

MANUAL FOR ORDINATION

June 2023

This Manual for Ordination is offered within the context of the whole mission and ministry of the church. It is intended as a structured guide for inquirers for ordination and others working with them in the overall journey of discernment.

The process leading to postulancy begins when the applicant and the clergy-in-charge of the congregation agree to contact the chair of the Commission on Ministry (COM). After a joint meeting (phone or face-to-face) between the applicant, clergy-in-charge and the COM Chair (or his/her/their designate from the COM), the clergy-in-charge is required to send a written formalization to the Bishop and COM of the intent to start a discernment process.

The applicant is responsible for scheduling and keeping appointments along the way, and for ensuring that all paperwork is submitted in a timely manner to the appropriate parties.

The requirements of this Manual apply to those applicants already in process. Should any changes presented in this manual adversely affect applicants in process, requirements may be waived or modified by the Bishop in consultation with COM.

For questions concerning this process
please contact the Chair of the Commission on Ministry
The Rev. Kurt C. Wiesner
385-321-1772
rector@stpauls-slc.org

The Episcopal Diocese of Utah occupies and operates upon the ancestral and traditional lands of the Ute, Goshute, Northwestern Band of Shoshone, Paiute, and Navajo.

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Ordained Ministries.....	4
Biblical, Theological and Historical Perspectives	
The Ministries of Deacons and Priests and the Call to Ordained Ministry	5
Beginning Steps in the Ordination Process.....	7
Education and Spiritual Formation.....	9
Formation for Applicants Whose Second Language is English ...	11
Applicants from Other Churches.....	13
Other Matters.....	14
Definition of Terms.....	15
Frequently Asked Questions.....	17

INTRODUCTION

This manual has been prepared by the Bishop and Commission on Ministry (COM), which is advisory to the Bishop in the entire process leading to ordination. This manual and relevant forms are available on the diocesan website: www.episcopal-ut.org.

Ordained ministries are governed by the Canons of the Church (Title III), and this manual contains the requirements for ordination in the Diocese of Utah.¹

A person who may feel called to an ordained ministry formally begins the process when the clergy-in-charge and the person agree to contact the Chair of the COM, and then the clergy-in-charge sends written formalization to the Bishop's office of the intent to start a discernment process. Discernment and testing of a call will continue in many other steps and stages along the way.

The entire process takes patience, energy and commitment. One can feel quite vulnerable and lonely being questioned by other persons and groups along the way. Therefore, it is recommended that one have the companionship of a spiritual director or friend who is outside the process.

One should also remember that the Holy Spirit works through the church—through others—as well as through oneself. We all serve for the sake of Christ's church. Discernment of call is an ongoing process involving the applicant, the Bishop, the COM, the Standing Committee, the vestry, the parish discernment committee, and the clergy-in-charge of the congregation. A person entering the process has no guarantee that it will end with ordination, but everyone working on the discernment pledges to be as transparent as possible concerning the applicant's process, treating the applicant with kindness, respect, and dignity.

¹ The Canons of The Episcopal Church may be found at www.churchpublishing.org/general_convention/

ORDAINED MINISTRIES

Biblical Roots

The biblical basis for ordained (or ordered) ministry derives from the Lord's commissioning of the twelve apostles, as referenced in all three of the synoptic gospels. The continuity of apostolic authority takes on even greater significance and responsibility after Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-13). However, the titles and patterns of local ministry in the newly founded churches varied as evidenced in other New Testament books and early documents of the church.²

Anglican Tradition

Unlike most churches formed at the time of the Reformation, the Church of England continued the Catholic tradition of ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons in the church. That historic practice continues in The Episcopal Church USA, and in other provinces of the Anglican Communion.

However, such persons were (or are) selected for these ministries, individual calls always come within communities of Christian faith. The process leading to ordination continues to change over time. While the details change, the process is embedded in community discernment.

The Episcopal Church (TEC)

In The Episcopal Church, the ministry of baptized lay persons has recently been emphasized and encouraged more than in other provinces of the Anglican Communion, and the Baptismal Covenant sets out clear expectations of our people.

