

Candidacy Pathway: Roadmap

December 2021



Office of / Bureau de la
vocation

The United Church of Canada
L'Église Unie du Canada

Candidacy Pathway: Roadmap (December 2021)



Copyright © 2021
The United Church of Canada
L'Église Unie du Canada



The content of this resource is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial No Derivatives (by-nc-nd) Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/ca>. Any copy must include the United Church copyright notice and the Creative Commons licence.

Care has been taken to trace ownership of copyright material contained in this text. The publisher will gratefully accept any information that will enable it to rectify any reference or credit in subsequent printings.

The United Church of Canada
L'Église Unie du Canada
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 200
Toronto, ON
Canada M8X 2Y4
1-800-268-3781
united-church.ca



Supported by
Mission & Service

Contents

About This Resource	4
How to Use This Resource	4
Initial Steps and Discerning Your Call	5
<input type="checkbox"/> Become Familiar with the United Church Website.....	5
<input type="checkbox"/> Learn about the Candidacy Pathway	5
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the Resources that Guide the Journey	6
<input type="checkbox"/> Understand the Concept of Discernment	7
<input type="checkbox"/> Discern with a Mentor.....	8
<input type="checkbox"/> Discern a Stream of Ministry.....	8
<input type="checkbox"/> Discern Your Educational Path	9
<input type="checkbox"/> Discern Implications	10
Application to Meet with the Candidacy Board	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact an Office of Vocation Minister.....	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the Type of Your Initial Application	12
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit Your Initial Application.....	14
Vocational Assessment	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Receive Notice from the Office of Vocation	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Pay for the Vocational Assessment.....	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Receive a Vocational Assessment	16
<input type="checkbox"/> Respond to the Questions for Reflection.....	17
Interviews.....	18
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Your Interview.....	18
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose an Accompanier.....	18
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the Interview Process	18
Circle of Accompaniment.....	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Learn about the Circle of Accompaniment	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a Circle of Accompaniment.....	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep Track of Meetings with Your Circle of Accompaniment	20
The Ongoing Journey	21
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop Your Competency for Ministry Leadership	21
<input type="checkbox"/> Meet with your Candidacy Board	21
Celebration.....	25
Candidacy.....	25
Commissioning, Ordination, or Recognition.....	25

About This Resource

We are not alone. We live in God's world. And God's World Needs Leaders.

The United Church of Canada celebrates that God calls individuals with varying gifts and abilities to the vocation of ministry in order to faithfully lead the church in living out its purpose for the sake of a broken world.

How to Use This Resource

This is an exciting time on your faith journey. We are grateful that you are taking the initiative to explore your sense of call to ministry leadership.

This resource provides you with checklists to follow and useful information on how to pursue the requirements of the Candidacy Pathway. You may wish to check off the boxes as you go to track your progress.

If you need help or guidance along the way, please contact an Office of Vocation Minister.

Initial Steps and Discerning Your Call

□ Become Familiar with the United Church Website

As you make your way through this resource, you will see references to other documents and resources that play a role in the Candidacy Pathway process. They are available on the [United Church website](#).

Many are located on the [Handbooks and Guidelines](#) page. You can find others by using the search function in the top right-hand corner on the main page. The Leadership tab at the top of the main page navigates to pages related to entering ministry.

Begin exploring the website to locate the resources you'll require.

□ Learn about the Candidacy Pathway

The Candidacy Pathway is the process you must follow to become a minister in The United Church of Canada. Please familiarize yourself with the policy so you understand what guides the process. The document that outlines the policy, [Candidacy Pathway: Policy](#), is on the website.

The introductory video on the Candidacy Pathway webpage offers an overview of the Candidacy Pathway. It's a good idea to start by watching this [video](#).

The Candidacy Pathway includes seven phases, which are not sequential or linear. Each person will journey differently through the pathway. The seven phases are

Call Forth: discernment, mentor, Community of Faith

Identify: Does the person show promise and suitability for ministry?

