

Report
Board of Ordained Ministry

Vitality. Transformational Leadership. Effectiveness.

These are some of the words to which we are drawn in today's Church. They speak to both the beauty and the urgency of ministry. And they speak with power to the work of the Board of Ordained Ministry. For ours is a work of deep discernment for the sake of the God Who Calls.

When a member of my church asks me about the work of the Board, I am always eager to tell of my awe for the diverse ways in which God calls and the diverse stories of human response. I remain enthralled with the innumerable avenues through which God beckons God's children into ministry.

Through varied people with varying gifts, God continues to share grace with the world.

In seeking to serve this God Who Calls, the Board engages in tasks that may at times look like just "processes," but are, in truth, paths that lead to deep discernment and lasting empowerment. The journey of questions and mentorship and assessments and interviews and site visits (and so much more) is a rich and powerful pilgrimage of deep listening, for the individual and for the community.

In this deep listening, it is our privilege and our responsibility to equip those who are called, in order that each may fully claim the gifts God has given, and may use them with joy.

In attending to the unique spiritual timbre God has given for ministry, the door is then opened for the very things we seek: vitality, effectiveness, and even transformation. We find that these words, when we hold them with care, tap into the great mystery of how God is at work in our midst.

This quadrennium has held many important changes for the Board, as reflected in previous reports. This year, in addition to our standing responsibilities, we have been tending to the need for greater staff support, to include staffing for recruitment; we have been exploring assessment tools in languages other than English, to care for our community; and we have made the transition from the Online Candidacy Application System (OCAS) to UMCARES.

We have joined with Conference leadership in envisioning the future of vibrant ministry, continued to evolve the written requirements of candidates to reflect current insights, and nurtured the individual journeys of persons under our care.

As this season comes to an end, I would offer a word of deep thanks to all the persons who serve on the Board, for their countless hours attending to matters of call and community, their willingness to wrestle with complex issues, their commitment to care for the persons responding to God's call, and above all their openness to the movement of the Spirit.

We also thank Beverly Karlovich for her indispensable administrative wisdom and care; her grace and diligence have been integral to our work. It has been a privilege and joy to serve among such faithful servant leaders.

Collectively, we understand that we are responding to a sacred calling to engage in discernment, be attentive to the movement of the Spirit, and celebrate what God is doing in our midst. It is our privilege to serve the God Who Calls.

Shawn Callender Hogan
Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry