Dear MID,

You have reached the final steps in the requirements for ordination. Here is what you need to know about writing your ordination paper.

**Expectations**

Your ordination paper should be an organic expression of your understanding of ministry based on your faith journey, life experience, and relationship matrix.

Rather than follow a predetermined outline, you are encouraged to use a style with which you are comfortable and which best expresses your journey. We would like to be challenged by your thinking, so you can be creative, raise questions, and express yourself freely.

Because you have already written other papers as part of the ordination process, we are not looking for an academic work of art, but we do expect your paper to demonstrate that your theology and biblical perspectives are sound. It is appropriate to discuss your movement toward mastery or growth in the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers, reflected in those original papers.

**Topics to Include**

Utilize the Plan of Formation outlines and papers as a means of integrating:

- your spiritual formation,
- your theology,
- your understanding of sacraments and sacramental authority,
- your relationship with the UCC, its polity and practices, and how that impacts your leadership in the local church and covenant with the other settings of the church,
- how using the Marks of Ministry influenced how you handled a professional conflict, challenge, or your approach to emergent theological scholarship.
- your understanding of your call and how you deal with doubt—intellectually, spiritually, or emotionally. You may share your vulnerability, concerns, and hopes as you share your movement into your sense of call.

**Guidelines**

- You are expected to work with your MID Advisor to plan and write the paper and to report your progress to the AWG. Your advisor will also need to approve the final draft that will be given to the AWG.
- The AWG needs the paper one month before meeting with you. The AWG may ask you to revise the paper before an ecclesiastical council is set up.
• Although the ordination paper is not an academic paper, use footnotes when you quote scholars. However, we are really looking for your thoughts, not the thoughts of others.
• We are not concerned about the length of your paper, but about the quality of the thinking and content. You might find that you need to write only 10 pages, but don’t exceed 25 pages. Write something that people will want to read to the end.
• The format should follow recognized formats for graduate work.
• Take delight in what you are doing.

9.21.2020