1-1-2000

DO 504 Formation for United Methodist Ordained Ministry

H. O. Thomas

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Professor: The Rev. H. O. (Tom) Thomas, Jr. has known personally and walked with Jesus for over thirty years. He has pastored six local churches in southern California and England. He received his Ph.D. degree from Bristol University, Bristol, England, where he lived in John Wesley’s Chapel “The New Room” and studied the theology of John Wesley. He has been married to his wife Pamela for twenty-four years. They have two children, Karissa, 11, and John who is 4 years old. Dr. Thomas is a supervising mentor in the California-Pacific Annual Conference. His desire is to “work and speak and think for Thee!”

Purpose of the Course: To help the candidate seeking licensed or ordained ministry explore the “many facets of decisions” being made about a future in licensed or ordained ministry. To help a candidate discern God’s call to ministry.

Course Description: This course offers candidates for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church an opportunity to be mentored in the candidacy process, which is required for United Methodist ordination. Along with other candidates and under the leadership of a trained candidacy mentor, “exploring candidates” will share their spiritual lives and calls into ministry, practice spiritual disciplines and identify areas for service as they work through the Candidacy Guidebook. Candidates will explore together the many facets of decisions required of those progressing toward licensed, ordained ministry. Satisfactory completion of the course fulfills basic United Methodist requirements necessary for application for “certification” with a District Committee on Ministry. Please consult your DCOM for any additional requirements. The course will include consideration of pertinent issues and may include input from relevant, visiting United Methodist leaders. Prerequisite: Current status as an exploring candidate in the United Methodist Church with two years’ membership in a local United Methodist church. One year of leadership service in a local United Methodist Church is also required. This is a two-hour, Credit/No Credit course. Certain fees will apply depending on a student’s annual conference.

Learning Objectives
• Candidates will explore the nature of licensed, ordained ministry
• Candidates will recount their experiences of saving grace, discern and share their calls, and examine themselves, their gifts, and fruit with a view to clarifying God’s leading and their promise for effectiveness in ordained ministry
• Candidates will grow in self understanding -- psychologically, spiritually, and vocationally in light of ordained ministry-- as they complete the first two sections of the Candidacy Guidebook applicable to application for certification
Required Textbooks:

Recommended Reading:

Method: Home study with guidebooks, directed class sharing, dialogue and lectures, psychological inventories and mock interviews.

Course Evaluation:
- Full, weekly attendance: Only one unexcused absence permitted
- Completion of all assignments by due dates
- Class participation expected
- Grading is Credit/No Credit

Martin Luther’s Prayer for God’s Counsel and Guidance for the Holy Ministry - “You know how unworthy I am to fill so great and important an office. Were it not for your counsel, I would have utterly failed long ago. Therefore I call upon you for guidance. Gladly will I give my heart and voice to this work. I want to teach the people. I want always to seek and study in your word, and eagerly to meditate upon it. Use me as your instrument. Lord, do not forsake me. If I were alone, I would ruin everything. Amen.”

Wesley’s Word to Preachers - “You have nothing to do but save souls.”

Mother Teresa’s Exhortation - “We are not here for the work, we are here for Jesus. All we do is for Him.”
## Course Outline:

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| Sept. 5| Overview of Candidacy Process                                         | • Introduction to Course  
• Timeline of Candidacy  
• Covenant’s Meaning (page 12)  
• Criteria used to assess the gifts and graces and promise of a person for ordained ministry  
• Completing the IRAI religious interests inventory |
| Sept. 12| Sharing Experiences of God’s Saving Grace                             | (Read pages 29-42, C.G.)  
• Biblical Examples of Grace  
• Personal Testimonies of Saving Grace |
| Sept. 19| God’s Call in Scripture to Ministry                                   |                                                                           |
| Sept. 26| Administration of Psychological Inventories                           | (Read pages 58-71, C. G.)                                                |
| Oct. 3  | Administration of Psychological Inventories (continued)               | (Read pages 72-83, C. G.)                                                |
| Oct. 10 | Our Call to Ministry                                                  |                                                                           |
| Oct. 17 | Spiritual Formation                                                   | (Read pages 43-57, C. G.)                                                |
| Oct. 24 | Self Understanding and Ordained Ministry                               | • Intellectual  
• Interpersonal  
• Leadership  
• Participation in the Christian Community  
• Impact on Others |
| Oct. 31 | Changing Careers                                                      | (Read pages 84-96, C. G.)                                                |
| Nov. 7  | Evidence of the Holy Spirit and Fruit                                 | (Read pages 97-101, C. G.)                                               |
| Nov. 14 | Exploring Family Lifestyles as They Relate to Licensed Ordained Ministry | (Read pages 102-108, C.G.)                                              |
| Nov. 21 | READING WEEK                                                           |                                                                           |
| Nov. 28 | Issues: Age, Gender, Race, Socio-Economic Background, and Language in Relation to Ordained Ministry | (Read pages 109-120, C.G.)                                              |
| Dec. 5  | Coming to a Decision, Preparing for the SPRC and DCOM Interviews, and Beyond | (Read pages 121-159, C.G.)                                              |

*Reading assignments come from the Candidacy Guidebook.*