

METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND  
TE HAAHI WETERIANA O AOTEAROA



MISSION RESOURCING

# CANDIDATING 2021

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## **Guidelines for Candidates Application Process**

For people preparing for Ministry as Ordained Presbyters or Deacons  
In the Methodist Church of New Zealand



## Introduction

Welcome to the 2021 Candidates application material. You have received this information because you have expressed an interest in undertaking a journey towards Ordained Ministry as a Presbyter or Deacon in the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

No doubt you are at this point in your life because you have identified a passion for serving God and living out your baptism in this way. It is also likely you and others around you have affirmed your gifts in ministry.

You are about to embark on an exciting and deep spiritual journey as you explore this call and these promptings more extensively. You may find this exploration leads you to decide that ministry is not for you at present. We encourage you to explore all your promptings to where ever they may lead you. For example, ordained ministry, lay preaching, chaplaincy work, etc.

We hope that this information will assist you to further explore and discern your call to ministry with the Methodist Church of New Zealand, Te Haahi Weteriana O Aotearoa.

As you continue to read through this booklet, you will have further questions. Please keep in contact with your parish presbyter and Mission Resourcing who will assist you with any questions you may have, help set up support mechanisms as well as guide you through the process and filling out the forms.

If you have any questions, please contact Mission Resourcing.

### **Documents included with this Booklet:**

- Timeframe checklist for Candidates Application Process
- A hard copy of the following forms:
  - Police Vetting Consent Form
  - Medical Report
  - Financial Report
  - Personal Data Report
  - Parish Report
  - Presbyter Report
  - Synod Report
  - Referee Report One
  - Referee Report Two
  - Personal Ministry & Leadership Report

# Candidates Application Process

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## **General Information**

The Methodist Church has defined ministry in the following way, and in applying for ministry formation you will need to be clear about which vocation you intend to follow.

### **The Vocation of a Presbyter**

Presbyters are called to a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care. The presbyter serves as pastoral minister of word and sacrament in a local Eucharistic community and can fulfil his/her calling in and for the community.

Presbyters are preachers and teachers of the faith, exercise pastoral care and share responsibility for the ordering of the life of the congregation to the end that the world may believe and that the whole membership of the church may be renewed, strengthened and equipped in ministry and mission.

Presbyteral ministry has traditionally been symbolized by the Chalice and Paten, a reminder that when Jesus broke bread and poured the cup he was feeding his community of faith. It is especially in the Eucharistic celebration that the presbyter is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body.

It is the particular calling of the presbyter to encourage and to offer sustenance, preparing individuals for Christian life and ministry and enabling the community to faithfully live out its life.

### **The Vocation of a Deacon**

Deacons have been around since biblical times. We first meet them in Acts 6 and although there is some variation across the centuries and denominations, the basics of diaconal ministry have always remained the same. Any theological dictionary will give a definition that should be acceptable to most Christians alive now or of past generations. One of the main differences between churches is whether the diaconate is a permanent order of ministry or whether it is purely a transitional diaconate on the pathway to priestly ordination. Another point of difference is that some churches have traditional liturgical roles for deacons that go back centuries, whereas some of the recently established forms of the diaconate barely feature any liturgical role at all. The Methodist Church of New Zealand, Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, has a permanent order of ministry for deacons and has no strictly defined liturgical roles for deacons, but many deacons will be qualified leaders of worship.

Deacons are called to a servant ministry. This ministry is often symbolised by the bowl and towel which recalls Jesus' diaconal service to his disciples when he washed their feet, thereby demonstrating the future servant ministry of the Church. It is true that the whole people of God are called to a servant ministry, but a deacon feels the Call of God to dedicate themselves in a public, and for Methodists, permanent fashion through the act of ordination.

It is sometimes observed that a deacon, especially in a church like ours lacking prescribed liturgical dress and roles for a deacon, can do nothing more than any lay person can do. So what is the point of such ordination, ask some Methodists.

This point is that God has called the deacon to exemplify and promote the servant ministry to and on behalf of the whole people of God. The added theological training required for ordination and the formal endorsement of the Church that ordination gives, allows the deacon to take the Church's servant ministry into places that might not be open to untrained volunteer lay people. But essentially, the deacon's ministry is an exemplary ministry to express the servant ministry of the whole Church and to inspire the whole people of God to participate in that challenging aspect of the Church's calling.

Diaconal ministry is both servant ministry and non-sacramental – both equally true and essential definitions of this ministry. What a deacon is saying to the Church is that God has not called them to the sacramental role of the presbyter, but to the servant ministry of the deacon.

To say that presbyteral ministry is church-facing and diaconal ministry is community-facing is misleading, inadequate and not always true. It is only partially true – and it becomes false if that definition is taken as the whole truth.

The first deacons in Acts 6 were appointed to look after the church widows and serve tables at the church's agape meals, in Acts 8 Philip baptized – that is church-facing work. In some denominations deacons do have a church-facing role within the liturgy; they may conduct baptisms and they may also have a teaching role. Sometimes the servant ministry is actually focussed not on the world at all, but on the Church. (If deacons wear liturgical dress, the stole should be worn from the left shoulder to the right hip).

Presbyters, on the other hand, who are said to be church-focussed, may indeed work outside the regular framework of the church altogether. Some presbyters are worker-priests, or chaplains in hospitals, airports or Armed Forces – these are in community-facing ministries.

The line between deacon and presbyter cannot be that one is community-facing and the other Church-facing – even if that definition works in many instances – it is not absolute enough to serve all situations.

