

Process & Requirements Summary for Privilege of Call

Southwest Association, Michigan Conference, United Church of Christ
Approved by the Church & Ministry Committee on August 1, 2019

Reference: Manual on Ministry, page 44-47

1. A minister ordained in a denomination other than the United Church of Christ may apply for Privilege of Call by submitting a formal request to the Southwest Association Church & Ministry Committee. The request should be 1-2 pages and give an overview of their ministry, why they seek privilege of call, and how they currently understand their call to ministry. Upon receipt of the request, an interview will be scheduled with the Committee.
2. Candidates who have been granted “Seeking Privilege of Call” status by the Committee shall complete the following requirements before approval to go before an Ecclesiastical Council. These requirements may be modified by the Church & Ministry Committee based on a candidate’s situation.
 1. Submit a statement of the person’s spiritual journey (3-5 pages).
 2. Successfully complete an approved UCC History, Polity and Theology course OR submit a written paper to the Committee demonstrating knowledge of the same material (3-5 pages).
 3. Submit a paper / resume / portfolio addressing the person’s theology, experience and qualifications with regard to the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers (5-10 pages).
 4. Submit documentation of educational background, especially as it regards qualifications for ministry.
 5. Submit three written references of support.
 6. Submit the results of a criminal background check as required by the UCC search and call process.
 7. Successfully complete approved Boundary Awareness training or submit documentation that such training has been completed within the last five years.
 8. Submit a letter of good standing from the ordained minister’s current denomination. If such a letter cannot be obtained, the candidate and the Church & Ministry Committee will need to discuss how to proceed.

Note: The Manual on Ministry also recommends requiring a psychological assessment. The Southwest Association views a psychological assessment for Privilege of Call candidates as worthwhile, but not required.

3. Once all of the above requirements are complete, the candidate will again be interviewed by the Committee which shall then vote whether to approve the candidate for an Ecclesiastical Council. If approved, the paper(s) submitted from the above process (2.1, 2.2, 2.3) will be distributed to the Association for review prior to the Ecclesiastical Council.
4. If approved at an Ecclesiastical Council of the Southwest Association, the candidate will be granted “Privilege of Call” status. Privilege of Call must be renewed annually by the Church & Ministry Committee. Once the candidate receives a call approved by the Church & Ministry Committee they are granted Ordained Ministerial Standing, at which point the candidate relinquishes their standing in any other denomination.