Accompany: The Candidacy Board walks with the Candidates throughout their process; a Circle of Accompaniment (chosen by the Candidate) also supports the Candidate

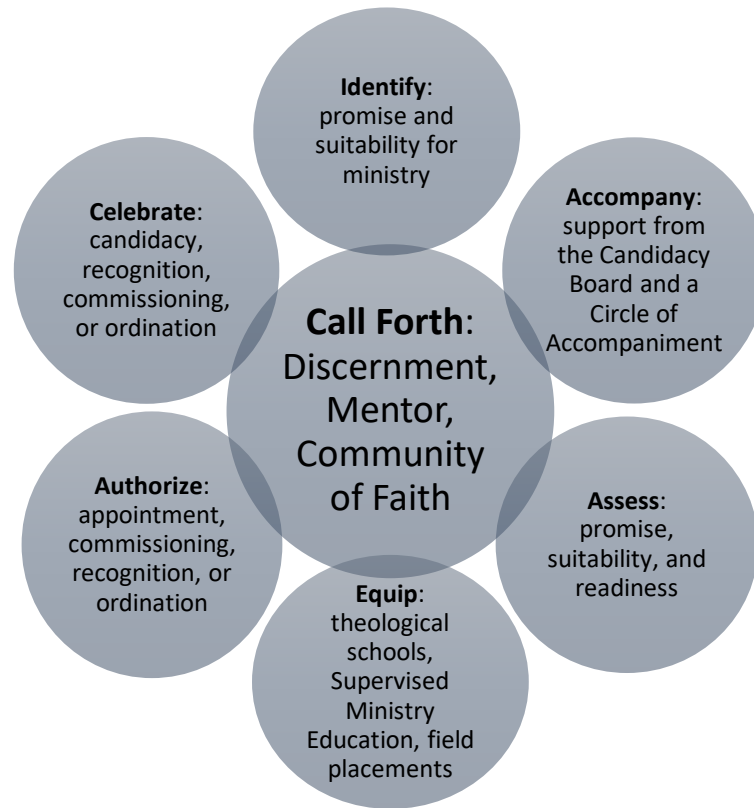
Equip: theological schools; Supervised Ministry Education (Education Supervisors and Lay Supervision Teams); field placements

Assess: for promise; suitability to be a Candidate; readiness for Supervised Ministry Education; readiness for recognition, commissioning, ordination

Authorize: for a Supervised Ministry Education appointment or another appointment; for commissioning; recognition, or ordination

Celebrate: Candidacy; recognition, commissioning, or ordination

The Candidacy Board oversees the Candidacy Pathway process. Throughout your journey you will meet with the Candidacy Board and are responsible for following their direction.



□ Review the Resources that Guide the Journey

Numerous additional documents describe the other aspects and requirements of the Candidacy Pathway; you should refer to them as needed on your journey.

- [**Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice**](#) – provides the standards that ministry personnel must follow. In your application to the Candidacy Board you will be asked if you agree to follow these standards. In order to answer this question truthfully, you must review this document.
- [**Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership**](#) – identifies the competencies the church requires in its ministry leaders. These learning outcomes will be used in your education and formation to shape learning goals and to assess your competence for ministry leadership.
- [**Candidacy Board Resources**](#) – includes best practices for the Candidacy Board to fulfill their role of overseeing the process. When you have an interview with the Candidacy Board you may want to review this document.
- [**Circle of Accompaniment**](#) – provides information on the role of the Circle of Accompaniment and resources for its members. When the Candidacy Board indicates you should establish your Circle of Accompaniment, refer to this document.
- [**Supervised Ministry Education**](#) – describes the requirements for Supervised Ministry Education and how they can be accomplished.

- [Learning Covenant](#) – offers resources for those involved in Supervised Ministry Education (SME). If you pursue the ordained stream or the designated lay ministry stream, this resource will come into play once you begin your SME..

□ Understand the Concept of Discernment

Your daily life includes making decisions. It's called discernment when you seek to involve God in your decision-making. Discernment is often described as prayerful or faithful decision-making.