The crucial question is the nature of the Call. If someone is called to a servant ministry as the chief focus of that Call – it is to diaconal ministry that God is calling that person. If someone is called to preach the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, as well as to promote the church's mission to the world, that person is being called to the presbyterate.

The Church resists the giving of dispensations for Holy Communion to deacons because in that one act the distinctive nature of diaconal ministry is lost. Give a deacon a dispensation to preside at Holy Communion and you no longer have a deacon, but a presbyter, because a presbyter can also be engaged in community-facing work.

In recent times, deacons have not been available to the Methodist Church of New Zealand in large numbers. That is beginning to change, but deacons remain too few to risk losing the focus of their distinctive calling: for the deacon not only loses, but the whole church loses an example of humble service that inspires others to follow. Finally, if God truly has called someone to be a deacon, God's purpose might be frustrated if the Church then makes them into yet another presbyter.

# **A Statement of Mission for the People of Aotearoa/New Zealand who are associated with the Methodist Tradition, both in Methodist Parishes and in Co-operative Ventures**

*Our Church's mission in Aotearoa/New Zealand is to reflect and proclaim the transforming love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and declared in the Scriptures. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God in the world. The Treaty of Waitangi is the covenant establishing our nation on the basis of a power-sharing partnership and will guide how we undertake mission.*

In seeking to carry out our mission we will work according to these principles:

## **Christian Community**

We are a worshipping, praying and growing community, sharing and developing our faith, and working through its implications in our social context.

## **Evangelism**

We are able to challenge people to commit to Christ and Christ's way.

## **Flexibility**

We are able to be flexible, creative, and open to God's Spirit in a changing world and Church, so that the Church is relevant to people's needs; to release energy for mission rather than to absorb energy for maintenance.

## **Church Unity**

We are able to foster networks and relationships with communities of faith which have similar goals.

## **Inclusiveness**

We are able to operate as a Church in ways in which the diversity of the people e.g. all ages, all cultures, female and male, will be able to participate fully in the whole life of the Church, especially within decision-making and worship.

## **Every Member a Minister**

We encourage each person to develop his/her full potential by accepting and nurturing each other, developing skills and providing resources, challenging and enabling for service in the Church and community.

## **Cross-cultural Awareness**

We are able to be aware of and to be challenged by each other's cultures.

## **Justice**

We work for justice for any who are oppressed in Aotearoa/New Zealand, keeping in mind the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi. We are able to share resources with the poor and disadvantaged in Aotearoa/New Zealand and beyond.

## **Peace**

We are able to be peacemakers between people and in the world.

## **Healing**

We are able to listen for hurt and work for healing.

## **Ecology**

We are able to care for creation.

# **Ethical Standards for Ministry**

## **Preamble**

These Ethical Standards for Ministry for Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, the Methodist Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, set out the Church's position on standards of conduct for people, clergy and lay, who undertake ministry in the name of the Church. While the disciplinary standards of the Church always apply to presbyters, and deacons, in this case the Ethical Standards also apply to others representing the Church.

This document is a declaration of commitment rather than of intent. It is by the grace of God that we are called to serve as presbyters, deacons and paid lay workers, and by the grace of God through the power of the Holy Spirit that we are sustained and called to uphold these standards.

## **Responsibilities to those to whom we offer pastoral care:**

1. I will deal truthfully with people, encouraging free and open discussion, respecting their integrity, rights and well-being.
2. I will respect the right of people to privacy and confidentiality of information obtained during pastoral ministry, except when there is a clear danger to the personal safety of themselves or others. Those in my care will be informed about these limits.
3. I will recognize the dignity and worth of every person and seek to avoid discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic group, disability, and age, religious, theological or political belief.
4. I will not abuse my position by taking advantage of people for purposes of personal, political, financial or institutional gain.
5. I will not subject people to sexual exploitation or sexual harassment and abuse. Sexual intimacy in the pastoral relationship is inevitably exploitative and is therefore unacceptable.
6. I recognize that there are limits to my competence. I will not attempt formal counselling until appropriately trained. I will refer people on to others when this is necessary or desirable.

## **Responsibilities to the Church:**

1. I will uphold professional standards of practice in ministry and work for their advancement.
2. I will exercise stewardship in the time I give to the ministry of the Church, guarding against both over-commitment and avoidance of responsibility.

## **Responsibilities to Colleagues within the Church and outside the Methodist Connexion:**

1. I will promote co-operation and mutuality with Church colleagues and with members of other helping professions, treating them with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith. I will respect professional confidences.
2. I will affirm the abilities, expertise and gifts of colleagues in ministry and value their positive contributions, while respecting their time constraints and commitments.
3. I will seek mediation and reconciliation through Connexional procedures when conflicts arise with colleagues or others within the church community.
4. I will take action through the proper channels to confront incompetent and unethical conduct by colleagues.

## **Responsibilities to the Wider Community:**

1. I will act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the wider community against individuals and groups on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic group, age, disability and religious, theological or political belief.
2. I will encourage, as part of the pastoral task, participation in the shaping of social policies advocating the promotion of social justice, improved social conditions and a fair sharing of the community's resources. While respecting the law, I will act to change unjust laws.

## **Responsibilities to Ourselves:**

1. I will recognize there are limits to what one person can do in ministry, and seek appropriate self-care for my health and well-being, and that of my family.



