**Instructions for Entering the Program**

***1. Review the Program Information on the CER Website***

Individuals or congregations interested in learning more about the Commissioned Lay Ministry Program should go to the CERG website for information: <http://www.uua.org/central-east/programs/cll>. Look over the materials carefully so that you have a good understanding of the program.

***2. Contact the Commissioned Lay Ministry Council***

Members of the CLM Council are happy to speak with any congregation or person who would like to learn more about the program, either over the phone or by arranging a visit. Don't be shy about contacting the council—it helps the entire process for the candidate, council, and congregation to be in close communication. Any member of the Central East staff can help put you in touch with the CLM Council's chairperson or regional staff program manager if you desire more information.

***3. Talk with Your Congregation's Leadership***

The Commissioned Lay Ministry Program requires that candidates be sponsored by a local congregation. This implies two things.

* First, it implies that both the congregation and the senior minister (if there is one) positively endorse the candidate. Congregations are instructed that the ideal candidate for the CLM program is someone
	+ who is already an active leader within the congregation,
	+ who would like to be more effective or assume broader responsibilities,
	+ who would give time, effort and thought to the training program, and then to additional responsibilities within the congregation, and
	+ who would be recognized and accepted as a leader by the congregation after commissioning.
* Second, the congregation's agreement to sponsor a candidate means that the congregational leadership and senior minister agree to work closely with the candidate to specify in writing the expected duties of the CLM Candidate, and to help provide the Candidate with feedback as a part of the CLM educational process.

The congregation is also expected to conduct an appropriate commissioning ceremony upon completion of the program.

As a potential applicant to the program, you need to make sure that

* your congregation and senior minister (if there is one) are willing to give you a positive endorsement,
* your congregation and minister understand their role in the process of both cultivating a CLM candidate and working with a commissioned CLM
* your congregation and minister are willing and able to work out a written agreement as to the duties to be performed by the CLM candidate according to the mutual needs, interests and expectations of congregation, senior minister, and candidate.

***4. The Application Process***

If you have learned what you can about the program, you have spoken with your congregation's leadership and have every reason to expect their endorsement, and you are still interested in the program, it is time to complete your official application by following these steps:

1. Complete your Application Form.
2. Negotiate with your church board and senior minister (if there is one) exactly what leadership roles and duties you expect to assume within the congregation as a part of your training program. Be sure also to have your Board specify what they will do to support your efforts (this can be purely moral support, or for example, it could be an agreement to help pay to send you to CLM/CLM Candidate regional meetings, purchase books from the reading list, etc.).
3. Write out the specifics of this mutual agreement on your Letter of Agreement Form, and have your congregation’s President sign it. Your letter of agreement is the central authorizing document for your participation in the program, so be sure to do this step with great care. Make sure your Board and Minister are educated about the CLM program. (Please let the Council know if representatives from the Council should visit the congregation in order to explain the program). The letter of agreement should also specify to what office or person within the congregation the CLM Candidate will be accountable for the quality of their work and for reports of their activities. (This is typically the senior minister or an associate if there is one) The CLM Council recommends a minimum of a written quarterly report; copies of these reports to also go to the CLM Liaison.
4. Return your Application Form and Congregation/CLM Agreement to Beth Casebolt, CER Communications Manager, at bcasebolt@uua.org .
5. Give the Application Reference Form to three persons who can vouch for your qualities as a potential CLM candidate. Be sure to include the senior minister of your congregation if there is one. Have your references return the completed forms directly to Beth Casebolt, bcasebolt@uua.org

***5. Interview and Acceptance into the Program***

Once the regional office has received all of your forms, they will be forwarded to the Chair and Program Manager of the CLM Council, who will schedule an interview with you at the next available meeting of the council. If geography makes it exceedingly challenging to conduct an interview with the entire council, then arrangements will be made for a sub-group of at least 2 members of the larger council to conduct the interview. **Due dates for applications are October 1 and April 1.**

At the interview, the council will be most interested in the applicant’s commitment to Unitarian Universalism and their congregation; the match between the person’s skills, style, and intended forms of service; and the good relationship between the congregation and the applicant. If the council is satisfied with the interview, that applicant is then accepted into the CLM program as an official CLM Candidate.

