



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## **MESA and SEMINARIES: PARTNERING TO BUILD THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE**



In partnership with others, the **Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization** (MESA) Ministry Team of the United Church of Christ's national setting works to support Authorized Ministers (commissioned, licensed and ordained) and Committees on Ministry throughout the UCC, by supporting the processes by which persons are authorized and the infrastructure for search and call in the denomination. MESA looks forward to direct partnerships with seminaries in order to support students and strengthen covenantal relationships.

### **MESA offers seminary students a connection to the wider church:**

- overview of ministry in the UCC, including workshops on the changing nature of ministry based on trends and statistics, and a comprehensive look at UCC polity regarding the diverse practices of Committees on Ministry;
- orientation to ministry opportunities and UCC search and call processes, with workshops on creating a UCC Ministerial Profile and building a digital presence;
- inspiration for excellence in ministry with congregations and in specialized settings, including workshops on navigating UCC call agreements, understanding ministerial oversight in the UCC, and the process for ecclesiastical endorsement;
- integration of the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, required by most Committees on Ministry for UCC authorization.

### **MESA offers seminary faculty collegiality in meeting the needs of the church for excellence in authorized ministry:**

- support in understanding the various forms of authorization in the United Church of Christ and the general expectations for ministerial formation;
- collaboration in preparing students for the UCC search and call process;
- specialized presentations and guest speakers on a wide variety of ministry-related topics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- tangible covenantal relationships as guests in UCC History, Theology and Polity courses as well as curation of UCC polity resources.

## **What UCC Students Are Saying about MESA's 1-Day On-Campus Search & Call Training:**

*"I have much to discern after graduation. But there IS a structure in place to help me."*

*"Worthwhile workshop."*

*"Wonderful, spirit-based."*

## **Members on Discernment (MIDs) on record with the United Church of Christ:**

- receive information on UCC scholarships;
- have a covenantal relationship with their home church and related association;
- may attend [a MESA-hosted MID gathering](#) once in their discernment process;
- network with other MIDs through online groups and in-person events, including General Synod.

## **Seminaries serving UCC Members in Discernment and Authorized Ministers:**

- are encouraged to connect to regional and national UCC partners in order to share in the building of the church for the future;
- if possible, name a staff liaison for UCC relationships;
- invite a search and call training from MESA every other year;
- offer continuing education and ongoing professional development for alumni and area clergy, including information on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, search and call, and oversight processes;
- collaborate with MESA to resource Committees on Ministry within the seminary's geographic region;
- through the UCC national setting: connect with Wider Church Ministries to explore global immersion opportunities and volunteer service years or to host visiting international guests; contact Justice and Witness Ministries to learn about justice immersion centers, to offer Our Whole Lives human sexuality education training and/or Justice Leaders trainings, and other opportunities.

For further information contact:

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