PRIVILEGE OF CALL

MARKS PORTFOLIO

COVENANTING COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NEVADA CONFERENCE

OVERVIEW

In the process of seeking Privilege of Call (POC), you will be creating a Marks Portfolio. The Marks Portfolio is intended as a medium for people seeking POC to both integrate and demonstrate their personal, professional, and spiritual formation and preparation for ministry. Using the United Church of Christ's *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*[1] as a foundation, the Marks Portfolio should be curated and arranged to demonstrate competencies and experiences in each of the eight main categories.

Working alongside and in consultation with your POC Advisor, your portfolio should be assembled, edited, and amended throughout the duration of your discernment process. Think of it as a living document that should grow, change, and develop over the course of your discernment and formation process. For instance, you may find more clarity in your sense of call to ministry in the UCC and therefore materials in section one may need revision, or you may find that a sermon added initially may later need to be replaced by a sermon that better reflects your preaching style or theology.

For each semi-annual review, a working draft of your portfolio must be submitted to the Committee on Ministry (COM). The draft should be submitted one month prior to the review. Because the portfolio is a work in progress, you do not need to have the portfolio completed for your first review.

At your first semi-annual review, sections one and two should have drafted responses as well as at least four categories of the Marks in section three and four. Each subsequent semi-annual review, your portfolio should reflect edits to sections one and two and further development of section three and four. Throughout your discernment process, at each review the COM will ask you to discuss and reflect upon the additions and changes you have made to your portfolio.

At the conclusion of your POC process, you will submit a completed portfolio. A portfolio that demonstrates integration of the Marks is a key part of the final assessment of a candidate's readiness for UCC ministerial authorization.

[1] The Marks are available online at www.ucc.org/ministers_marks and in Section 1:1 of the Manual on Ministry.

Approved for use by the Covenanting Committee on Ministry, June 1, 2023.

CONTENTS OF YOUR PORTFOLIO

Marks Portfolios are comprised of four main sections. While there is room for creativity in the creation of the portfolio, be sure to center your work on the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*.

SECTION 1: SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Introduce yourself by way of sharing your spiritual autobiography[2]. As a part of your reflection, be sure to interact with themes from the Marks. Conclude this section by writing your own personal Statement of Faith. You may structure your Statement of Faith in any variety of ways but may find it helpful to look at the structures and themes of the various versions of the UCC's Statement of Faith.

This section should be no more than three written pages.

SECTION 2: UNDERSTANDING YOUR CALL TO AUTHORIZED MINISTRY

Clarity in articulating a call to ordained ministry by God and the Church and continuing discernment of one's call in community are fundamental practices. Please respond succinctly to the following:

- Describe your theological understanding of ordination and the role of the Church in discerning call.
- Describe in particular your call to the vocation of ministry and the setting to which you currently feel most called.
- Expanding on the understanding of ordination, why are you interested in ordination and ministry specifically in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ?

This section should be no more than two written pages.

SECTION 3: REFLECTION ON INTEGRATION OF THE MARKS

This section of the portfolio is for you to engage in reflection of competencies in each of the eight categories of the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*. The eight categories are as follows: Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice; Nurturing UCC Identity; Building Transformational Leadership Skills; Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions; Caring for All Creation; Participating in Theological Praxis; Working Together for Justice and Mercy; and Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets.

For each of these eight categories, write a reflection that weaves experiences, education, and preparation that demonstrate your skills and speak to how you are integrating various particular Marks of that category into your ministry. You are expected to also discuss where your strengths and experiences are, and where you need continued development or practice.

As you write your reflection for each of the eight categories of the Marks, discuss one specific example of your ministry in greater detail that reflects integration of the section's Marks. Describe the process, tools, and resources you utilized in its creation; what informed you theologically, socially, and culturally;

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[2] A spiritual autobiography is a story of how significant events, relationships, and cultural influences have contributed to the author's spiritual formation, relationship with God, interpretation of scriptures, and understanding of how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

what you learned as a result; and what you would do or try differently next time. The ministry example you refer to in detail in Section 3 will go into Section 4. Further directions regarding ministry examples are in the directions for Section 4 below.

At the conclusion of each reflection, include a note to your readers that clearly indicates the title of the ministry example you have referenced in this section and the page number its located on in the portfolio (ex. "The sermon referenced as a ministry example in this reflection, 'Rise Up: Unconventional Easter Sermon' can be found on page 22.")

Each of the eight reflections are a practice in the necessary skill for ministers of clear, concise, and effective communication. Each reflection should be no more than two written pages.

