



MCC[®]
METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCHES

СОВМІСНИЙ СЛУЖБЕЇ
МЕТРОПОЛІТАН

CLERGY MANUAL ADDENDUM

European Protocol

2019

Office of Formation and Leadership Development
E-Mail: OFLD@MCCchurch.net Web: ofld.mccchurch.org

Introduction

The European Protocol for MCC Ordination applies to:

- Residents of Europe who are preparing for ordination by MCC into vocational ministry; and
- Residents of Europe who are ordained by another denomination and seeking to transfer their credentials to MCC.

The process of becoming a professional clergyperson in Metropolitan Community Churches is managed by the [MCC Office of Formation & Leadership Development](#).

The [MCC Clergy Manual](#) contains a full explanation of the global ordination process, requirements, and expectations. The European Protocol for MCC Ordination is a supplement to the MCC Clergy Manual (see Chapter 1 of the MCC Clergy Manual) and addresses questions and processes that are particular to the context of ministry in Europe.

Preparing for Ordination in MCC (supplements Chapter 3 of the MCC Clergy Manual)

Discerning a Vocation

The Metropolitan Community Church is unique in its share of ministry between lay people and clergy. There are no areas of ministry which are not equally shared amongst God's people. Lay people as well as clergy preach, lead worship, design liturgy, celebrate the Sacraments, and serve in leadership. There is, therefore, a particular task of discernment that MCC enters into when it has to consider affirming a vocation to ordained ministry.

All Christian churches have a process of discernment as they consider whether or not to affirm an individual's sense of being called to ordered ministry. Within Catholic and Anglican traditions this discernment happens under the direction of a Bishop, within the Free Churches this discernment process happens through elected or appointed panels or committees. Regardless of the process, the Church has always needed to find a way to work out if a person who feels that God is calling them to ministry is

ready to start the training, might be ready in the future, or is mistaken in their sense of call.

In MCC Europe this discernment process happens in the following way:

Once a person begins to feel a sense of call to ordained ministry in MCC, they should discuss this with the pastor of their local MCC congregation. For those who may not have a local congregation, contact the Director of the Office of Formation and Leadership Development. After initial conversations about ministry have occurred, persons seeking ordination should contact the Office of Formation and Leadership Development (OFLD) to gather information about the requirements for ordination in Europe.

After these initial conversations, the person in discernment will be assigned to a Discernment Team, chosen from a pool of trained lay and clergy leaders in MCC, who will continue the discernment process through a series of meetings and interviews based on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Leadership in MCC. The Discernment Team will make a recommendation to the OFLD determining whether or not the person in discernment is ready to attend a Readiness to Enter Vocational Ministry (REVM) programme.

Readiness for Entering Vocational Ministry (REVM)

REVM is the beginning programme for preparation for ordained ministry in MCC. This programme is designed for individuals at the very beginning of their ordination process as well as for clergy in good standing from other denominations who want to transfer their credentials to MCC. Students who participate in this programme must be able to do so in English.

The application process to attend a REVM includes:

- Completion of the application form
- The endorsement of a local MCC church Pastor and Board of Directors or the Director of the Office of Formation and Leadership Development
- Two references outside of MCC: one personal and one professional
- Two brief essays (500-1000 words): Your Spiritual Journey and Your Involvement with MCC; Your Calling and Ideas for Future Ministry in MCC
- A letter from your GP (template provided)
- A report from a registered psychologist (in countries where this is possible--template provided)

- A police check (in countries where this is possible)
- A current CV
- Copies of certificates of any previous theological and higher education
- For clergy from other denominations, a letter of good standing (when possible)

Upon completion of the REVM the participants should:

1. Have an enhanced understanding and appreciation for their call to ministry, as well as a demonstrated ability to articulate that call (even as it is evolving).
2. Have an enhanced understanding of the distinctive nature and calling of Metropolitan Community Churches, and how their own calling intersects with this.
3. Have an enhanced understanding of ministerial ethics and vocational ministry in Metropolitan Community Churches.
4. Have developed some level of connection and collegiality with their cohort and Metropolitan Community Churches, more broadly, that will help to support a sustainable ministry in MCC.
5. Leave with tools for ongoing spiritual formation. Have an enhanced understanding of the practices that support the integration of sexuality, spirituality, and overall wellness.
6. Leave with a future virtual appointment with a member of the faculty to discuss a personalized initial Ministry Action Plan (MAP) outlining the steps to ordination in MCC and some ideas of how that might be individually tailored given personal experiences, requirements, and learning goals; as well as a decision (or pending decision) about official Student in Formation status with MCC.

Preparation and Formation for Vocational Ministry in MCC

Each person's MAP will contain specific requirements in three broad categories: Personal Spiritual Formation, Education for Vocational Ministry, and Relationship with the denomination.

Personal Spiritual Formation

In order to develop spiritual practices, which will help sustain a life-time of ministry, each year during the duration of the MAP, one or two spiritual practices will be engaged and reflected upon. Working with a Spiritual Director is also highly recommended. Information on spiritual practices and working with a Spiritual Director will be presented during REVM.

Education for Vocational Ministry

Faculty members for the REVM will assess participants' previous education and professional experience, as well as access to accredited theological education, to make specific recommendations about theological education. The theological education required for ordained ministry must be from an accredited institution and include basic topics that will equip one for the specific vocation to which they are called. There is also the expectation that there will be study and reflection on more contemporary theological studies such as post-colonialism, queer, feminist, ecological and liberation theology

There are also four required topics mandated by MCC and offered online:

- MCC History and Polity
- Queer History
- Sexuality Studies
- Diversity Studies

Relationship with Denomination

MCC is a diverse global movement and it is imperative that persons who want to be Professional Spiritual Leaders in this denomination have a broad experience of it. This section of the MAP will list ways one can continue to experience MCC through visiting a variety of congregations, attending General Conference and participating in Network Gatherings.

Supervised Ministry Experience

Relationship with the Denomination also includes the Supervised Ministry Experience, which is a primary component of this part of the MAP. REVM faculty will work with participants to identify possible Supervised Ministry settings that will further their vocational discernment and knowledge of MCC. All Supervised Ministry Experiences must be pre-approved by the Office of Formation and Leadership Development. The components of a Supervised Ministry Experience are:

- A Learning Covenant which spells out the specific goals for the student as well as the means by which the goals will be accomplished and a plan for how the student will be supervised for each goal.
- Weekly supervisory meetings with a trained Supervising Clergy
- The establishment of a Supervised Ministry Committee made up of lay people from the local congregation for the purpose of feedback and support to the student.

- Quarterly evaluations by the Supervising Clergy and Supervised Ministry Committee
- A final evaluation by the Supervising Clergy and Supervised Ministry Committee and endorsement by an MCC church Board of Directors which will become part of the student's ordination application.

Upon completion of the MAP, the Student in Formation should contact the Office of Formation and Leadership Development to make application for ordination.