

Requirements for the Doctrinal Answers

You shall write a **6000-8500 word** paper answering the following questions:

A) Theology

- a) Give examples of how the practice of ministry has affected your experience and understanding of:
 - i. God
 - ii. Humanity
 - iii. The need for divine grace
 - iv. The Lordship of Jesus Christ
 - v. The work of the Holy Spirit
 - vi. The meaning and significance of the sacraments
 - vii. The Kingdom of God
 - viii. Resurrection and eternal life
- b) How do you understand the following traditional, evangelical doctrines:
 - i. Repentance
 - ii. Justification
 - iii. Regeneration
 - iv. Sanctification
 - v. The marks of the Christian life
- c) How has the practice of ministry informed our understanding of the nature and mission of the Church? What primary challenges face the church today?
- d) The UMC holds that Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason are sources and norms for belief and practice, but that the Bible is primary among them. What is your understanding of this theological position of the UMC? How has your practice of ministry been affected by this understanding?
- e) How has the practice of ministry enriched your understanding of the meaning and significance of the sacraments?

B) Vocation

- a) How has the experience of ministry shaped your understanding of the vocation of an ordained elder?
- b) How has it shaped your understanding of the vocation of an ordained deacon?
- c) Describe the unique importance of elders, deacons, lay pastors, and certified lay ministers. How do you see these various callings interacting collaboratively with each other in our conference?

C) Practice of Ministry

- a) *If you are applying for elder's orders:* How has the practice of ministry affected your understanding of the expectations and obligations of the itinerant system? Do you offer yourself without reserve to be appointed and to serve as the appointive authority may determine?

If you are applying for deacon's orders: How has the practice of ministry affected your understanding of what it means for a deacon to be appointed by the bishop to a service ministry?

- b) Describe and evaluate your personal gifts for ministry and how they have resulted in fruitful ministry. What would be your areas of strength and areas in which you need to be strengthened in order to be more fruitful in ministry?
- c) For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel and in consideration of your influence as an ordained minister, how will you make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life? How will you exercise responsible self-control? How will you maintain habits conducive to physical health, intellectual development, sexual holiness, integrity in personal relationships, financial responsibility, citizenship, love of neighbor, experience of grace, and love of God?
- d) Provide evidence of your willingness to relate yourself in ministry to all persons regardless of
 - i. race,
 - ii. ethnicity,
 - iii. national origin,
 - iv. social status,
 - v. gender,
 - vi. sexual orientation,
 - vii. age,
 - viii. economic condition, and
 - ix. disability.
- e) What is your understanding of the confessional nature of pastoral conversations?
- f) Provide evidence of your experience with
 - i. Doing justice
 - ii. Making peace

As you write your doctrinal answers, begin each response with a restating of the question before addressing the issue. Answer the questions in the order they are given above. Lengthy questions do not need to be restated in their entirety. You may summarize those questions in your paper.

Provide a bibliography at the end of the paper of books, articles, online information (limit the number of these resources), and presentations that have directly influenced your thoughts on these specific topics. Be prepared to talk about those resources at your oral interview.