

## **Days of Discernment Written Work Prompts**

*Written work should be 11-13 pages in length. 12-point Times New Roman, Arial, and Calibri fonts are the preferred fonts. Document should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. Your name, along with page number, should be at the bottom of each page. Please include the text of the question in your written work.*

1. Reflect on your life. Share some life-transforming "sweep" of your history: some events or "aha" moments that opened your eyes to see differently and directed your life toward ministry.
2. Consider some significant stories of leadership in ministry from the Bible (i.e., Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Deborah, Esther, Jonah, Isaiah, Mary, Matthew, Paul, Lydia, etc.). Which story best mirrors your call to ordained ministry? Why? How is your call being affirmed in yourself and by others?
3. Discuss the difference between the call 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, NRSVUE) 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. *The Book of Discipline* 2020/2024, in ¶324. 7 (k) asks, "Explain your understanding of the distinctive vocations of the Order of Elders and the Order of Deacons."
7. (Elder Track) *The Book of Discipline* 2020/2024, in ¶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 yet are appointed to their places of ministry by the bishop. Describe your understanding of our itinerant system and the appointment of deacons.

8. 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.*