2. I will use regular approved professional supervision to maintain accountability and a high standard of ministry.
3. I will use regular opportunities for spiritual growth.
4. I recognize that my knowledge and areas of competence continually need to be extended and enhanced and will regularly attend to this.
5. I recognize and will act on my need for personal recreation, refreshment and renewal.

*Authorised by Conference 1993 as resource material for the Church.*

# **Selection Criteria for Candidates for Ministry**

The selection criteria below set high standards for our candidates, but it is accepted that candidates will excel in some areas yet have room for growth in others. It is also recognised that additional criteria would be required of candidates for special work e.g. as a presbyter in self-supporting ministry or a particular ethnic situation. Candidates for both self-supporting and itinerant ministry will be assessed to the same standard. What is essential is that a candidate shows that after the appropriate training period she/he will, under the grace of God, meet the high standards the church expects of its presbyters and deacons.

## **1. Personal Qualities**

- Spirituality
- Self-Awareness and realistic assessment of how they come across to others
- Respect for self and others
- Co-operate and work well with others, be sensitive to and accepting of others' needs and situations, and be able to find, accept and give support.
- Be a person of good physical, emotional and psychological health, with a good sense of self-worth
- Sense of humour
- Sensitivity to other people and willingness to see other view points
- Openness and vulnerability
- Genuine, being real
- Ability to manage their own energy
- Creativity
- Willingness to change and grow
- Good interpersonal skills
- Show evidence of recent personal growth, and openness to further grow and change
- Be able to survive crises and resolve conflicts in a healthy manner

## **2. Religious experience, Spirituality and Theology**

- Be a person of natural and deep spirituality with a personal faith in Jesus Christ and a mature prayer life
- Have a good working knowledge of the Scriptures
- Able to articulate what their theology is
- Able to articulate a clear call to ordained ministry
- Able to speak easily about their understanding of God
- Shows an understanding of how their spirituality / theology interfaces with their own personal life
- Give evidence of having a gospel to proclaim and a vision for the church
- Be able to reflect theologically on life and show a relationship between theology and personal life
- Can talk about what they have done that has been different as a result of their Christian beliefs
- Vocabulary – demonstrates an ability to talk of spiritual things in meaningful ways, not just jargon
- Has studied various parts of the Bible, can make interrelations, and speak about the difference it makes
- Can relate the Bible and their theology to today's issues
- Can talk about their understanding of prayer and the appropriate use of prayer
- Can talk about their 'call', who have they shared this with and what their reactions have been
- Are able to accept and relate to people of different theological perspectives
- Their book list shows they are reading widely

### **3. Emotional Qualities**

- Life pressures at home and work
- Awareness and practice of self-care
- Emotional self-awareness
- Awareness of other's emotional states and needs
- Level or use of intuition
- Awareness and use of personal power
- Decision-making skills
- Conflict skills
- Degree of psychological integration of self
- General Health

### **4. Ministry Skills**

- Shows a good understanding about what ministry is
- Demonstrate skills in;
  - Worship, leadership and preaching (Presbyter)
  - Communication
  - Administration
  - Pastoral care
  - Group Life
  - Motivation and leadership
- Is an effective communicator, oral and written, one-on-one and in group situations
- Demonstrates good listening skills
- Demonstrates commitment to inclusive language and gender issues
- Demonstrates a commitment to lay ministry
- Demonstrates total acceptance of the values and traditions of other cultures
- Demonstrates a good understanding of ethical issues and boundaries
- Has leadership skills
- Has been actively involved in local church
- Has a good understanding of meeting procedures and consensus decision-making
- Demonstrates an ability to motivate others and evoke gifts
- Is able to delegate responsibility where appropriate
- Be aware and accepting of the church's commitment to mutual and inclusive ministry
- Be an enabler of others with the capacity to help others to develop their gifts and ministries
- Be sensitive to, and able to work within other cultures and with other denominations (especially those within the Act of Commitment)

### **5. Role Understanding and Motivation**

- Has the educational ability to undertake theological studies
- Have a clear understanding of the present and likely future role of a Methodist presbyter / deacon
- Shows an understanding of Methodist history, including that of the New Zealand Be accepting of the multi-racial nature of the Church and its commitments to ecumenism, the bi-cultural journey and other significant issues of church and society
- Be committed and loyal to the Methodist Church, its ethos, policy and discipline, and give evidence of some years' experience in parish life
- Has Connexional awareness
- Shows evidence of understanding and commitment to the bicultural journey
- Shows evidence of understanding and commitment to Methodist involvement in social justice
- Show ability to change and adapt to meet the future demands of the church
- Has healthy understanding of leadership
- Is able to live with diversity
- Give evidence of wider community involvement

- Be available for stationing

## 6. General Ability

- Possess adequate academic capabilities and a good measure of common sense
- Demonstrate competence in present career and in daily life
- Have a wide range of interests and abilities
- Be capable of drawing on a variety of resources for ministry and study

## Ministry Cultural Settings

Most candidates will choose one cultural setting, however, some candidates may be in the position to offer for more than one. If so, please follow the guidelines below.

It should be noted that a ministry cultural setting is not defined simply by the ability of a person to speak one or more languages. It is an attempt to describe a cultural group which includes language, styles of worship, styles of leadership, styles of conducting a meeting and ways of relating with other people and understanding mission and ministry within a given context. These things are very different (for example) in Samoan and English speaking settings. It is only exceptional people who can really work effectively in two such different settings.

