

Days of Discernment -- Written Work Prompts

This written work should be 10-14 pages in length with one-inch margins. Preferred fonts are Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri with 12-point type. Include each question/prompt within your paper (single-spaced) and respond utilizing double spacing. Your name and page number should be at the bottom of each page.

1. This is an opportunity to reflect on your life. Briefly share an overall transforming “sweep” of your history including events or “aha” moments that opened your eyes to see differently as your life was directed toward representative ministry.
2. Consider examples of leadership in ministry as recorded in the Bible and reflect on why your chosen example best mirrors your call to ordained ministry. Biblical leadership examples may be discovered through Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Deborah, Esther, Jonah, Isaiah, Mary, Matthew, Paul, Lydia, or others. How is your call being affirmed in yourself and by others?
3. Discuss the difference between the overall call of baptized believers to discipleship and the call to ordained ministry.
4. Jesus said, “*Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.*” (Mark 9:35 NRSV). Describe your understanding of a servant’s heart. How has this been evident thus far as you explore your call to ordained ministry?
5. Read Ephesians 4:11-12. How do you envision yourself as a set-apart leader who calls, equips, and empowers others for ministry?
6. (Elder Track) The Book of Discipline 2016, paragraph 335.c. 1 asks, “*Do you offer yourself without reserve to be appointed and to serve as the appointive authority may determine?*” What are the opportunities and challenges of a United Methodist pastor who itinerates? What does it mean to offer yourself “without reserve”? How does this relate to the location of appointment and pastoral compensation?

(Deacon Track) Deacons do not itinerate in the same manner yet are appointed to their places of ministry by the bishop. Describe your understanding of our itinerant system and the appointment of deacons.
7. Write about an individual you know personally who has shaped your understanding and practice of ministry. What qualities do they practice and embrace that you wish to emulate? Why?

Please come prepared to share and discuss your responses with your Discernment Team.