Still, we do ordain deacons and priests who have been selected through their diocesan ordination process and educated to serve in those capacities.

As our ecclesiastical authority is grounded in the General Convention of the church, lay and ordained people have a say in establishing the norms and patterns of our province. We are an adaptive faith community. The Anglican tradition has a rich intellectual heritage, from which we equip our potential clergy. The primary point of this education is to ensure that Episcopal deacons and priests are able to teach the people they serve about their church, and facilitate deep discussion, contemplation, and action concerning the living and sharing of their faith.

² For a brief outline of the history of ordained ministries, see The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, *Orders and Ordination*, p. 1188.

THE MINISTRIES OF DEACONS AND PRIESTS³ and THE CALL TO ORDINATION

The Diaconate

The deacon's role has both symbolic and functional dimensions. The Greek word "Diakonos" means "servant," "minister," or "agent." Deacons are therefore primary reminders that we are a servant church. They enable all the baptized to claim their authority as ministers of Christ in the church and in the world.

Deacons interpret the needs of the world to the church and brings those concerns into the center of the gathered Episcopal community. Deacons are not the sole workers that the Church provides to the larger community. They work with priests, Bishops and concerned laypeople. They lead, equip, inform and empower the whole church for that work.

In the liturgy, the deacon proclaims the Gospel, assists at the Table, and sends the assembly out to love and serve in Christ's name.

In this diocese, "Deacons" are primarily understood to be vocational (those for whom the diaconate is their calling). The modifier "transitional" refers to those who are ordained deacons on their way to becoming priests, as required by our canons. It is expected that transitional deacons respect the order of the Diaconate and learn as much as they can during their transitional period from those called to the Diaconate.

Diaconal assignments are made by the bishop, whether to parishes or other faith communities. Deacons also participate in the governance of the Church.

The Priesthood

The priest's role also has symbolic and functional dimensions. To be a priest, one must have the character and substance to be for the Church a role model and a conduit of grace to the people of God.

The locus of a priest's responsibility is the parish, mission, hospital, educational institution, prison or other institutional structure within which the Word is preached, the sacraments administered, and the faithful are equipped for their service in the church and in the world.

The order of priesthood is an extension of the Bishop's ministry as chief pastor and overseer. Priests have a place in the councils of the church (diocesan and general conventions). Within their communities they preach the gospel, declare God's forgiveness, celebrate Holy Communion, and bless the people.

³ See the Book of Common Prayer, pp. 525-535, and pp. 537-547.

In all that they do, priests nourish Christ's people from the riches of his grace, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

The Call to Ordination

The Episcopal Church understands that an authentic call to ordination comes to an individual within a community of faith. It may either come first to the individual or to the community, but either way, it must be affirmed by the person involved as well as by others within their community, and the diocese.

Continual recognition and testing of a call to ordination is crucial in the process of discernment. This process is complex and requires constant reflection on the validity of the call by both the individual and the community. Thus, the process leading to ordination is very structured and thorough.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) encourages inquirers to be prayerful and patient every step of the way. We are created as diverse people, yet we are also one in Christ through our baptism, and it is important that we treat one another with care and respect.

While no definitive criteria for deacons or priests can be given at the outset of the process, individuals being considered should manifest:

- Leadership ability, a sense of inner authority, and a spiritual presence;
- Familiarity with the church community, Anglican tradition, polity and worship, as well as an understanding of our church's advocacy on social justice issues;
- Compassion, exhibiting a capacity to gather people, reconcile differences, support others in their journey and maintain community; and
- Understanding of and appreciation for diverse cultures, e.g. the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Native American, Sudanese and Latino cultures and awareness of racial, gender and socio-economic biases and prejudices.