Discernment is also the spiritual practice of identifying the ways in which the Spirit is at work in your life. It involves taking the time to reflect, notice, and attend to where the Spirit is leading you. It is an ongoing and lifelong journey of seeking to live faithfully.

Discernment starts by asking questions and continues by including the Spirit in exploring the answers. It hinges on this main question: what is God's hope for my life?

Discernment is done in community and is shaped by community. While you may feel the Spirit nudging you in particular ways, it is also important to explore this within community. Does your community affirm your understanding of your call? In what ways might the community help you to discern faithfully?

Your entire Candidacy Pathway includes discernment. When you engage the part of the process that involves the Candidacy Board, they play a crucial role to discern along with you. That's because discernment takes place in the company of others. The decisions regarding leadership of the church must be discerned within community. Candidacy Board members seek the Spirit's leading in all of the decisions that need to be made on the pathway.

How to Discern

- **Attend a Discernment Retreat:** If you wish to immerse yourself in discerning your call, participating in a Discernment Retreat is the best option. Information on upcoming opportunities is located on the Discerning a Call to Lead page on the website.
- **Read, pray, explore:** The Discerning a Call to Lead page on the website includes resources for discernment including books, videos, and spiritual practices.
- **Walk yourself through the items below:** At this initial stage of your journey a variety of factors require prayerful consideration and particular questions need to be explored. The following items do not need to be done in a particular order, and some of the items in the list intersect with each other. Just see how this process is unfolding for you and where the Spirit is leading you in your discernment. Take the time you need to discern your call to ministry leadership. Feel free to approach it in a way that works for you.

□ Discern with a Mentor

A mandatory part of your pathway is to meet with at least one minister or Elder in The United Church of Canada. This person may be a diaconal, designated lay, or ordained minister. If you hope to serve in an Indigenous community of faith, you can meet with an Elder.

First, identify the person you would like to meet with. You will see later in this document that your mentor writes a letter as part of your initial application. Ensure that the individual is aware of this requirement.

You can meet with your mentor as many times as needed for your mutual discernment. Focus your time together on the following:

- Share the story of your faith journey and ask your mentor for feedback.
- Talk about how you feel God is calling you to ministry leadership and ask whether your mentor affirms this direction for your life.
- Ask questions about what it is like to be ministry personnel in the church and examine whether the reality matches your understanding. Discern together whether this role matches your gifts.

Information for the Mentor

You've been asked to mentor someone who is prayerfully discerning a call to ministry. This is a privilege and a gift. Thank you for considering this important role.

When the person is ready to submit an application to meet with a Candidacy Board, they will ask you to write a Mentor Letter. This letter will include the following:

- observations concerning the person's call to faith, theology, and/or call to ministry
- a description of the person's involvement and leadership in church and/or community
- comments on the person's spiritual gifts and gifts for ministry
- comments on possible challenges facing the person

The letter must be submitted using the appropriate online form, which will be provided once the applicant submits their own application.

□ Discern a Stream of Ministry

There are three streams of ministry in The United Church of Canada. You must carefully discern which stream God is calling you to.

You must watch the Streams of Ministry video in order to have accurate information on each of the three streams. A link to the video can be found on the Discerning a Call to Lead page of the website.

If you attend a Discernment Retreat, this will be part of the event's agenda.

Watch the video and reflect on the following questions:

- How does your understanding of your call to ministry relate to the various streams of ministry?
- What is your understanding of the difference between a call to ordered ministry (a call to the whole church) versus a call to designated lay ministry (a call to the local church for a specific time)?
- What stream of ministry do you feel called to at this time? Why?

Here are further suggestions for exploring the streams of ministry:

- Watch the video and reflect on the questions with your mentor.
- Interview ministers in each of the streams to inquire what they find meaningful about their chosen stream. Ask them to help you understand their stream of ministry and to discern which one you are called to.
- Review the 2012 [Statement on Ministry](#) to further reflect on your call to a particular ministry stream.

