



Commissioned Lay Ministry Program

Candidate Instructions

Revised February, 2019

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The success of the Commissioned Lay Ministry Program includes a combination of study, practice, and reflection and depends heavily on the relationship between Candidate and Mentor. There are some standard requirements that all CLM Candidates must complete, listed below.

Because CLM Candidates usually specialize in only one or sometimes two areas of ministry, they will work with their Mentor to develop a specialized learning-serving plan to meet their training needs.

Overview of Educational Programming

Before being eligible for commissioning, each Candidate must:

- Complete the CLM Required Reading List
- In partnership with the Mentor, develop and successfully follow an individualized learning/serving plan
- Contact the CLM Council to schedule the commissioning interview.

Working with the Mentor

It is expected that the educational/training component of the program be a matter of mutual decision and design on the part of Candidate and Mentor. The training program is meant to include both academic components (readings, workshops, etc.) and experiential ones, where the Candidate has the opportunity to experience various aspects of church leadership and then review these experiences with the guidance and feedback of the Mentor. We suggest that Mentors take into careful consideration the Candidate's intended form of service in planning the training program with the Candidate. A Candidate who is most interested in pastoral care, for example, might have very different learning needs than a Candidate interested in performing rites of passage or in leading adult education. The CLM Council recommends that the Candidate seek out relevant regional trainings, webinars and leadership schools as they are available.

Candidates who feel called to one or two specific forms of service are often most successful. However, it is perfectly acceptable for Candidates to generalize and explore many areas of congregational leadership. This Candidate is perhaps more common in lay-led congregations, where the CLM might be expected to provide guidance in a variety of areas, than it is when the CLM expects to serve in a congregation with professional religious leadership. In the latter case, the Candidate usually focuses on one or two specific areas of interest or need in consultation with the settled minister..



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All CLMs offer a public representation of Unitarian Universalist leadership; therefore, whatever a Candidate's focus, the program should include a grounding in Unitarian Universalist identity and practice in the presentation of that identity, whether in worship or other settings. We provide a required reading list that covers basic areas of general competence. Upon request, the Council can make available (online) to Mentors and Candidates a copy of the *Lay Ministry Training Curriculum* developed by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta. While this curriculum was intended to be used in a group setting, we believe that Candidates and Mentors might find it helpful as a structure for discussing the basic competencies. We also appreciate that this curriculum has a module devoted to helping CLMs discern their call, and another on the work that a CLM can do in order to reconcile their call to lay ministry with the expectations and responsibilities of professional ministers within and outside of their own congregation.

In addition to the general categories of competence outlined by the required reading and the *Lay Ministry Training Curriculum*, we expect the Mentor and the CLM Candidate to develop additional learning experiences focusing on the Candidate's area(s) of specialty. In the past, these experiences have included regional or national workshops, leadership school, auditing seminary courses, or even a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education. CLM Mentoring is based on a clinical model; in other words, ideally, a lot of the Candidate's learning will come from reflecting with the Mentor on successful and unsuccessful leadership experiences within the home congregation.

We strongly urge that Mentors consider a Candidate's learning style as they help plan the training program. Some of our Candidates come to us with graduate educations and a great deal of academic knowledge, while other Candidates are interested in the program precisely because their gifts suggest leadership that doesn't require a seminary-level educational experience.

Because of the highly individualized nature of the CLM study program, we encourage Mentors with questions to contact the Council. We are happy to put new or potential Mentors in touch with experienced Mentors and the Council conducts a quarterly Mentor Learning Circle to facilitate these discussions.

Connecting with the CLM Council Liaison

CLM Candidates must submit a quarterly report to his/her assigned Council liaison to the CLM Council due January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

Commissioned Lay Ministers submit semi-annual reports on April 1 and October 1.

In the Event of Ministerial Transition



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As soon as a congregation served by a CLM or CLM Candidate makes the decision to move into a ministerial transition, the CLM/Candidate should inform their Council liaison of the decision.

The CLM Council and, if possible, also the UUA Transitions office, will then encourage the search committee to include in the congregational search packet or search web site, a page, description or letter introducing the CLM/Candidate and describing the relationship (Covenant & agreements) and their role and responsibilities in the congregation. The CLM Council can provide a sample document which the search committee can adapt to the specific situation.

Once an interim minister or ministerial candidate has been named, the Council liaison will contact the clergy person to offer more detailed information about the CLM Program and to offer to help with the process of renegotiating the Covenant between CLM/Candidate and new minister and revising the CLM/Candidate's duties in a new Letter of Agreement. If the minister accepts the offer for assistance from the CLM Council, the Council liaison will meet with the minister and the CLM/Candidate at a mutually convenient time to create a new Covenant and affirm expectations of duties.

The new Covenant and Letter of Agreement should be submitted within three months of the start of service of the new clergy person.

The congregation is also strongly encouraged to include the CLM/Candidate along with paid congregational staff in the activities and interviews of Candidating Week and the new ministry Start Up Retreat.

Whether interim, settled or contract, the ordained clergy person has the final authority to establish the vision of ministry for the congregation, including the role and parameters of the work and ministry of the CLM/Candidate.

