

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

RE: Psychological Assessment of Clergy Candidates

(Revised 9/2014)

The psychological assessment process of the Board of Ordained Ministry is intended to serve as a positive step in helping candidates look at the gifts and graces they bring to ordained/licensed ministry, as well as identify areas of weakness that need to be addressed in order for them to be successful in ministry. Psychological assessment at the candidacy level is focused on "fitness" criteria. Fitness criteria involves determining whether or not a person possesses the personality characteristics that "fit" the requirements for both licensed and ordained ministry in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church. The psychological assessment process must be completed and the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) must receive an assessment report before the candidate appears before the DCOM to request approval as a certified candidate for ordained/licensed ministry. Therefore, ***candidates should begin this process at least six months in advance of the anticipated date of the certification interview.***

The Ministerial Assessment Specialists for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference are Dr. Frank Richardson and Dr. Rosemary Cook.

THE PROCESS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The candidate must have met the prerequisites for testing as noted on the checklist provided by the DCOM. (This includes completing the Candidacy Application Form in the Online Candidacy Registration System, obtaining signatures of district superintendent and mentor, and requesting the candidacy guidebook with payment of the appropriate fee.)
2. The DCOM or the District Superintendent informs the candidate and the candidate's church of the psychological assessment process, its purpose, and cost.
3. The candidate submits payment as follows: \$300 from the candidate and \$275 from the candidate's sponsoring church. Checks totaling \$575, made payable to EPA/UMC should be sent to The Rev. Amy Smith, Psychological Assessment Registrar, 409 S. Main St., North Wales, PA 19454. The remaining cost of \$325 will be paid by the EPA Board of Ordained Ministry.
4. Once payment has been received and pre-requisites have been met, candidate will be notified by the registrar that admission to testing has been granted.
5. Candidate will identify four references, as noted below. References will be contacted by email or U.S. mail. For each reference who prefers a hard copy of the reference forms, send to Rev. Smith a stamped envelope addressed to that reference along with a stamped envelope addressed to Rev. Amy Smith, Psychological Assessment Registrar, 409 S. Main St., North Wales, PA 19454. For references who prefer email, send email addresses to Rev. Smith at amy smith@comcast.net.

References:

- 1) *Candidate's most recent local church pastor. If the candidate is serving a church and does not have a pastor, this should be a former pastor, preferably the one who knows the candidate best and can best comment on his or her gifts and graces for ministry. If the most recent local pastor is a parent or close relative, candidate must list another pastor who knows him or her well.*

- 2) *SPRC Chairperson of the candidate's local church.*
- 3) *A professor, if the candidate is in college or seminary. If the candidate is not in college or seminary, list most recent employer.*
- 4) *A church member who has served with the candidate in ministry and can comment on his or her potential for service as a member of the licensed or ordained clergy.*

PLEASE NOTE: Candidate should inform the references that they have two weeks from the time they receive the evaluation forms to return them to Rev. Smith. Failure of the references to return their evaluations in a timely fashion may delay the candidate's interview.

6. In addition, if the candidate has received a prior psychological evaluation and/or an evaluation from clinical pastoral education, the candidate is expected to inform the registrar about these evaluations and how to access them. If an action report has previously been filed, this should be made known as well.
7. The registrar will notify the candidate of upcoming testing dates. These are typically scheduled four times a year. Upon reserving a spot for testing the candidate will receive a Personal Data Inventory to be completed and returned on the day of testing. This form should be typed to ensure that it is legible.
8. Testing will be conducted at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 600 Walker Rd, Wayne, PA 19087. If St. Matthew's is unavailable, the candidate will be informed of the alternative location. The candidate will need to allow three to four hours to complete the testing. The candidate should plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the announced time for testing.
9. On the day of testing, the candidate will schedule an appointment for his or her interview with the Ministerial Assessment Specialists. Candidate should bring his or her calendar on the day of testing to facilitate this scheduling.
10. Following the interview with the candidate, Drs. Richardson and Cooke will send their report to the candidate's DCOM chairperson (or other DCOM representative trained in the process), with a summary report being sent to the candidate. **The report will take four to six weeks after the interview to complete, so the candidate and DCOM should plan accordingly.**
11. If the candidate has questions about their report results, or there are major factual errors in the report, they should contact the Psychological Assessment Registrar. This procedure applies only to questions a candidate may have about the meaning of the report, or correction of major factual errors in the report.

IF YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY HAD A PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT:

It is Board of Ordained Ministry policy that if a previous assessment is more than five years old, then a candidate will be expected to undergo a second assessment at the total cost of \$900. Cost shall be split between the candidate and the Board of Ordained Ministry. Exceptions can be made if the candidate's previous assessment did not raise any concerns and there is sufficient evidence to support a candidate's psychological readiness. The Board of Ordained Ministry, along with the Ministerial Assessment Specialists, will make the determination as to what will be expected from the candidate. The candidate or the DCOM may contact the Psychological Assessment Registrar to begin this process.

Rev. Smith may be contacted at 215-429-4592 or amycsmith@comcast.net.