

## **Psychological Evaluation at Samaritan Counseling Center, Memphis**

### *Committee on Ministry: Preparation*

St. Louis Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference

United Church of Christ

At the beginning of the discernment process, as a way of assessing a candidate's initial fitness and potential for ministry, a thorough psychological evaluation is required--life history questionnaire, behavior screening and standardized tests, written references and a face-to-face interview with a licensed counselor who regularly works with clergy. The final report testifies that there are no contraindications to continuing in discernment, celebrates the strengths and emotional stability of the candidate and gives them some suggestions of areas and possible strategies for further personal and pastoral development.

1. Member In Discernment (MID) candidates should contact the Samaritan Counseling Center as soon as possible to set up an appointment. (See contact information below.)
2. The MID receives paperwork via email, fills it out and brings it to the appointment when a 2.5-hour battery of psychological tests are taken on site--Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-2), Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) and Rotter Sentence Completion. In advance of the appointment, the candidate will complete a free online version of The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator ([humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp](http://humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp)), print out their results pages and bring them to the evaluation appointment.
3. A face-to-face clinical interview with a counselor will take place as well. *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ (The Marks)* are referenced in this dialogue.
4. The MID, in consultation with Samaritan and the Committee on Ministry: Preparation (COM:P), sets a date for the follow-up feedback session. At this meeting, the MID has a private debrief with the counselor, and then one or two COM:P members join in the conversation.
5. Within 4 weeks after the feedback session, Samaritan will send the written summation of its work with the MID to both the candidate and COM:P. The COM:P copy of the report will be kept in the MID's confidential file in a secure location in the Missouri Mid-South Conference office. (See address below.)  
This report focuses on an individual's psychological functioning--including overt psychopathology which could impact the candidate's ability to perform their function as a UCC clergyperson. The report also serves as a thorough background history as well as current status, spiritual status, beliefs and how they align with the UCC. The narrative would also incorporate themes noted in *The Marks*. The report has a section of assessment results and interpretations. Finally, there is a summary section which incorporates all the parts into a whole. This would include any recommendations.

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