SECTION 4: MINISTRY EXAMPLES AND DEMONSTRATION OF THE MARKS

This section of the portfolio is the space to include the specific examples of your ministry that demonstrate competencies in each of the eight categories of the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*. The material in this section should be comprised of the ministerial examples referenced in in Section 3's reflections. Ministerial examples might include things like a sermon, lesson plans for a UCC polity class you taught, photos and descriptions from an art installation you created for Lent, meditations written, worship outlines and notes used for terrarium making to tell the story of creation in worship, etc. You are invited and encouraged to provide a diversity of ministry examples to reflect the Marks. In cases where your ministry example includes video, audio or large files, upload them to a server such as Dropbox, Google Drive, or Vimeo (all have free account versions) and then provide a hyperlink in the text of your portfolio. Be sure to password protect any sensitive information and provide details on how to access the file in your portfolio.

An essential understanding as you approach the task of creating this section is to think of it as journey of integration, rather than a task of reiteration. Consider the Marks in each category holistically. Remember that no one is expected to reflect expertise in all of these Marks to the same degree. We each have particular gifts, interests, and strengths as well as areas for further growth and development. It is also the case that no minister ever achieves final mastery of these Marks. So as a resource for your ministry, the Marks are intended serve as a tool for assessment of readiness for authorization and also as a guide for lifelong learning and ongoing professional development and continuing education.

SECTION 5: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

This section should be utilized to reflect five specific documents:

- Final Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) evaluation by your supervisor
- Final Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) self-evaluation
- Final educational and theological education transcripts or reports
- Certificate of Attendance at Pastoral Boundaries Training class within the past three years.
- Documentation of completion of an approved UCC History, Polity and Theology course

You may also include any other vital documents in this section needed to demonstrate the Marks that have not been previously included in your ministry examples. Accompany those documents with brief reflection on how these documents demonstrate integration of specific Marks.

SUBMITTING DRAFTS OR THE COMPLETED PORTFOLIO AS ONE FILE

Each draft of your portfolio should be reviewed and assessed by your POC Advisor prior to submission. This is an opportunity for constructive feedback, deeper discussion, and further discernment. Additional reviewers, such as your pastor and Local Church Discernment Committee, are recommended before your final portfolio is submitted.

Your portfolio, whether the draft due prior to your annual review or the completed version, should be emailed to the as one PDF file with active links to media, video, etc.

Email your portfolio to Vicki Holland, holland@scncucc.org. If the PDF file is too large to be sent over email, upload it to a service like Google Drive or Dropbox, and send the link or URL for the file. The file will be downloaded and distributed to the committee. Technology is ever evolving so each of these services has extensive support and how-to guides located on their website.

Please be sure that on the first page of the PDF file, you include a cover page with your name as well as the portfolio's submission date and indicate whether it is a draft (in which case please also indicate whether it is your first, second, third, etc. submitted draft) or a completed portfolio. Be sure to also include a table of contents for the portfolio.

IF YOU HAVE MARKS PORTFOLIO RELATED QUESTIONS, CONTACT THE UCC CONFERENCE OFFICE TO BE CONNECTED WITH THE COM CHAIRPERSON AND ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTER WHO WORKS WITH MINISTERS SEEKING PRIVILEGE OF CALL.

THIS RESOURCE WAS APPROVED FOR USE BY THE COVENANTING COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY ON JUNE 1, 2023.

SAMPLE TABLE OF CONTENTS AND OUTLINE OF A PORTFOLIO

Below is an example of a Table of Contents and outline of how a Marks portfolio could be structured. Page numbers should be included in your Table of Contents but may differ from those listed here.

Sample:

Table of Contents

Cover Page and Table of Contents 1

Section 1: Spiritual Autobiography 2

Section 2: Understanding Your Call to Ministry 5

Section 3: Reflection on Integration of the Marks 7
- Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice 7
- Nurturing UCC Identity 9
- Building Transformational Leadership Skills 11
- Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions 13
- Caring for All Creation 15
- Participating in Theological Praxis 17
- Working Together for Justice and Mercy 19
- Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets 21

Section 4: Ministry Examples and Demonstration of the Marks 22
- Title of Ministry Example for Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Spiritual Practice 22
- Title of Ministry Example for Nurturing UCC Identity 24
- Title of Ministry Example for Building Transformational Leadership Skills 27
- Title of Ministry Example for Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions 30
- Title of Ministry Example for Caring for All Creation 35
- Title of Ministry Example for Participating in Theological Praxis 38
- Title of Ministry Example for Working Together for Justice and Mercy 41
- Title of Ministry Example for Strengthening Inter- and Intra- Personal Assets 45

Section 5: Additional Documents 48
- Final Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) supervisor's evaluation 48
- Final Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) self-evaluation 52
- Final educational and theological education transcripts or reports 54
- Certificate of Attendance at Pastoral Boundaries Training 55
- Documentation of completion of a UCC History, Polity and Theology course 56