Candidates who wish to candidate in more than one cultural setting are required to be supported by a Synod and a Parish from each cultural group (E.g. Parish report and Synod approval from each cultural group). They will also be required to have been actively part of both parishes for more than 2 years within the last 5 years. This takes into account the needs of all groups in Taiuiwi, as well as giving a fair process to the candidates who feel called to ministry in more than one ministry cultural setting. Ministers who enter through one cultural setting will not be stationed within another cultural setting except by the express approval of stationing committee.

## Itinerancy

An **itinerant minister** is one who is available to the Stationing Committee, and may be asked by the Church to undertake ministry anywhere in New Zealand.

If you choose to have a **limited itinerancy**, the Church cannot be responsible for your future deployment if a suitable appointment is not available within the geographic/social area you specify.

Most English-speaking presbyter appointments are currently itinerant.

Most deacons are currently not in itinerant positions and are self-supporting.

Pasifika Synods have a greater proportion of self-supporting positions with limited itinerancy.

Please note: The Church cannot guarantee a full time stationed appointment.

## Self-Supporting Ministries

Most stationed appointments are paid a stipend with housing provided, however some appointments are only part time and some are unpaid, or 'Self-supporting'. Probationers, Presbyters and Deacons may only be appointed to self-supporting ministries if they have an identifiable means of financial support, and may not offer full time ministry when being supported by an unemployment or sickness benefit.

## The Role of the Directors of Mission Resourcing

From 2018/19 the post of Synod Candidates Convenor shall be abolished. However, in synods which have to process a large number of applicants each year, those synods may wish to continue with the appointment of a Synod Candidates Convenor (SCC) who may assist the candidate and the parish presbyter in their duties.

The role of Synod Candidates Convenors has been replaced by the Directors of Mission Resourcing working more closely with individual parishes and individual candidates to help them

through the process. This is because experience has shown that the majority of synods do not process candidates on a yearly basis and so it is proving unfair to expect an SCC to remain current in the complicated processes involved in candidating. The number of candidates processed annually at the national level is of a size that can more easily be coached by the Directors themselves.

The Directors will assist and advise all candidates, but will play no part in the crucial assessment of each candidate made at the annual Candidates Assessment Panel (meeting usually in May). The Directors will offer advice to help candidates present themselves with the highest degree of confidence that they are thoroughly prepared and meet the general criteria for ordained ministry.

## **MINISTRY CANDIDATES APPLICATION PROCESS**

The first step is to talk to your parish Presbyter who will contact Mission Resourcing.

Candidates should be well known and have been an active member of their parish for at least 2 years.

Find further ways to be involved in the life of your local parish and Synod, if possible become a member of parish meetings or other church committees.

If you are not already a qualified NZ Lay Preacher, you will be asked to provide evidence of your potential as a preacher and leader of worship. If you are not a qualified Lay Preacher, arrange with your parish presbyter to lead services and to have a service assessed by representatives of your synod. Any report should be submitted before you appear before your ministerial synod in March.

It would also be beneficial to familiarise yourself with the Methodist Church of New Zealand Law Book and the Church's bicultural journey.

The Methodist Church of New Zealand accepts gay and lesbian people to exercise ordained ministry and take on leadership roles; all candidates, whatever their own theological position, must be willing to work in a collegial manner with all their colleagues, lay and ordained, although no parish is required to receive a gay presbyter against its conscience.

The Methodist Church of New Zealand ordains women and all candidates are expected to respect, support and work collegially with women in leadership, both ordained and lay.

### **Responsibilities of the parish and parish presbyter**

A local support group must be established in the parish. The parish council and candidate choose the members of the support group together.

(The Support Group plays no role in assessment of the candidate)

Parish Presbyter and parish Council must provide timely reports on the candidate. Reports should be supportive, but not uncritical, because parishes are part of the discernment process, not cheerleaders 'on their candidate's side'.

If your candidate is offering for diaconal ministry, the parish presbyter should seek the advice of the diaconal task group before writing your report.

The parish presbyter is responsible for supervising the candidate so that all forms are completed and returned on time. The parish presbyter is not required to see any private information regarding health, finances or criminal history, but ascertain that the forms have been duly completed and sent to Mission Resourcing.

The parish presbyter should inform the synod superintendent as soon as possible that a candidate needs to be processed at the February/March Ministerial synod and arrange for the candidate to meet with the synod superintendent as early as possible in the process. The parish presbyter, or the Synod Candidates' Convenor where appointed, will introduce the candidate to the ministerial synod, present the parish and his/her own reports on the candidate and any synod report of a

worship service led by the candidate and then invite the candidate back into the room to give their testimony to their sense of Call.

Parish presbyters, where synod convenors have not been appointed, are responsible for reminding synod secretaries of the need to inform Mission Resourcing of the mind of the synod whether the candidate is deemed ready to proceed further to the Assessment Panel.

## **Responsibilities of the Candidate**

The Candidates must supply evidence of:

- Have been baptised
- Have been confirmed, and in active membership in the Church
- Be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident (Must provide proof)
- **From 2018/19 all candidates, at the request of Trinity College, shall sit the IELTS exam.** Please note that, 6.0 Academic English language proficiency is an expectation for all stationed Presbyters and Deacons to English speaking appointments. All other language setting Presbyters and Deacons are expected to be competent in English (IELTS 5.0 or above). If you have any questions about this test please contact Mission Resourcing.
- Be committed to the Methodist Church of New Zealand and its Laws and Regulations.

## **Forms**

There are ten forms in the Candidates Application process. It is essential that all forms are filled in carefully, accurately and honestly. All of the forms must be completed on a computer, except the Police Vetting Form and Medical Report. All forms are on the disc provided with this booklet. The costs associated with the application process are to be paid by you, the candidate, unless stated below.