BEGINNING STEPS IN THE ORDINATION PROCESS

- O Sensing a call to the diaconate or priesthood, a person (inquirer) should contact their clergy-in-charge to discuss what they are experiencing. The initial meeting should lead to continued reflection and further conversation with the clergy-in-charge concerning ministry in the Church. This sense of call should be discussed with family and other trusted people. It is required that before moving into the formal ordination process, the inquirer must be a communicant in good standing of an Episcopal congregation in the Diocese of Utah for at least two years;
- O At such a time where an initial discernment is completed, the inquirer and the clergy-in-charge of the congregation mutually agree to contact the chair of the Commission on Ministry (COM). After a joint meeting (Zoom or face-to-face) between the inquirer, clergy-in-charge and the COM Chair (or his/her/their designate from the COM), the clergy-in-charge is required to send a written formalization to the Bishop's office of the intent to start a discernment process. The inquirer is now an applicant.
- O The clergy-in-charge refers the applicant to the Parish Discernment Committee (PDC), or forms such a committee if there is not one. The Parish Discernment Committee begins its work with the applicant using *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community* or some other approved guidance text from the COM. The clergy-in-charge is to notify the Vestry/Bishop's Committee that a Discernment Process has begun.
- O The clergy-in-charge and applicant come to agreement over a project/ministry that expresses one of the pillars for Becoming Beloved Community, to be undertaken by the applicant within the congregation. This can be an extension of work already being administrated by the applicant. The project/ministry must involve other members of the congregation;
- O The clergy-in-charge sends the parish's written recommendation to the Bishop when the inquirer, priest, the PDC and the vestry have finished their parts in the discernment process;
- O The vestry submits a Congregational Nomination for Postulancy form to the Bishop and COM;
- O The applicant submits a one-page autobiographical statement to the COM;
- O The applicant will be invited to participate (with life-partner, if applicable) to attend the Bishop's Advisory Council on Applicants for Ministry (BACAM) with their clergy-in-charge, which includes a welcome by the Bishop and a series of interviews with the BACAM team.
- O The BACAM team makes a recommendation concerning formal interviews for postulancy:
 - o If the recommendation is "no" or "not yet", the COM Chair meets with the applicant and their clergy-in-charge for discussion.

- o If the recommendation is “yes”, the applicant and their clergy-in-charge are notified of the recommendation to be interviewed by the COM. Before this interview, the applicant will need to complete medical, psychological and background checks as arranged by the Diocesan office. There will be a financial cost from the applicant to complete these checks.
- O The COM interviews the applicant and makes a formal recommendation to the Bishop concerning postulancy;
- O The applicant meets with the Bishop;
- O The Bishop notifies the applicant of the decision to grant postulancy;
- O COM members known as “shepherds” are assigned to each postulant;
- O The postulant makes preparations for education and formation in consultation with the Bishop;
- O The sponsoring congregation pledges financial support to the postulant;
- O The postulant carries out the portfolio requirements as approved by the Bishop, Standing Committee, and COM;
- O The postulant writes Ember Day letters to the Bishop and checks in as agreed with his/her/their COM shepherd.

The postulant must always keep in mind that the process toward ordination is subject to ongoing discernment by the postulant and the Church. Being “in the process” has no predetermined time frame and may be postponed or terminated by the Bishop if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the postulant or the Church.

EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

An applicant for ordination in the Diocese of Utah must have completed the minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Individuals with exceptional circumstances may be asked to arrange to meet with the Bishop and selected members of the COM, on a case-by-case basis, to determine if this requirement may be waived or modified.

Ordained ministry requires well-developed communication skills including reading, writing, and speaking in one's native language. The abilities to research, teach, organize, and lead are important as well. Remedial coursework in language skills in English or in other native language, requiring specialized instruction may be recommended.

Individuals seeking ordination to the priesthood are expected to complete a Master of Divinity degree. Preferably this is accomplished by attending a three-year residential seminary or, if approved by the Bishop, an online or hybrid version of their study (usually a four-year program) that also earns that degree. Earning a Master of Divinity does not guarantee future ordination.

