YouTube platform for sharing and viewing videos. You must have a verified YouTube account to submit your proclamation video. Follow these instructions for uploading and sharing your video with the Board of Ordained Ministry.

1. Create your YouTube account - If you do not already have a YouTube account, create one by going to YouTube.com and clicking on the Sign In button at the upper-right corner. If you do not see a Sign In button, you may already have an account.
2. Visit this link for more information on creating a YouTube account:
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/161805?hl=en>

3. Verify your YouTube account - To upload videos longer than 15 minutes, the YouTube account must be verified. A verified account requires an automated voice call or a text message on your mobile phone.
4. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/verify> to verify your YouTube account.
5. Upload your proclamation video - After you have signed in and verified your YouTube account, upload your proclamation video at <http://studio.youtube.com>.
 - On the upper-right corner, click the Create button.
 - Then select Upload videos.
 - Select your proclamation video file to upload.
 - Depending on the size and format of your file, as well as your internet connection speed, the amount of time required to upload your video may take several hours.
6. Follow the prompts from YouTube and click Next. When the Visibility page is reached, check the Unlisted option in publishing the video. Then Save the video.
7. For more information on the uploading process, go to:
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57407?hl=en>
8. Share your video with the Board of Ordained Ministry –
 - Start watching your video on YouTube.
 - Click on the word Share under the video.
 - Copy the video's URL address.
 - Email the video link. Be sure to paste the video link into the body of your email to Cathy Wilson.
9. For more information about sharing your video, go to:
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/57741?hl=en>