As soon as a Candidate is accepted into the program, that Candidate is assigned a mentor for the educational/training component of the program. The mentor is a religious professional with experience, and is most commonly an ordained and fellowshipped Unitarian Universalist minister. It is up to the Candidate to contact the mentor to arrange for times to meet.

Each CLM Candidate is also assigned a liaison--a member of the CLM council who has the responsibility of checking in with the Candidate and facilitating the Candidate's process. Your liaison will contact you prior to each regularly scheduled CLM council meeting to check on your progress. It is your responsibility to provide a summary report to your liaison describing your activities on a semi-annual basis. Between reporting periods, if you have a question about the program, or if you or your mentor require more guidance as you structure your educational experiences, don't hesitate to contact your liaison.

**Commissioned Lay Ministry**

**Application Form**

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List Academic Training (*Institutions, Dates, Degrees*)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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List Other Relevant Preparation (*Training or Experiences*)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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List Employment (*Positions held and dates, most recent first*)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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List churches and fellowships with which you have had membership. Also list any offices or positions held with the church or fellowship.

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List the names, addresses and phone numbers or emails for the three persons, and their respective roles in the congregation (e.g. Board president, minister, etc.) who will be completing and mailing directly to the CER Communications Manager office (bcasebolt@uua.org) the Commissioned Lay Ministry Application Reference Form

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**Free Response**

Please evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses, as well as your motivation for pursuing the CLM Program, by considering and responding to the following questions.

1. You would not be interested in entering the CLM Program without a deep feeling of commitment and emotion. How did these feelings develop?

2. How do you envision your role as a CLM?

3. How would you describe your leadership style?

4. What is your religious background? Were you always a UU, or how did you become one?

5. How do you think you would recognize and handle situations involving strongly felt convictions which might differ from your own?

6. How do you view CLM activities in contrast and in relationship to those of a professional minister?

7. Describe a situation in which you provided help to someone.

**CLM Application Reference Form**

Please evaluate this candidate on the following attributes below, and return via email:

1. Interest in and ability to relate to people of all ages.

2. Commitment to local church/fellowship and to Unitarian Universalism.

3. Ability to listen to others' points of view and to take them into consideration.

4. Ability to express ideas clearly.

5. Ability to take initiative and to bring others along with enthusiasm.

6. Willingness to learn.

7. Any further comments you wish to make

Name & Position (in congregation) of person providing Reference : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Person Providing Reference\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Congregation/Prospective CLM Candidate Agreement**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Name of Prospective CLM Candidate)* has applied to enter the Commissioned Lay Ministry Training program of the Central East Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. As a part of that process the CLM Council requires that the Senior Minister (if there is one), the Board, and the prospective CLM candidate to enter into a signed agreement the CLM Candidate and the Congregation.

Entering into this agreement implies that the congregation and the senior minister endorse this person as someone of good standing and that the congregational leadership recognizes this person as a leader and believes that this is a person who would make good use of this training opportunity.

Please **attach a signed and dated letter of agreement** between the CLM Candidate and the Congregation for the next three years with the following elements:

1. Name of the congregation
2. Name of the CLM Candidate
3. Office or person within the congregation to whom/which the CLM Candidate will be accountable for the quality of their work and review of reports of their activities (the CLM Council requires a written semiannual report due January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1; copies of these reports to go as well to the CLM liaison).
4. Obligations of the CLM Candidate towards the Congregation and Senior Minister
5. Congregation's responsibility towards the CLM Candidate
6. Signatures of the Minister and President
7. Signature of the CLM Candidate