The postulant should research programs to find those that best match his/her/their educational needs. The postulant should also visit programs in person or have extended discussion with each prospective seminary to better make an informed choice. Costs can be considerable and should be well researched before starting. Also, ordination may not lead to paid employment. Many clergy are bi-vocational. In making the seminary decision, wide discussion needs to be made with family members, mentors, the priest in charge, other clergy, spiritual directors, the COM and the Bishop. The Bishop must approve the postulant's educational plan.

For those pursuing ordination to the Diaconate, the Diocese of Utah offers a local program through *The Tuttle School for Discipleship and Ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Utah*. This is a two-year program in diaconal studies, adapted from the Iona curriculum of the Seminary of the Southwest (SSW). The program combines academic study, practical experience, and spiritual formation so as to provide the Diocese with ministers who are holistically prepared to serve the Church. Students who complete the program earn a Certificate of Diaconal Studies from SSW. The competencies and learning outcomes for the Tuttle School are currently those of the Association for Episcopal Deacons (AED) (2017).

It is also important that all postulants for Holy Orders engage in spiritual disciplines, the most important of which is prayer. It is with God that we discover the most important truths about ourselves and come to trust God's never-ending compassion for us.

Any change in relationship/marriage status, at any point in the process, must be discussed with the Bishop. The Bishop might pause the process for recommended counseling or other action. Privacy will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

In the Diocese of Utah, all candidates for ordination to either the diaconate or the priesthood, are required to have completed

a) one unit of Accredited Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) prior to ordination or alternative option approved by the Bishop.

b) two semesters or equivalent of field placement. Especially for those being trained locally, this placement cannot be in the applicant's home congregation.

It is also strongly recommended that the candidate complete the Education for Ministry (EFM) four-year theological program early in the discernment process, before formal study toward ordination.

Reporting Requirements and Steps to Completion

The postulant/candidate should comply with ongoing reporting requirements during the entire process. Diocesan staff and COM shepherds will be available to help with completing the needed documentation; however, the postulant/candidate is the person primarily responsible to ensure timely record updates.

Requirements

1. Ember Day letters to Bishop (see "Other Matters" for dates)
2. Periodic interviews with the Bishop and the COM
3. Submission of grades and other assessments of academic work as the work is completed, including Middler evaluation.
4. Submission of evaluations and reports of completion of ACPE, field placements, internships, General Ordination Exams (priest only) and other relevant experiences
5. Portfolio completion, showing proficiency in all canonical areas, required by the Canons of The Episcopal Church
6. Candidacy letters from the parish vestry and priest in charge
7. Candidacy interviews with Bishop, COM, and the Standing Committee
8. Ordination interviews with the Bishop, COM, and the Standing Committee

A Transitional Deacon must receive formal approval from the COM and the Standing Committee before the Bishop may ordain them to the priesthood.

FORMATION FOR APPLICANTS WHOSE SECOND LANGUAGE IS ENGLISH

Jesus commissioned his apostles to go and make disciples of all people. The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Utah seek to carry out this injunction of our Lord in numerous ways. Two of those means are reflected in this manual. The Diocese seeks to raise up lay and ordained leaders for faith communities in which English is not the native language of the congregants. Current efforts have focused on the Native American population, the growing Latino population in the Diocese and the increasing South Sudanese community. As the demographics of Utah continue to evolve, other such ministry opportunities will inevitably arise.

Diocesan efforts try to both nurture leaders to serve specifically in these communities and to raise up leaders from these communities who can serve a wider church population through other specialized ministries such as hospital chaplaincies, prison work or seminary teaching, to name but a few.

Whichever ordained ministry path (diaconal or priestly) a candidate pursues, the candidate will have to meet the requirements specified by the Canons of the Episcopal Church (Title III).

If deemed necessary, study of the English Language in order to improve fluency will be undertaken concurrently with the other required academic work. Any language study program will be considered completed at such time as the Bishop determines that sufficient working knowledge of English has been achieved. The Bishop may require that the study of English be continued throughout postulancy and candidacy, and may even recommend it after ordination.

