

Procedures for Approving the Member In Discernment Candidate

Committee on Ministry: Preparation

St. Louis Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference

United Church of Christ

1. At the conclusion of the initial interview, take the Member in Discernment (MID) candidate's photo and be sure to have their correct contact information for follow-up.
2. Give the MID candidate the document sheet outlining the Psychological Evaluation procedure. Be certain the MID candidate understands the usefulness of such an evaluation, both to the MID candidate and to the Association. Explain the procedures outlined and tell the MID candidate to set up an appointment for the evaluation and to notify the co-chairs of the Committee on Ministry: Preparation (COM:P) of that date.
3. Tell the MID candidate that two people from the COM:P will attend the *feedback session*.
4. Tell the MID candidate that MID status will be granted at the monthly COM:P meeting immediately following a positive *feedback session*, reading and filing of the *psychological report* and receipt of all payments. The St. Louis Association (SLA) pays 40%, the home church pays 40%, and the MID candidate pays 20%. The evaluating body charges the SLA, and the three parties reimburse the SLA. The SLA treasurer will notify the COM:P co-chairs when all payments have been received.
5. After the MID candidate leaves the initial interview, the COM:P will select two members to attend the psychological evaluation *feedback session* and read the *final psychological report*, which the counselor creates after the *feedback session*.
6. When scheduling the *feedback session*, the MID candidate will contact the COM:P co-chairs, who will notify the selected COM:P members so that the three of them can set up a date for the *feedback session*. It is the SLA's policy that *only* these three people attend the *feedback session* with the counselor.
7. The selected COM:P representatives will contact the MID candidate by phone or e-mail to introduce themselves before the psychological evaluation *feedback session*.
8. After the *feedback session* has taken place with the counselor and the *final psychological report* has been received and read by the two COM:P representatives, a Committee member is appointed as the advisor.
[If serious concerns come up in the psychological evaluation, the concerns will be addressed at the next COM:P meeting and a decision made as to MID status. Then a follow-up conversation will be held with either the advisor (if, after deliberation, the COM:P decides to accept the MID candidate) or with the Conference Minister and a COM:P co-chair (if the decision is *not* to accept the MID candidate).]
9. Once all fees have been paid, the MID candidate's name will be placed on the agenda of the following month's COM:P meeting and, *at that meeting*, the MID candidate will officially become an MID--*retroactive to the initial interview date*.

10. A COM:P co-chair will send letters to the sponsoring church council or home church support committee and to the new MID, officially recognizing the candidate's MID status. A copy of the Expectations of the Home Church of MIDs should accompany the letter to the sponsoring church council or support committee. This is the beginning of what is ideally a close connection between the advisor and the MID's home church.
11. The advisor sets up a meeting with the new MID, home church support committee and the pastor. At this meeting, the advisor distributes and reviews the materials listed on the MID Documents sheet; some of these materials will need the MID's signature right away.
12. The advisor files the signed Code of Ethics for MIDs, MID Documents sheet and Authorization to Share MID Documents form in the new MID's folder in the Conference office. The Documents Checklist for Ordination Interview should be stapled on top of the Documents Checklist for Entry into MID Status inside the folder, noting dates these three signed sheets were filed on that Entry Documents checklist. (Blank copies of Documents Checklist for Ordination Interview are in the front of the COM:P top file drawer in the Conference office.)
13. Before any church schedules a ceremony recognizing a candidate's MID status, the home church pastor and the candidate should seek approval and arrange scheduling with the COM:P and with the Conference office. The advisor will attend, if possible. Again, advisor discretion and availability is honored in reference to MIDs from churches in Memphis or Arkansas. Attendance may not be possible for clerical advisors if the ceremony of recognition is held during a regular worship service. Sometimes an alternate person from the COM:P or someone else from the SLA is available to attend as a representative of the COM:P.