Completing the CLM Training

The duration of the educational component of the program is up to the Candidate, the Mentor, the supervising minister, and the congregation. Most CLM Candidates take approximately two years to complete their training. Once the Candidate and the Candidate's Mentor feel the Candidate has successfully completed the training program, the Candidate should contact the Council liaison to schedule a Candidate Interview with the Council. If, for any reason, the Candidate needs to take a hiatus from their development period due to life circumstances, it is the Candidate's responsibility to



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communicate with their Mentor and Council liaison. If the hiatus extends past one year, then they will need to reapply for the program.

The liaison will schedule the commissioning interview with the Council and inform the Candidate of the date of the interview and the deadline for submission of the necessary forms before the interview.

Required Paperwork for the Commissioning Interview

(Forms are available at <https://www.uua.org/central-east/programs/cll/omdccl>)

- CLM Required Reading List (Completed and signed)
- CLM Code of Ethics (signed)
- Congregation/CLM Letter of Agreement (to be completed by the Candidate and the congregation's Board, signed by the President and Minister, then scanned and sent to bcasebolt@uua.org)
- CLM Candidate Self Evaluation and Application for Interview
- CLM's Mentor Evaluation for Commissioning (scanned and sent to bcasebolt@uua.org)
- Two additional Reference Evaluations for Commissioning (to be distributed by the Candidate to appropriate references then scanned and sent to bcasebolt@uua.org)
- Covenant between CLM and the congregation's Minister(s)

The Commissioning Process

The Candidate Interview

The commissioning interview with Candidates will be scheduled during a regular meeting of the CLM Council when possible. If the Candidate lives in an area too far from the meeting location, every effort will be made to have a subgroup of at least 3 people from the CLM leadership Council meet with the aspiring Candidate at a mutually convenient location or meet via online video connections for the interview. Mentors are invited but not required to attend the interview between the Candidate and Council.

During the interview, the Candidate shall briefly (10 minutes) engage the Council in a presentation employing their area of focus, such as worship or a teaching experience, which should demonstrate the Candidate's presence and spiritual depth in assuming the role of a public religious leader.



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The Council will then ask the Candidate various questions based on the Candidate's experiences within the program. The Candidate should be prepared to discuss identified growth areas and plans for continued education. After the Candidate completes the interview, the Council will discuss its decision. Unsuccessful Candidates will be contacted with specific suggestions for continued training, with a goal-date for second interview.

The Initial Commission

The CLM Council chair writes a formal letter of acceptance to the successful Candidate with a copy to the congregation's board, board president and minister. The CLM Chair, in the letter to the congregation, recommends that the congregation set a date for the commissioning of the Candidate. The congregation is urged to make this a celebratory event, which both congratulates the Candidate for their accomplishment and reminds the congregation of the mutual covenant of service that now exists between congregation and Commissioned Lay Minister. The Commissioned Lay Ministry Council is happy to send representatives to such events on request, when possible.

The CLM Council strongly advises that the commissioning includes a means of informing the congregation of the basic content and intent behind the CLM Code of Ethics.

Requirements/Reading List for CLM Candidates

1. Introductory Works

Required:

_____ John Buehrens and Forrest Church, [A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism](#)

Optional:

_____ *Lay Ministry Training Curriculum Candidate's Handbook* from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta (out-of-print but available to CLM Candidates on the CLM Resource page.)

_____ Unitarian Universalist Association, [UUA Pamphlet Sampler](#) (Note: There is no need to buy the set. Each pamphlet has a link to a pdf file with the full text.)

2. Unitarian and Universalist History

Required:



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_____ David Bumbaugh, [Unitarian Universalism: A Narrative History](#)

Choose 1

_____ Cynthia Grant Tucker, [Prophetic Sisterhood: Liberal Women Ministers of the Frontier, 1880-1930](#)

_____ Mark Harris, [Elite: Uncovering Classism in Unitarian Universalist History](#)

_____ Mark Morrison-Reed, [Black Pioneers in a White Denomination](#)

Optional

_____ Warren R. Ross, [The Premise and the Promise: The Story of the Unitarian Universalist Association](#)

3. Church Leadership

Required:

Choose One (or relevant coursework or alternative approved learning activity)

_____ Anne Oden Heller, [Churchworks: A Well-body Book for Congregations](#)

_____ Erik Walker Wikstrom, [Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice](#) (There are also some short webinars on the UUA Bookstore page)

Optional:

_____ Peter Steinke, [Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What](#)

4. Unitarian Universalist Theologies

Required: (or relevant coursework or alternative approved learning activity)

_____ Rebecca Parker and John Buehrens, [House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-First Century](#)

Optional:

_____ Conrad Wright, ed. [Three Prophets of Religious Liberalism: Channing, Emerson, Parker](#)

_____ Rob Bell, *Love Wins*

5. Unitarian Universalist Polity

Required:

_____ Your Congregation's Constitution or Bylaws

_____ Alice Blair Wesley, [The Lay and Liberal Doctrine of the Church: The Spirit and the Promise of Our Covenant](#) (pdf) or UU History class with Rev. Susan Ritchie