Aspects of the Formation Process:

- 1 In interviews and all meetings with commissions and committees throughout the process, the applicant may request that a person fluent in his/her/their first language be present as translator/interpreter.
- 2 All other provisions of the present diocesan procedures for pre-postulancy are to be followed. Any written material prepared by the applicant may be in that person's first language (with adequate provision made for translation.)
- 3 The training programs include formal academic work, field education, Title IV training, anti-racism training, local cultural studies, and CPE experience.
- 4 In Field Education, persons training for ethnic ministry will be permitted to fulfill their field education requirement in their own congregations, if adequate supervision can be provided. Supervised field education in centers approved by the bishop is required for the full term of postulancy and candidacy. Evaluations

by the supervisor are to be submitted directly to the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry.

- 5 Ordained ministry requires well-developed communication skills including reading, writing, and speaking in one's native language and in English. The abilities to research, teach, organize and lead are important as well, as noted in the previous section on Educational and Spiritual Formation.
- 6 As noted earlier in this Manual, candidates must show competency in the seven canonical areas prescribed by the Church and Diocesan Canons. In addition, certain other requirements must be met. They are:
 - An academic evaluation by an appropriate person from the educational program undertaken by the postulant.
 - A functional evaluation from the field education supervisor.
 - An evaluation from the supervisor of the hospital (or other) Chaplaincy program.

As the opportunity exists, the postulant will take summer classes at seminaries that offer programs for further training.

We understand that each person has different gifts and different abilities. It is our hope that as we discern vocations within faith communities where English is not the first language, that each candidate will be able to find his or her own specific path toward ordination whether through seminary or through other "alternative track" programs.

APPLICANTS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

We welcome all people to worship with us and to join us in ministry. We are also mindful that while we have much in common with all Christians, Episcopal polity, theology, spirituality, and liturgy are distinctive. For this reason, those ordained in other traditions must meet certain canonical requirements of The Episcopal Church and be approved by the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Utah.

OTHER MATTERS

The Commission's Involvement

The Commission on Ministry is advisory to the Bishop. COM is involved with the individual throughout the process leading to ordination. There are canonical requirements that the COM must meet, and, in addition, the COM may request informal meetings with the individual. Once the individual is a postulant, COM will assign one of its members to serve as a shepherd to the individual throughout the remainder of the process.

Congregational Support

The support of the nominee's congregation is crucial in the process. It is expected and normative that the sponsoring congregation pledge to contribute financially to the preparation of the nominee, and recognize and rejoice in the gift of lifting someone up to ordained life.

Candidacy

At some point mid-way through their training, postulants will be scheduled for candidacy interviews. Candidacy is a canonical status between postulancy and ordination and confirms the individual's progress. Postulants will be interviewed by the COM and the Standing Committee prior to being recommended for candidacy.

The Standing Committee and Ordination

The Standing Committee of the diocese determines that all canonical requirements have been met and recommends the candidate to the Bishop for ordination. Each level of ordination requires a separate determination and recommendation by the Standing Committee to the Bishop.

Placement

Though some dioceses only ordain those who have a paid call within the diocese, in Utah, we hope to place our people within the Diocese but cannot guarantee such placement. If the Bishop determines that the person cannot be placed in the Diocese, the Bishop may release the candidate to seek positions elsewhere, usually by the middle of their senior year.

Ongoing Support

Newly ordained persons serving in the Diocese of Utah are assigned a mentor or coach and placed in a two year program for those newly ordained. We also encourage those newly ordained to participate in support groups, whether Episcopal or ecumenical.

Continuing Education

The canons of the church now require that all clergy engage in continuing education throughout their ministries and report yearly to the Diocese.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

ACPE

Clinical Pastoral Education. Interfaith professional education for ministry focusing on pastoral skills in a certified program.

Affirmation

A positive recommendation from the Commission on Ministry to the Bishop for a person to officially continue the process of discernment towards ordination.

Applicant

A person, feeling called to an ordained ministry, who formally begins the discernment process when the clergy-in-charge sends written formalization to the Bishop and COM of the intent to start a discernment process.