### **1) Set 1**

The first set of forms you need to complete are;

- **Police Vetting Consent Form**

Ordained ministry puts a person in a position of trust. The police vetting consent form allows the Church to access details of any recorded criminal convictions. If there are any records which raise concerns, further discussions will take place before a decision is made about your candidate's application.

A hard copy of the full process and the consent form is provided with this booklet. Please fill it in by hand and then post it to Mission Resourcing for processing.

- **Credit File Report & Financial Report**

The Church understands that many things in life including studying, can cause some financial stress. The purpose of the credit file report is to gather financial information for our financial advisor to assess.

The Credit File report must be completed online [www.mycreditfile.co.nz](http://www.mycreditfile.co.nz) and costs \$51.95 (My Veda Plus). Please note that Mission Resourcing will reimburse you for this but you must have a receipt. When posting the report to Mission Resourcing please attach the receipt and your bank account details for reimbursement.

- **Medical Report**

It is a requirement of the Church that all candidates are reasonably fit and healthy. A hard copy of the Medical report is provided with this booklet. Please complete the required parts of the form and then visit your Doctor, who will complete the rest of the form and gather the required information. Please note that all costs are to be carried by you, the Candidate.

A hard copy of this form is provided with this booklet.

- **Personal Data Report**

The purpose of this report is to gather information about you, such as details about your family, your education, your work history, NZ residency status, ethnicity, language, church membership as well as details about which ministry you are candidating for. Please note that this report also requires additional material, such as a passport photo, baptism certificate or letter, English Language test results (IELTS) etc. Please read the report carefully to ensure you include all necessary documents and complete all which is required.

You will find this form on the disk attached to the front of this booklet. Please also note that once you have completed this form (on a computer) you must print it out and physically sign the declaration in section eight.

These forms must be completed and sent directly to Mission Resourcing by the due date specified in the timeframe, usually by mid-October. All supporting documentation required must also be provided.

All reports will be checked by Mission Resourcing to ensure that all the criteria relating to this part of your application for candidating have been met. Please note that, applications will not be processed if they are received incomplete or late. You and your parish presbyter or Synod Convenor where appointed will be notified when it is completed.

## 2) Set 2

The second set of forms you need to complete are;

- **Personal Ministry & Leadership Report**

This report seeks information about your personal faith journey, your understanding and experience of leadership, society, Church and Methodism. You are also required to do a book/film review which is not associated with your employment or the church. A 500 word summary of one of Wesley's prescribed sermons is also required.

Please complete this form on a computer, then print it out and physically sign the declaration in section seven before sending it to Mission Resourcing.

- **Referee Report 1 & 2**

You must ask two people to be a referee. It is your choice as to who those referees will be, but they must be able to objectively comment on your suitability as a candidate for theological education and professional ministry formation. Please note that members of your immediate family are not suitable to act as referees.

The purpose of these reports is to get an independent view of your gifts, abilities and experiences. Please complete the required parts of the form before sending it to your referee.

- **Presbyter Report**

This report provides your Presbyter or Deacon with an opportunity to reflect on who you are, how you function in a variety of leadership and ministry situations and how you meet the criteria for ministry. If you are interested in Diaconal Ministry, your Presbyter should contact your Synod Deacon Advocate or the National Diaconate Co-ordinator to be part of the process.

Please complete the required parts of the form before sending it to your Presbyter or Deacon.

- **Parish Report**

This report provides your parish an opportunity to share their perspective on your ministry and leadership. If you have been with this parish for less than two years, you and you may choose to provide more than one Parish report (e.g. previous Parish).

Please complete the required parts of the form before sending it to your Parish.

- **Synod Report**

For the candidate to proceed to the Candidates Assessment Weekend, the Synod Ministerial meeting must approve and agree that the candidate is ready for assessment. Please note that the Synod may say “no” because it feels you are not ready and need more experience. It also may say “no” if it feels you are unsuitable for ministry training or practice. The Synod Secretary to the Ministerial Synod is responsible for conveying the result of the synod’s assessment to Mission Resourcing.

These forms must be completed and sent directly to Mission Resourcing by the due date specified on the timeframe. All reports will be checked by your parish presbyter or Synod Candidates Convenor where appointed to ensure that all the criteria relating to this part of your application for candidating have been met.

If your completed application meets the criteria **and** your Synod approves your candidacy, you will be approved to proceed to the Candidates Assessment. You will be advised of this in writing.

If the criteria are not met, or for some other reason it is felt that you are not ready to proceed, Mission Resourcing will advise you that your application cannot proceed at this time.

**Please also note;**

- A personal profile or psychological report may also be sought during the process. If required we will contact you with more details. The purpose of this report would be to understand how you engage with others and the world around you. It is also to help determine whether you are psychologically fit for Ordained Ministry.
- Applications will not be processed if they are received incomplete or late.
- Dates must be strictly observed
- No material will be accepted after the due date
- All questions must be answered.
- All requested supporting documents must be provided
- Referee reports may be checked for accuracy
- Please do **not** include large CV’s, folders, etc with your application. Everything you need should be contained in the application forms.
- Mission Resourcing and the Candidates Assessment Team reserves the right to declare an application invalid should the information supplied be found to be incorrect or incomplete. Failure to disclose information which a candidate could reasonably expect to be of material significance may lead to the subsequent expulsion of the candidate from the process, or disciplinary action.

If you have **any** questions ask Mission Resourcing as soon as possible.