Discern Your Educational Path

The journey to ministry leadership requires extensive commitment to formation and competency development. During this time of initial discernment, you must learn about the various educational requirements and explore how to accomplish them.

[Candidacy Pathway: Policy](#) outlines the requirements by stream of ministry. In order to address any questions, you are encouraged to meet with someone who is knowledgeable about the educational requirements for each stream. See the following chart for the websites of the United Church schools to learn out about the programs they offer.

Reflect on the following questions as you research the various educational programs:

- What educational path will be best for you?
- What factors influence your choice of educational programs? What factors limit or restrict your consideration of an educational program?
- How are you discerning the best program for you?

The ordained and designated lay ministry streams also include Supervised Ministry Education (SME) as a part of the Equip phase of Candidacy Pathway. At this time of your exploration and discernment of your educational path, you need to be aware of the SME requirements. These are available in [Supervised Ministry Education](#).

United Church Theological School	Programs of Study	Website
Atlantic School of Theology Halifax, NS	3-year on-campus Master of Divinity degree and a 5-year Master of Divinity summer distance program	astheology.ns.ca
Centre for Christian Studies Winnipeg, MB	Diploma in Diaconal Ministries	ccsonline.ca
Emmanuel College Toronto, ON	3-year Master of Divinity degree	emmanuel.utoronto.ca
Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre Beausejour, MB	Diploma in Indigenous Ministry (for ordained, diaconal, and designated lay ministry)	sandysaulteaux.ca
St. Andrew's College Saskatoon, SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-year Master of Divinity degree includes a ministry residency and a unit of clinical pastoral education • 3-year Designated Lay Ministry program 	usask.ca/stu/standrews
The United Theological College/Le Séminaire Uni Montreal, QC	3-year Master of Divinity degree	utc.ca
Vancouver School of Theology Vancouver, BC	3-year Master of Divinity degree	vst.edu

Discern Implications

Ministry is a commitment that affects all aspects of your life. During this time of discernment, explore the questions below and discuss the implications with your friends and family.

- What are the ways in which your current life commitments might be affected by becoming a minister?

- What are the short- and long-term implications of pursuing theological education and earning a minister's salary? On you and your family?

Application to Meet with the Candidacy Board

When you are ready to meet with the Candidacy Board to further discern your call to ministry, you must submit an application. This section provides the steps to follow and information to guide your way.

Contact an Office of Vocation Minister

Their contact information is on the United Church website. Choose one based on your own context. One Office of Vocation Minister serves the national Indigenous church and six Office of Vocation Ministers serve particular geographical areas across the country. If you are Francophone, please contact the Office of Vocation Minister for Québec and Eastern Ontario.

The Office of Vocation Minister will talk with you to ensure you're ready to submit an application. They will then give you access to the online portal called ChurchHub, which is where you access forms, submit documents, and track your whole Candidacy Pathway process.

Determine the Type of Your Initial Application

The Candidacy Pathway is not a cookie-cutter process that unfolds in the same way for every person. You must discern the best way forward for your circumstances. As you discern the steps in this section, please seek assistance from an Office of Vocation Minister.

During your Candidacy Pathway process, the Candidacy Board assesses for promise, suitability, and readiness. These assessments may be spread out over time and take place during several interviews, or they may be accomplished during one interview. This partly depends on the type of initial application you submit to the Candidacy Board. Determining the extent of your first application is based on where you are in your discernment, the program of study you intend to pursue, and the direction of the Office of Vocation Minister.

There are three possible scenarios for the type of application you can submit in advance of your first interview with a Candidacy Board:

Scenario 1: Promise

If you are still exploring the questions in the Discernment section above and wish to seek the wisdom and guidance of the Candidacy Board to discern the answers, only submit the application for Promise. It includes the following:

- Police Records Check - levels 1/2 (vulnerable sector) checks dated within 6 months
- Mentor Letter
- 2 Letters of Reference
- Work and Education History
- Narrative Responses to Questions

Police Records Checks

Review [Police Records Checks](#), which includes additional information including your responsibility for annual filing.