BACAM

Bishop's Advisory Council on Applicants for Ministry. Meets to interview inquirers on an annual basis in order to advise the Bishop.

Candidacy

Following postulancy, a time of formation in preparation for ordination. Consult the canons for lengths of candidacy for those seeking the diaconate or the priesthood.

Clergy-in-charge

Can refer to the rector, the priest-in-charge, an interim priest, chaplain, or other cleric who is in a parochial or pastoral relationship with the inquirer and who oversees the process of individuals seeking ordination.

COM

The Commission on Ministry. A group of lay and ordained people established by canon who advise and assist the Bishop on matters of ministry.

Communicant in Good Standing

For the purposes of this document, a Communicant in Good Standing is someone who is regular in attendance, worship, ministry, and mission of their Episcopal church. He/She/They must be a confirmed member of The Episcopal Church and regularly, that is no less than weekly on average, receives the Holy Sacrament of Communion.

Discernment

The prayerful attention to God's will.

Discernment Committee

A local community to assist and reflect with an individual on his/her/their sense of discernment which is appropriate to the cultural background, age, and life experiences of persons seeking direction in their call to ordained ministry.

EFM

Education for Ministry. A four-year theological course by extension from the School of Theology, the University of the South, Sewanee, TN.

Ember Day Letters

Letters written by each postulant and candidate to the bishop, four times a year in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on his/her/their academic, emotional, spiritual, and practical development and formation. Ember Days are the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after 1 Lent, the Feast of Pentecost, Holy Cross Day (September 14), and St. Lucy's Day (December 13).

Formation

Ongoing preparation to do God's work. In this case, formation refers to preparation for ordained leadership. This is a continual process of growth, development, awareness, and grounding during the time of discernment, postulancy, and candidacy. Formation is a life-long deepening of one's gifts, spirituality, and sense of call to ministry.

Inquirer

Someone exploring the idea of formal ordination discernment.

Nomination

Written process whereby confirmed adult communicants in good standing are put before the Bishop to be considered for affirmation.

Postulancy

Canonical period between nomination and candidacy.

Shepherd

A person from the Commission on Ministry who acts as a liaison between the individual seeking ordination and the COM throughout the process leading to ordination.

Spiritual Direction

A relationship of reflection and conversation with an individual in deepening a person's awareness of their calling, their spirituality and their relationship with God and others. The preference of the COM is for each person in the process and for all ordained persons in the diocese to have a licensed Spiritual Director. There are websites that list such individuals.

Standing Committee

A canonical committee of lay and ordained members elected in the diocese to serve as the Bishop's council of advice and who must give consent for ordinations within a diocese.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q: I feel a call to be ordained. May I just approach the Bishop and ask to be considered for ordination?
A: No, the individual must begin with conversations within the local faith community. Discernment may start with an individual's sense of a particular call, or with a congregation's awareness of an individual with gifts for ordained leadership. A call to ministry always occurs in community. Sorting out a call is a matter for prayerful deliberation in community. The discernment process is continuous, even after the period of formation has begun.
2. Q: May I go to seminary first, and then begin the ordination process?
A: An individual may choose to attend seminary before admission to the ordination process. This choice risks a large investment of time, energy, and money with no guarantee of ordination. Remember, the call to ordination requires input from many sources, including community. Graduation from seminary (or receiving the Certificate of Diaconal Studies) will not guarantee admission to postulancy.
3. Q: At what point is the responsibility for my ordination process transferred to the Bishop, away from the clergy-in-charge, parish discernment committee, and community of faith?
A: Hopefully, the clergy-in-charge, parish discernment committee and the community of faith will always be supportive of the individual. Once the person is nominated and becomes a postulant, these communities no longer have any direct authority over the ordination process, but continue in a role of support.
4. Q: I began the process as a postulant for the priesthood, but now believe that the diaconate is where I belong. May I transfer to preparation for the diaconate?
A: If you wish to transfer from any one "track" to another, the discernment and formation processes must be reconsidered, although may be accelerated in part.
5. Q: I'm not sure if I am being called to the diaconate or the priesthood. How do I decide?
A: This is part of the discernment process. Read the Book of Common Prayer, the pertinent sections of this Handbook, and work with your clergy-in-charge and parish discernment committee. The COM and the Bishop may also be of assistance in this decision.
6. Q: Seminary would be great, but I have a full-time job and other responsibilities here in Utah. Is there any other training choice?
A: Many people called to serve as ordained ministers are not able to leave their homes, families or jobs for the extended years of seminary training. The Diocese realizes that these individuals have much to offer the church, but academic training in certain key competencies is required. Any local option requires commitment,