## **Candidates Assessment Panel**

The National Candidates Assessment Panel usually takes place in May and is normally held in Auckland.

If your completed application meets the criteria **and** your Synod approves your candidacy, you will be required to attend the Candidates Assessment Panel. A letter or email will be sent to you from Mission Resourcing with the details once you have been approved by your Ministerial synod.

All candidates are assessed against the criteria set by the Church, which includes all references, your written material, all reports and participation at the Candidates Assessment Panel. The event includes interviews with the Assessment team and a number of other group processes (with other candidates).



The Assessment Team makes their recommendation for **all** candidates on the aforementioned criteria. The team can either approve your candidacy application or decline your candidacy application if you have not met all the criteria or if they feel you are not ready and need more experience. The team can also decline your candidacy application and state that you should not candidate again if they feel you are unsuitable for ministry training or practice. Please note that Mission Resourcing can recommend the above also.

The outcome of the Candidates Assessment Panel will be conveyed to the candidate, before leaving the event venue. A chaplain will be present at this time as well as throughout the event.

Following the conclusion of the event, the Candidates Assessment team will write a report on each candidate which will be sent to Mission Resourcing to distribute.

If the candidate is accepted, Mission Resourcing will send a letter to the Candidate, the candidate's parish presbyter and the SCC (where appointed) and Trinity College with the outcome and a copy of the report. Details about the style and language of ministry will be sent to the General Secretary to ensure it is presented and recorded at Conference.

## **Unsuccessful Candidates**

If your application is not approved, a letter and a copy of the report will be sent to the Candidate, the parish presbyter and SCC (where appointed) and the Synod Superintendent.

An appeal can be lodged on the grounds that there was an alleged abuse and/or incorrect use of candidating procedures. For more details please refer to page 17 – Appeals Process.

Unsuccessful candidates require timely pastoral support following the Assessment Panel, and parish presbyters/ SCC's and Synod Superintendents should be on standby to offer such support. Even though the unsuccessful candidate is given the substantive reason behind the panel's decision at the weekend itself, we note that the emotional turmoil often means this information is not taken in at the time. So this information may be repeated to the candidate upon request.

Please note that if you are not approved, you are most welcome to enter the candidating process again but applications are not permitted in consecutive years (e.g. If you are not approved at the 2018 assessment, you may re-candidate for the 2020 assessment). The reason for this delay is that we wish to see evidence in reports to reassure us that those matters raised by your first candidating have been successfully dealt with.

## **The Pathway to Ordination**

Successful candidates will be handed over to Trinity College for training, being Student Presbyters or Student Deacons, until the Principal informs Mission Resourcing that they are ready to be stationed as Probationer Ministers. Probationers normally serve 2 years in an appointment before they appear in their second year of ministry (it may be more for those serving in part time appointments) before the Probationers Assessment Panel, also organised by Mission Resourcing on behalf of the church. Probationers deemed ready for ordination will then become Ordinands.

Those Probationers who are passed by the Probationers Assessment Panel in the year Conference meets will attend the Ordinands' Retreat prior to Conference and be received into full connexion and ordained at Conference.

Those Probationers who are passed by the Probationers Assessment Panel in the years that Conference is not meeting will become Ordinands and will be received into full connexion by the President (at a suitable occasion held by the parish/synod) and then attend the next Ordinands' Retreat and be ordained at Conference.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. How does the Privacy Act 1993 apply to me in this situation?**

A. The Privacy Act statements for Mission Resourcing and Trinity Methodist Theological College are included in the Candidates Pack.

They explain your rights, and tell you how the Church uses the information you provide.

**Q. Do I need to complete all sections of the Application Forms?**

A. Yes, please complete every question. If the question is not relevant to you, write 'nil' or 'N/A' in that space so we know you have not overlooked the question.

**Q. What is a 'verified copy'?**

A. We ask for 'verified copies' of relevant documents with your application. A verified copy is a photocopy of an original document signed by someone of suitable standing, such as a Minister of Religion, a Kaumatua, Justice of the Peace or a Solicitor.

This person must see the original document and check the photocopy is a genuine and unaltered copy. They will need to stamp the copy with an official stamp (e.g. one they use for business purposes), or will need to write words to the effect of "This is a true and unaltered copy of the original document which I have sighted." The person must sign and date their statement or stamp on the copy.

You must ensure all your copies are clear and readable and that all parts of the document are copied (e.g. resident's permit stamps on a passport), including back pages if relevant.

**Please note:**

- **Do not** include a photocopy or fax of a verified copy. We require the original **verified** copy. Once received they become the property of the Methodist Church records. We do not send them back.
- Please **do not** send any **original** documents.

**Q. Help, I'm stuck!!**

A. If you have any problems completing the Candidates application forms, or are unsure what a question means, please read the relevant section in the guidelines.

- If you need more help, please telephone or email Mission Resourcing.

**Q. Are there any grounds upon which the church through Synod or the Candidates Assessment Team may say "No" or suggest further preparation?**

A. Yes. The Church assesses people on a variety of criteria. The Synod may say "no" because it feels you are not ready and need more experience. It also may say "no" if it feels you are unsuitable for ministry training or practice.

Mission Resourcing or the National Candidates Assessment Team may recommend "no" after due consideration. This "no" can be because of a failure to demonstrate the standards required, or on psychological, medical or financial grounds or failure to meet the criteria for Police Vetting. They may also say "no" if they feel you are not ready and need more experience or they may say "no and that you should not candidate again" if they feel you are unsuitable for ministry training or practice.