During the first interview, the Candidacy Board uses the following criteria to assess your promise for candidacy:

- You can articulate your call to ministry and to a particular stream of ministry.
- You have received affirmation from others in the church who support your call to ministry.
- You have the capacity to develop the gifts and attributes required for ministry leadership, including a deep spiritual life and self-knowledge as articulated in [Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership](#).
- You possess the willingness to learn and grow.

After your first interview, the Candidacy Board determines the next steps on your pathway. This will include submitting the application for suitability and completing a vocational assessment at a later date. (Information about the vocational assessment is found later in this document.)

Scenario 2: Promise and Suitability

If you have clear answers to the questions posed in the Discernment section then, in addition to submitting the application for Promise, you may also submit the application for Suitability. In order to complete the application for Suitability you must

- a) *have been actively involved in the United Church for the last 24 months;*
- b) *be a member of the United Church;*
- c) *have completed mandatory trainings;*
- d) *agree to become a member of the United Church pension plan and group insurance plan upon eligibility for enrolment; and*
- e) *complete a vocational assessment.*

The mandatory trainings are offered in a webinar format through United in Learning. Please visit www.united-in-learning.com to register for and complete the trainings. Currently there are two mandatory trainings: Racial Justice (sessions 1 & 2); and Personal and Professional Boundaries for Church Leaders (Intro to Boundaries).

Once you submit the application for Suitability you will be instructed to complete a vocational assessment. In this scenario, where you are requesting to be assessed for both Promise and Suitability at the same time, the vocational assessment must be completed before your first interview. (Information about the vocational assessment is provided below.) The vocational assessment process takes at least three months to complete. It is your responsibility to respond to the vocational assessment process in a timely manner; delays on your end may result in a delay in your interview date with the Candidacy Board.

During your first interview, the Candidacy Board assesses your promise for candidacy following the criteria outlined in the Promise section above. They also assess for Suitability based on the following criteria:

- You have a well-reasoned plan for pursuing theological education and have started to identify potential learning goals.
- The vocational assessment affirms your strengths for ministry leadership and identifies some achievable goals for further learning and development.

After your first interview, the Candidacy Board may approve you as a candidate or they will outline your next steps on the pathway in order for you to be approved as a candidate or they may not make you a candidate and will affirm your gifts for lay leadership.

Terminology

Once you have submitted an application to meet with a Candidacy Board you are referred to as an *applicant*. When the Candidacy Board determines that you possess promise and suitability for ministry leadership, you are referred to as a *candidate*.

Scenario 3: Promise, Suitability, and Readiness for Supervised Ministry Education (SME)

In addition to submitting the two applications as outlined above, the initial application to the Candidacy Board may include a request for assessment of readiness for SME. This scenario applies if you have already completed theological education or if you intend to enrol in a program of study that incorporates SME, such as the designated lay ministry program.

After submitting all three applications, you will be instructed to complete the vocational assessment before your first interview.

During your first interview, the Candidacy Board assesses your Promise and Suitability for candidacy following the criteria outlined in the two previous sections. They also assess for Readiness for SME based on the following criteria:

- You have sufficient education or training to undertake the responsibilities of ministry.
- You have identified potential learning goals for the SME experience in relation to the resources [Learning Outcomes](#) and [Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice](#).
- You have given thought to the type of ministry setting or context where your learning goals may be best fulfilled.

The Candidacy Board determines the number of interviews on a case-by-case basis in order to approve you as a candidate and to authorize readiness for SME.

Submit Your Initial Application

Please follow the instructions on the application forms on ChurchHub. If you need assistance, please contact an Office of Vocation Minister.

The Candidacy Board

Following receipt of your initial application you will be assigned to a Candidacy Board. There are seven Candidacy Boards across the country. The initial application invites you to identify which Candidacy Board you would like to be assigned to. Your choice may be based on where you live, where you anticipate going to school, if your first language is French, or if you intend to serve Indigenous communities of faith. The Office of Vocation makes the final determination as to which Candidacy Board you will be assigned to.