rigorous training, home study, one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), numerous weeks and weekends of reading and group study over a period of years.

7. Q: What part does my spouse/partner play in this process?
A: The work of an ordained person is demanding in ways that can put a great deal of strain and tension on a partnership. Questions to both partners during the nomination process are appropriate and essential.
8. Q: I have heard that having a spiritual director is helpful during the entire process. What is a spiritual director? How do I get one, and does that person have to be an Episcopalian?
A: It is recommended that the spiritual director not be a member of the applicant's parish. A spiritual director need not be an Episcopalian and need not be ordained. Usually your clergy-in-charge can recommend individuals to you. A spiritual director can help someone deepen his/her/their awareness of a calling and help with the formation of his/her/their spiritual relationship with God and others.
9. Q: What is the role of my clergy-in-charge in the process?
A: The clergy-in-charge serves as advisor and pastor throughout the process, and serves as a guide in deciding the appropriate time for each step toward nomination. The clergy-in-charge helps the inquirer to decide if and when it is appropriate to enter the formal ordination process. The clergy-in-charge maintains the advisor/pastor role in support of the individual, but once someone becomes a postulant, responsibility for the individual rests with the bishop.
10. Q: What is a parish discernment committee (PDC)?
A: This is a group that assists in discerning a call. These are individuals chosen for specific skills in listening to an inquirer, questioning the call and ascertaining the abilities of the inquirer to continue toward nomination. This committee is made up of diverse parishioners, as determined by the local clergy-in-charge. The charge to the committee is to explore the call, to ensure it has been well tested, and to present a careful, thorough account of its work and observations to the vestry.
11. Q: Is the parish discernment committee also my advocate for ordination?
A: No, a parish discernment committee is not an advocacy group. Even when a genuine call has been discerned, this committee's responsibility is to present a clear, honest, specific picture of the individual's gifts, including areas needing further formation. Withholding information from the discernment committee damages the integrity of the process and prevents both a sound evaluation and important guidance for growth. In parishes with multiple inquirers, it is at the discretion of the clergy-in-charge whether to form separate discernment committees.
12. Q: What is the role of the vestry in this process?
A: Before coming to the vestry, the applicant has completed a discernment process with the discernment committee; has written autobiographical and theological statements, and been recommended for nomination for ordination, in writing, by the

clergy-in-charge. When the vestry receives a recommendation from the clergy-in-charge, it invites the inquirer to a vestry meeting where further questions may be raised. The vestry takes a separate vote. There are two choices:

1. Use the report as one component of a letter of nomination for postulancy to the bishop;
2. Decide that it cannot clearly recommend the applicant at that particular time. At that point, the process stops until the applicant requests that it be restarted.

13. Q: The priest, parish discernment committee, or vestry does not support me at this time. What are my options?

A: There are several choices:

One may choose to accept the outcome that the specific call to ordination is not sensed by the community, and to do further discernment as to where God is calling you.

One may choose to do further formation work, particularly addressing areas of concern and then approach them again at a later date.

One may move to a different Episcopal congregation in the Diocese, knowing that some time is likely needed to establish a new congregational relationship before reconsidering ordination discernment.