**Note:** Failure to provide all information, or provision of false information can result in your application and candidating not being approved or for immediate dismissal by Trinity College and the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

# Candidates Appeals Process

A Candidate, who is unsuccessful at the Candidates Assessment Event, can appeal within 21 days of the last day of the Candidates Assessment event.

- Any appeal is to be notified in writing to the Chair of the Mission Resourcing Board through the Synod Superintendent within 21 days of the last day of the Assessment weekend concerned in the appeal.
  - The appeal can only be lodged on the grounds that there was an alleged abuse and/or incorrect use of candidating procedures.
  - Any appeal must state specifically the part of the process on which the appeal is being made, outlining all the details of the appeal. No new evidence shall be submitted without the leave of the Appeals Committee.
  - No discussion of any appeal is to be entered into by the:
    - Candidate
    - Synod Superintendent or
    - Synod Candidates Convener/parish presbyterwith any member of the Candidates Assessment Team, other than the conversations indicated specifically in these processes.
  - The Appeals Committee should complete its work as soon as possible, though preferably at least three days before the next Mission Resourcing Board meeting.
  - The times and venue will be arranged by Mission Resourcing in consultation with the Appeals Committee.
  - The candidate will be entitled to one support person or legal counsel at the appeals meeting. The travel costs of the candidate and support person/legal counsel (excluding any other costs of legal counsel) as well as the costs of the Appeals Committee will be met by the Connexion.
  - The National Candidates Assessment Convenor may be called to provide evidence of the process which was followed. The Mission Resourcing Board will provide the Appeals Committee with all pertinent written material (letters, reports, transcripts) which will be circulated to the Appeals Committee by the Administrator. This information will also be made available to the appellant.
  - The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.
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## Spiritual Direction

A short Introduction by Elizabeth Hopner

All candidates are required to have a Spiritual Director and you are responsible for any cost associated with this.

### What Spiritual Direction is...

The relationship of Spiritual Direction is a holding in relationship with God. It is an invitation and empowerment to become aware, identify and clarify the movement of the Spirit and the action of God in the directee's life.

Spiritual Direction is a relationship which is undertaken with great care, on the part of the director and the directee. The primary focus of the relationship between directee and director, is the directee's relationship with God.

Spiritual direction may happen on a one-off occasion, or intermittently, and may have profoundly helpful and deep results. However, this is not seen in the same way as intentional spiritual

direction on a regular basis, for instance monthly or two monthly – or more frequently if desirable.

Spiritual direction can include teaching, coaching and pastoral counselling. However, the difference lies in the fact that its primary focus remains the relationship with God.

The aim of the relationship is to help the directee grow to inner freedom to respond to God's call and invitation. God is the primary spiritual director.

Jesus lays in front of us the ultimate model of this way of being in relationship.

Mutual trust and honesty is foundational to this relationship. The effectiveness of the relationship is governed by the honesty of the directee in the sharing of his or her cares and concerns, and stirring of emotions at the deepest level. St Ignatius of Loyola saw all our feelings as an expression of the spiritual life.

The director, through a prayerful life open to the presence of God, listens with great care and will honour whatever is shared. There is sometimes a place in spiritual direction for the director to share with the directee their own experience. In this instance it brings to mind the mutuality of relationship in the Trinity.

On occasion the function of spiritual direction can be described as that of being a midwife (or co-discerner and co-listener), in helping the directee to identify, clarify and articulate the action of God in his or her life, bringing to birth knowledge which is already there, but not yet named.

Listening to mind and body raises awareness of the movement of the Spirit within. The art of direction lies in inviting and empowering the directee to go deeper, until the directee is able to identify and articulate for his or herself the movement of the Holy Spirit.

It is a mentoring relationship touching the deep parts of our being, encouraging and holding the directee accountable to God's invitation and love and grace in his or her life. It is about finding God in the things we tend to ignore, in the things we choose not to think about, because they are too difficult or painful or make us feel uncomfortable. Most importantly spiritual direction is a companioning through the barren, dry desert places of the heart, as well as finding God in times of joy and celebration, and in the ordinary, simple, every-day events of our lives. It is about those special moments that in the rush and busyness of the current pace of life we easily skip over, or forget. Sometimes the encounter with God is so deep and personal that it is impossible to describe in human language.

In all these things, spiritual direction requires discretion and commitment to being in relationship with God, being accountable to God, and to another human being. It requires humility, deep faith, knowledge and wisdom.

A wide variety of forms of communication can be helpful in the process of spiritual direction. For example, dreams, visual, spoken, written resources, question and invitation, observation, reflective listening, humour, the engagement of mind, body and spirit. Patience, perseverance and ability to look and listen with the eyes and ears of the heart are essential.

Space for silent waiting, space for allowing grace to work, gives a special quality to the relationship between directee and director. If a challenge is needed, it is done gently and with compassion. The relationship with God is born out in the fruits of the Spirit.

### **What Spiritual Direction is not...**

Spiritual direction is not wrapping the directee in cotton wool; it is not avoiding risks; it is not avoiding the deepest issues; it is not taking away the directee's independence, nor crowding, nor demanding, nor judging, nor setting an agenda for the directee.

It is not categorizing, misinterpreting, dominating or manipulating; it is not sharing simply academic knowledge.

Spiritual direction is not putting words into the mouth of the directee, nor jumping ahead; it is not limiting communication to any one method, nor eliciting unnecessary information.

The role of director is not confined to clergy.