Here are the names of the Candidacy Boards:

Mountain

Prairie

North & Central Ontario

Southwestern Ontario

Quebec & Eastern Ontario

Atlantic

Indigenous

Choose the Quebec & Eastern Ontario Candidacy Board if you want to communicate in French. The Indigenous Candidacy Board is for those who intend to serve Indigenous communities of faith and students at the Sandy Sauteaux Spiritual Centre.

Vocational Assessment

The vocational assessment is a tool that affirms your strengths and identifies areas for growth and development with respect to the practice of ministry. It helps to discern your fit for the role of ministry personnel.

The vocational assessment is one of many pieces used by the Candidacy Board to identify and discern your promise and suitability for ministry and your readiness for ministry leadership. Areas for development and growth in relation to the Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership are identified. These areas of growth inform your learning goals throughout your pathway. The assessment is conducted by a third-party organization called Six Oaks Consulting.

The following is your checklist for the vocational assessment requirement:

Receive Notice from the Office of Vocation

The Office of Vocation determines when you must complete the vocational assessment. It is typically initiated several months before your interview for suitability.

After you submit your application for suitability you will receive a notification from the Office of Vocation that it is time for you to complete a vocational assessment.

Pay for the Vocational Assessment

Two-thirds of the cost of the vocational assessment is paid by the General Council Office. The remaining one-third of the cost (\$450) is your responsibility to pay.

When you receive the notification from the Office of Vocation, you will be asked if you wish to pay in one lump sum or if you would like to set up a payment schedule to make smaller payments over time. You will then receive an invoice from the General Council Office.

Applicants may seek assistance from their home community of faith to help pay for the cost of the vocational assessment.

Receive a Vocational Assessment

Once you submit a payment, the Office of Vocation notifies Six Oaks Consulting that you require a vocational assessment. Six Oaks Consulting will contact you to make the necessary arrangements.

Six Oaks Consulting will then send the vocational assessment report to the Office of Vocation and it will be added to your documents in ChurchHub.

□ Respond to the Questions for Reflection

After your vocational assessment you must complete the Vocational Assessment Self-Reflection that is found in the Vocational Assessment section of ChurchHub. These questions for reflection are based on your learnings from the vocational assessment.

You must complete this step before your interview with the Candidacy Board.

Beyond ordination, commissioning, or recognition, you can continue to refer to your vocational assessment in discerning your fit for a particular call or context. In this way, the vocational assessment invests in ministry personnel vitality in the long term.

Interviews

☐ Prepare for Your Interview

The Candidacy Board follows the guidelines and best practices in [Candidacy Board Resources](#). You may wish to review this handbook in advance of your interview since it includes sample interview questions you can review to assist your preparation.

☐ Choose an Accompanier

Applicants and candidates bring an *accompanier* with them to interviews with the Candidacy Board. An *accompanier* is someone who knows you and your faith journey reasonably well but is not:

- a spouse or partner
- relative
- another applicant or candidate
- your minister
- someone involved in your academic evaluation (this includes professors and instructors at theological schools and programs as well as supervisors in ministry)
- someone who is in a position of authority over you, OR you over them
- a member of the congregation that you may be currently serving as a leader

The accompanier will support you through the process, be a silent witness to the interview, offer observations to the interview team when invited, can take notes when the Candidacy Board communicates their decisions and directions to you, and assist you in debriefing after the experience.

☐ Review the Interview Process

The day and time for your interview will be communicated in advance. Plan to dedicate a four-hour block of time for the interview process, which will unfold as follows:

- The interview team reviews your application before you arrive; they design your interview based on your written information. In advance of the interview date you may be asked to prepare a presentation or a case study to deliver to the interview team.
- An interview team of 3–5 people will meet with you for approximately 1.5 hours. Expect to be sharing with people who are genuinely interested in you and what you have to say.
- In a break halfway through the interview, both you and the interview team will assess how the interview is progressing.
- When the interview is over you will leave the room. Your accompanier may be invited to meet briefly with the interview team to share any concerns and whether they believe the interview team experienced an accurate reflection of who you are.
- Based on both your initial written information and the interview itself, the interview team takes time to develop their recommendations.