Optional:



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_____ UUA Commission on Appraisal, [*Interdependence: Rethinking Congregational Polity*](#) (online)

_____ [*UUA ByLaws*](#) (online)

6. Worship

Required:

_____ Kathleen Rolenz and Wayne Arnason, [*Worship That Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists*](#)

Become familiar with the content and organization of:

Unitarian Universalist Association, [*Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal*](#) and Unitarian Universalist Association, [*Singing the Journey*](#), the hymn supplement Church of the Larger Fellowship [*Handbook of Religious Services*](#)

Optional:

_____ Jane Rzepka and Ken Sawyer, [*Thematic Preaching*](#)

_____ Erika Hewitt, [*Story, Song and Spirit: Fun and Creative Worship Services for All Ages*](#)

7. Rites of Passage

Become familiar with content and organization of:

_____ Carl Seaburg, [*Great Occasions: Readings for the Celebration of Birth, Coming-of-Age, Marriage, and Death*](#)

Optional:

_____ Edward Searl, [*In Memoriam: A Guide to Modern Funeral and Memorial Services*](#)

_____ Jane Ross-McDonald, [*Alternative Weddings: An Essential Guide for Creating Your Own Ceremony*](#)

8. Pastoral Care

Required: Select appropriate resources or activity with Mentor. The CLM Council will also plan to cover this area at the annual retreat and/or in a webinar

Optional:

_____ Robert Bolton, [*People Skills: How to Assert Yourself, Listen to Others, and Resolve Conflicts*](#)

_____ Forrest Church [*Love and Death: My Journey through the Valley of the Shadow*](#)



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_____ R. Paul Stevens and Phil Collins, [*The Equipping Pastor: A Systems Approach to Congregational Leadership*](#)

_____ Steve Levine, [*Meetings at the Edge: Dialogues with the Grieving and the Dying, the Healing and the Healed*](#)

9. Lifespan Faith Development

Required:

Choose One: (or relevant coursework or alternative approved learning activity)

_____ [*Essex Conversations: Visions for Lifespan Religious Education*](#)

_____ [*Tapestry of Faith \(Choose one\)*](#)

_____ Robert L. Hill, [*The Complete Guide to Small Group Ministry: Saving the World Ten at a Time*](#)

Optional:

_____ Sophia Fahs, [*Today's Children and Yesterday's Heritage \(pdf\)*](#)

_____ Tracy Hurd, [*Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*](#)

_____ Barbara Hamilton-Holway, [*Evensong, Volume 1: An Eight-Week Series of Gatherings*](#)

_____ [*Our Whole Lives Grades 7-9 or Young Adult*](#)

10. Issues in Social Justice

Required:

Choose One: (or relevant coursework or alternative approved learning activity)

_____ Rebecca Parker, [*Blessing the World: What Can Save Us Now*](#)

_____ Mark Hicks, [*Building the World We Dream About \(free online curriculum\)*](#)

Familiarize Yourself with:

_____ UUA [*Welcoming Congregation Program \(web\)*](#)

_____ UUA [*Journey Toward Wholeness \(pdf\)*](#)

_____ UUA [*Green Sanctuary Manual \(pdf\)*](#)

_____ UUA [*Social Justice Statements \(website\)*](#)

Optional:

_____ Richard Gilbert, [*The Prophetic Imperative: Social Gospel in Theory and Practice*](#)

_____ Jacqui James and Mark Morrison-Reed, [*Been in the Storm So Long*](#)

_____ John Gibb Milspaugh, [*A People So Bold: Theology and Ministry for Unitarian Universalists*](#)

_____ Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley & Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. [*Soul Work: Anti-racist Theologies in Dialogue*](#)

_____ Sharon Welch, [*A Feminist Ethic of RISK*](#)



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11. The Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism Journey

Required

- _____ Webinar: *White Privilege: Let's Talk* (a free UCC curriculum online)
- _____ *The Big Picture – with John Dorhauer* <http://privilege.uccpages.org/>
- _____ Mitra Rahema, ed. *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry*

Optional

- _____ Webinar Series: *White Privilege: Let's Talk* (a free UCC curriculum online) <http://privilege.uccpages.org/>
- _____ *Spiritual Autobiography Through the Lens of Race – with John Paddock*
- _____ *Whiteness as the Norm – with Da Vita D. McCallister*
- _____ *Whiteness as Cash Value – with Traci Blackmon*
- _____ *On Being an Ally – with Stephen Ray*
- _____ Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley & Nancy Palmer Jones, eds. *Soul Work: Anti-racist Theologies in Dialogue*

12. Spiritual Life

Required:

Familiarize yourself with at least 4 of the meditation manuals from Skinner House Books

Choose one (or relevant coursework or alternative approved learning activity)

- _____ Sharon Salzberg *Faith: Trusting Your Own Deepest Experience*
- _____ UUA *Spirit of Life* (curriculum - pdf)
- _____ Scott Alexander *Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching Your Life*
- _____ Karen Armstrong *The Case for God*