## **The title of Spiritual Director**

Is a Spiritual Director a Spiritual Companion? Spiritual Friend? Soul Friend?

Spiritual Direction is an historical term. Both Spiritual Companion or Friend, and Soul Friend, are explicit and express the personal nature of the deep trust in the relationship. They imply a mutuality of relationship. All titles have some limitations. Spiritual Direction implies formality and directiveness. Friend or Companion may be unclear so far as mutuality and boundaries are concerned.

My own feeling is that Spiritual Director still provides an understanding of the essence of the relationship, the aim of which is to seek the presence and guidance of the Spirit.

## **THE PRIVACY ACT 1993**

As it relates to Candidates for Ordained Ministry for  
the Methodist Church of New Zealand and Mission Resourcing

Mission Resourcing undertakes the candidate's application process work on behalf of the Methodist Church of NZ Conference. Information gathered and supplied in the process of a candidate's application will be used for the purpose of assessing the candidate's suitability for ministry. It will also form part of the Church's processes for training and assessment through Trinity College and Ordination Assessment

All application material supplied to Mission Resourcing will be made available to the National Candidates' Assessment team by the staff of Mission Resourcing. All material will also form part of your personnel file held by the Administration Division.

If a candidate's application is successful, the relevant information will be forwarded to Trinity Methodist Theological College and the Administration Division as part of the student's records.

If a candidate's application is unsuccessful, the originals of all application material will be retained on file in the Mission Resourcing offices.

During the candidating process, Mission Resourcing may from time to time require that application material be checked, or information clarified, and reserves the right to contact those who have supplied information for this purpose.

## **THE PRIVACY ACT 1993**

As it relates to Candidates for Ordained Ministry for  
the Methodist Church of New Zealand and Trinity Methodist Theological College

### **Use of personal information collected:**

Intending students are advised that the information sought on the application material, learning covenant and associated documents is required to enable Trinity Methodist Theological College to comply with its purposes and functions under the Education Act 1989. The information will be held by the College and used in the following ways:

1. Within Trinity College, personal information relating to progress in ministry training, as required by the Methodist Church of New Zealand, may be made available through the principal to the following bodies:
  - Board of Studies
  - Mission Resourcing
  - Ordination Assessment Group

- Stationing Committee or other connexional body responsible for deployment  
All information forwarded will have the written consent of the student concerned.
2. Within Trinity College, personal information will be available to members of the College staff. Information will be available for use in:
    - Your enrolment
    - Establishing and maintaining your records
    - Providing tuition, appropriate academic advice and support
    - Calculating fees and other charges
    - Providing student allowances, scholarships, or other financial service
    - Providing library and information technology services
    - Providing student services (e.g. tenancy, medical)
    - Maintaining order and discipline
  3. Trinity Methodist Theological College is also required by certain enactments to provide some personal information (typically your name, current address, date of birth, residential status and academic detail) to some other agencies. The agencies (or their successors) who may require the College to provide this information include:
    - The Ministry of Education
    - New Zealand Qualifications Authority
    - Ministry of Social Development
    - Inland Revenue Department
    - Department of Labour-Immigration New Zealand (where students are not New Zealand citizens or permanent residents)
    - New Zealand Police
    - Ministry of Justice
  4. Information about particular students may be supplied to the following agencies in the circumstances detailed below:
    - where the student concerned is enrolled in a course taught at another institution in association with Trinity College;
    - where the student concerned is transferring his/her records to that other institution or applying to enrol in a course taught at the institution;
    - where the student concerned has enrolled through Trinity College in a course which is an introductory or lead-in course for another institution and which may thereafter require the student to enrol at that other institution.
  5. Trinity College may supply to counsellors the grades of students for the purposes of academic counselling and support.
  6. Information held about students (not including grades or student loan/allowances/income details) may be supplied to researchers conducting academic research or research related to the welfare and well-being of students. If such research involves a survey, your agreement to participate will be sought in advance.
  7. Trinity Methodist Theological College may use a student's address and telephone number to forward mail and messages for them which have been received by the college.

### **Holding of personal information:**

The personal information supplied by students will be held within the college's record system. While a student remains enrolled at the college they will be asked to annually update any information that has changed. Information on educational progress will be retained by the college until ordination. After ordination any personal data, recommendations and official reports concerning ministry are transferred to the Connexional Office.

### **Previous study:**

Students who have previously enrolled with or studied at another institution or agency authorise Trinity College to verify details of that study with the institution(s) concerned.

**Failure to supply information:**

Students are advised that failure to supply the information requested by Trinity College, or the supply of incomplete or false information, may result in the termination of their study.

**Compliance with the Privacy Act 1993:**

Trinity College undertakes to collect, update, use, and store, disclose and exchange personal information in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1993, and subject to the conditions stated above.

Trinity College will, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, make available upon request a student's personal information to that student. Any appropriate corrections to that information will be made to ensure information held is accurate. Access by the student to confidential evaluative material is excluded.

Trinity College is required by law to appoint a privacy officer who receives all queries and complaints in the first instance. The Business Manager is the Privacy Officer (Office phone (09) 5212073; email [ngrundy@tcol.ac.nz](mailto:ngrundy@tcol.ac.nz)) (Revised February 2008)

The Methodist Church of New Zealand  
**Mission Resourcing**

Private Bag 11 903  
Ellerslie  
Auckland 1542

Phone (09) 525 4179  
Fax (09) 525 4346

[www.missionresourcing.org.nz](http://www.missionresourcing.org.nz)