- Several interviews will be taking place at the same time with different interview teams. When all of the interview teams have completed their recommendations, the whole Candidacy Board meets to hear the recommendation of each interview team and to make a formal decision.
- You and your accompanier are invited to join the Candidacy Board to receive their decision and their guidance regarding your next steps. You may ask questions for clarification.
- A written record of the decision, direction, and guidance of the Candidacy Board is shared with you within two weeks of an interview.

Circle of Accompaniment

□ Learn about the Circle of Accompaniment

Refer to the handbook [Circle of Accompaniment](#) for more information on the purpose and role of the Circle of Accompaniment.

□ Establish a Circle of Accompaniment

At the appropriate time on your pathway, you and your Candidacy Board must determine a suitable format for your Circle of Accompaniment. Factors such as your chosen ministry stream and the requirements of your program of study, which may already include some systems of support, are taken into account. The following are two possible formats:

Group Format: The Circle of Accompaniment may be a small group of people, perhaps four or five, who gathers together for regular meetings.

Individual Format: The circle may be made up of individuals who are identified to fill particular supporting roles with whom you meet with one-on-one. Put differently, the circle may be a group of dispersed people who surround and accompany you in specific ways. The relationships that form this type of Circle of Accompaniment may include

- a spiritual director—or Elder, if preparing for ministry within the Indigenous context—to focus on ongoing discernment, personal awareness, and identity
- a mentor who is well versed in the requirements of the Candidacy Pathway and of your chosen ministry stream, who helps you to navigate your journey
- a person who helps you shape your learning goals and who provides feedback in relation to your ongoing growth and development

You are responsible for inviting people to be part of your Circle of Accompaniment. Follow the guidelines provided in [Circle of Accompaniment](#).

□ Keep Track of Meetings with Your Circle of Accompaniment

The type of support that you require during your pathway will ebb and flow and may change over time. The Candidacy Board is interested in ensuring that your pathway includes adequate and effective support. Your ongoing journey will include updating your Candidacy Board regarding the work of the Circle of Accompaniment.

ChurchHub includes a place for you to keep track of your involvement or encounters with your Circle of Accompaniment.

The Ongoing Journey

Once you meet with the Candidacy Board for your first interview, the remainder of your journey is guided by the Candidacy Board. They provide you with your required steps based on your unique circumstances. You are required to follow the direction of your Candidacy Board. For this reason, the remaining checklist is quite broad.

□ Develop Your Competency for Ministry Leadership

You are responsible for demonstrating growth in relation to suitability and readiness for ministry leadership to the Candidacy Board throughout your pathway. Ensure that you complete the requirements in the **Equip** phase of the pathway including the required program of study for your chosen stream of ministry. This phase also includes Supervised Ministry Education, field education placements, and/or other structured learning opportunities, depending on your stream of ministry and your own particular learning needs. Focus your growth and development on specific learning goals based on [Learning Outcomes for Ministry Leadership](#). ChurchHub includes space for theological school reports, assessment on the Learning Outcomes, and templates to keep track of your learning goals.

In the Equip phase of Candidacy Pathway:

1. *Applicants and candidates are equipped to live out God's call to ministry leadership through ongoing formation, spiritual growth, and development.*
2. *There are two components to the education and other preparation for ministry:*
 - a) *Credentialing: acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for effective ministry leadership, and beginning the development of the "habits" or "arts" or ministry and that lead to credentialing; and*
 - b) *Competency: the development, through substantial experience in the field, of the "habits" or "arts" of ministry that leads to the deepening of competency for effective ministry leadership.*
3. *The United Church needs ministers who are trained for ministry in the United Church and who have knowledge and an appreciation of the United Church's polity, ethos, traditions, and theology.*
4. *The United Church relies on the theological schools related to the United Church to provide the training, knowledge, and appreciation required for ministry in the United Church.*

□ Meet with your Candidacy Board

The Candidacy Board can interview you at any time during your pathway. They may want to check in, address concerns, and provide guidance or support.