14. Q: What is the role of the Commission on Ministry (COM)?

A: The COM assists in discerning an applicant's call to ordination. The possible outcomes of this discernment are to recommend postulancy and candidacy to the bishop; to recommend further work of the nominee; or to recommend that the nominee not be granted postulancy. The COM also helps the Bishop and the Standing Committee evaluate calls to ordained ministry.

15. Q: Who is part of a BACAM and what happens there?

A: The Bishop's Advisory Council on Applicants for Ministry (BACAM) is an annual, usually two day gathering. The BACAM team consists of the COM and a number of at-large members of the Diocese. It is attended by all applicants (and life partners if applicable) who have received a Congregational Nomination for Postulancy. Their clergy-in-charge are encouraged to attend the first evening, where the Bishop welcomes all gathered and gives an overview of his/her/their understanding of the ministry of the ordained. There is considerable time to ask questions of the process beyond this point, as well as opportunity to discuss the current vision for the Diocese. The second day involves a series of interviews around the applicant's life journey and understanding of ordination and Christian life in The Episcopal Church.

16. Q: How might the COM respond other than a recommendation for postulancy?

A: Besides a recommendation for postulancy, the COM may respond "no" and affirm your call to lay ministry out of your Baptismal Covenant. The COM may also respond "not yet" and offer concrete recommendations for work or development before being reconsidered for postulancy. In all of these options, the COM seeks to kindly and respectfully discern with you life in The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Utah.

17. Q: What happens if the Bishop does not grant postulancy?
A: There is no guarantee that an applicant will be granted postulancy, a decision that ultimately belongs to the Bishop. Discernment is a process, not an ending. The applicant's clergy-in-charge and congregation are appropriate resources for further discernment.
18. Q: After initially pursuing postulancy or candidacy, I find I am not called to ordained ministry. What should I do?
A: There may be much wisdom in such a decision. At any stage in the process, you may realize that you are not called to ordained ministry. After conferring with the Bishop, and giving the decision in writing to the Bishop, you may withdraw from the process. There are many ways to serve.
19. Q: If a family member is on the Standing Committee or the COM, does that person have to resign if I enter the discernment process for ordination?
A: No. However, the person will need to recuse him/her/themself from any interviews, discussion or voting related to the person in the process.
20. Q: If I enter the process for ordination will I be able to continue serving as an officer of my parish?
A: It is asked that you resign from serving in an elected leadership position in your congregation, so you may focus your time and attention on your program of preparation. Likewise, once a postulant, one is not eligible for election to serve on Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, or Commission on Ministry.
21. Q: What is Accredited Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE)?
A: Accredited Clinical Pastoral Education is an interfaith professional education for ministry in pastoral settings. It brings theological students and ministers of several traditions into supervised encounter with persons in crisis. Out of an intense involvement with persons in need, and the feedback from peers and teachers, students develop a new awareness of themselves as persons and of the needs of those to whom they minister. From theological reflection on specific human situations, they gain a new understanding of ministry. Within this process people develop skills in interpersonal and inter-professional relationships. ACPE is a requirement for ordination in the Diocese of Utah. The ACPE program itself must be conducted under the auspices of an ACPE certified supervisor (faculty) attached to an ACPE center. Currently, the only accredited program in Utah is at St Mark's Hospital. However, other options may be available out of state.
22. Q: Do I have to have a bachelor's degree in order to enter the ordination process in the Diocese of Utah?
A: Yes. This is true for both the diaconate and the priesthood. Before entering the program, individuals with exceptional circumstances (e.g. English as a second language) should arrange an appointment with the Bishop and selected members of COM to determine on a case by case basis if this requirement may be waived or modified.

23. Q: What is the relationship between the applicant's shepherd, spiritual director, and local clergy-in charge?

A: The shepherd is appointed by the COM when one becomes a postulant as he/she/they moves through the ordination process and to facilitate interaction with the Diocese. A spiritual director works with the individual on his/her/their spiritual formation and sense of calling to the ministry, whether ordained or lay. The person's local clergy-in-charge remains their pastor in their local congregation, and helps the individual in their relationship to the supporting parish or mission. Each of these roles is distinct, and should be different persons.