You can also request to meet with your Candidacy Board at any point of your pathway.

The **Assess** phase of Candidacy Pathway continues throughout your theological education and formation for ministry, including field placements and/or Supervised Ministry Education appointments. There are several different interviews that are part of this phase of Candidacy Pathway. The Candidacy Board conducts interviews following the minimum guidelines in the chart on the next page, based on the program of study you are pursuing, and where you are in your individual Pathway.

Program of Study	Type and Purpose of Interviews	Scheduling of Interviews
Atlantic School of Theology: Summer Distance Program	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy	Beginning of process
	Readiness for SME	Before third year of program
	Benchmark: assess progress on learning goals and competency development based on Learning Outcomes	Recommended before fifth year of program but not required
	Readiness for Ordination	Final year of program
Centre for Christian Studies (Diaconal Stream)	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy	Beginning of process
	Benchmark: assess progress on learning goals and the focus of learning goals for competency development based on Learning Outcomes	Before third field placement
	Readiness for Commissioning	Final year of program
Designated Lay Ministry Program	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy Readiness for SME	Beginning of process
	Benchmark: assess progress on learning goals and the focus of learning goals for competency development based on Learning Outcomes	Halfway through program
	Readiness for Recognition	Final year of program
Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy Readiness for SME (for ordination and DLM streams)	Beginning of process
	Benchmark: assess progress on learning goals and the focus of learning goals for competency development based on Learning Outcomes	DLM: Halfway through program Diaconal or ordained: before fourth year of program
	Readiness for Commissioning, Ordination, or Recognition	Once all requirements are nearly complete—typically at least 4 months before anticipated date of celebration

Program of Study	Type and Purpose of Interviews	Scheduling of Interviews
Emmanuel College Atlantic School of Theology (non Summer Distance) United Theological College Vancouver School of Theology	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy	Beginning of process
	Readiness for SME	Typically final year of program—candidates may have reason to begin SME at an earlier time (see SME section for more details)
	Readiness for Ordination	Once all requirements are nearly complete—typically at least 4 months before anticipated ordination date
St. Andrew’s College Ministry Residency Program	Promise and Suitability for Candidacy	Beginning of process
	Readiness for SME	At the appropriate time in the program, typically after 1.5 years of (full-time) academic formation (in January-March of the year when the candidate anticipates seeking an SME appointment)
	Readiness for Ordination	Once all requirements are nearly complete—typically at least 4 months before anticipated ordination date

Celebration

Candidacy

- ❑ When you are approved as a candidate, the Office of Vocation will notify the regional council in which you live or have an appointment. The regional council may choose to make you a corresponding member (if you do not have an appointment). The regional council celebrates new candidates at their annual meeting.
- ❑ Once the Candidacy Board approves you as a candidate, you are given access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP). Information regarding this service is found on the website. You will receive a notification from the Office of Vocation regarding your enrollment.

Commissioning, Ordination, or Recognition

The regional council commissions, ordains, or recognizes at a celebration of ministries service based on receipt of the confirmation of readiness for commissioning, ordination, or recognition from the Office of Vocation, and confirmation that a covenant relationship is in place with a community of faith or offer of employment to a paid accountable/recognized ministry, as determined by the regional council.

When you get to this point in your pathway, additional information will be provided.

Remember to contact your Office of Vocation Minister when you have questions or need guidance.

Prayer for the Journey

God of the Way,

you are the road we travel,
and the sign we follow;
you are bread for the journey,
and the wine of arrival.

Guide us as we follow in your way,
holding on to each other,
reaching out to your beloved world.

And when we stray,
seek us out and find us,
set our feet on the path again,
and lead us safely home.

In the name of Jesus, our Companion, we pray. Amen.

—Janet Cawley, 1996 (*Voices United* 648), used with permission