

THE MARKS

of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ

AN ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



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Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) Ministry Team
United Church of Christ
700 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
ucc.org/ministers

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Assessing the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers

General Directions

1. As you approach the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*, whether for personal discernment, professional assessment, or the development of a Member in Discernment Portfolio, approach the Marks as **an invitation for insight**, not a pass/fail measure of perfection. Use this opportunity, first of all, for your own self-assessment in any season of ministry.
2. There are four sections within the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*: Spiritual Formation for Ministry, UCC Identity for Ministry, Personal and Professional Formation for Ministry, and Knowledge and Skills for Ministry. After becoming familiar with the overall content, **focus on the Marks and on each section holistically**. When taken as a whole, the *Marks* might be compared to the intricate art forms of the mosaic and the mandala: both hold in creative tension an attention to detail and an appreciation of the whole. Balance your study of the details and of the whole.
3. While lengthy, the list of marks in the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* is not a complete or closed canon. As you engage the *Marks* through personal reflection and covenantal conversation, **you may identify additional marks** throughout the four sections that acknowledge cultural marks of readiness, diverse learning edges and styles, additional talents and aptitudes. Feel welcome to extend the list of marks given using the blank spaces in this workbook.
4. Remember that no one is expected to reflect expertise in all of these marks to the same degree, or even to achieve final mastery of each mark. We each have particular interests, gifts and strengths as well as areas for further growth and development. The *Marks* should serve not only as a tool of assessment for authorization but also as **a guide for lifelong learning** and ongoing professional development throughout ministry, even into retirement.

5. Make notes regarding your experiences, training, and coursework that demonstrate your competencies in each of the sections. **Consider a variety of ways in which your skills can be documented** (for example, not only through a transcript or résumé but also through stories and case studies), and be creative in thinking about ways to meet your needs for continued learning. Members in Discernment share this conversation with an advisor, and together build a plan of action for developing knowledge and skills; authorized ministers may consider using the assessment and action plan format to prepare for a Committee on Ministry informational review.
6. Especially for Members in Discernment:
 - a. The documentation of competencies and the ensuing action plan based on the *Marks* become foundational pieces for one's Member in Discernment Portfolio. Developing the Portfolio is **a journey of integration rather than a task of reiteration**, and it in turn becomes a cornerstone for the Ordination Paper. Organize the portfolio around each of the four sections of the *Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers*, using the assessment rubrics in this document.
 - b. After completing this Marks Assessment in conversation with an advisor, write four integrative essays – one for each section of the *Marks* – demonstrating integration of the characteristics and abilities outlined. As addenda, include documentation (i.e., evidence of competencies) for the *Marks*. Together these will comprise the **Member in Discernment Portfolio**, to be submitted to the Committee on Ministry for review.

Assessing the Marks: Progress Sheet

Name: _____ Initial Assessment Date: _____

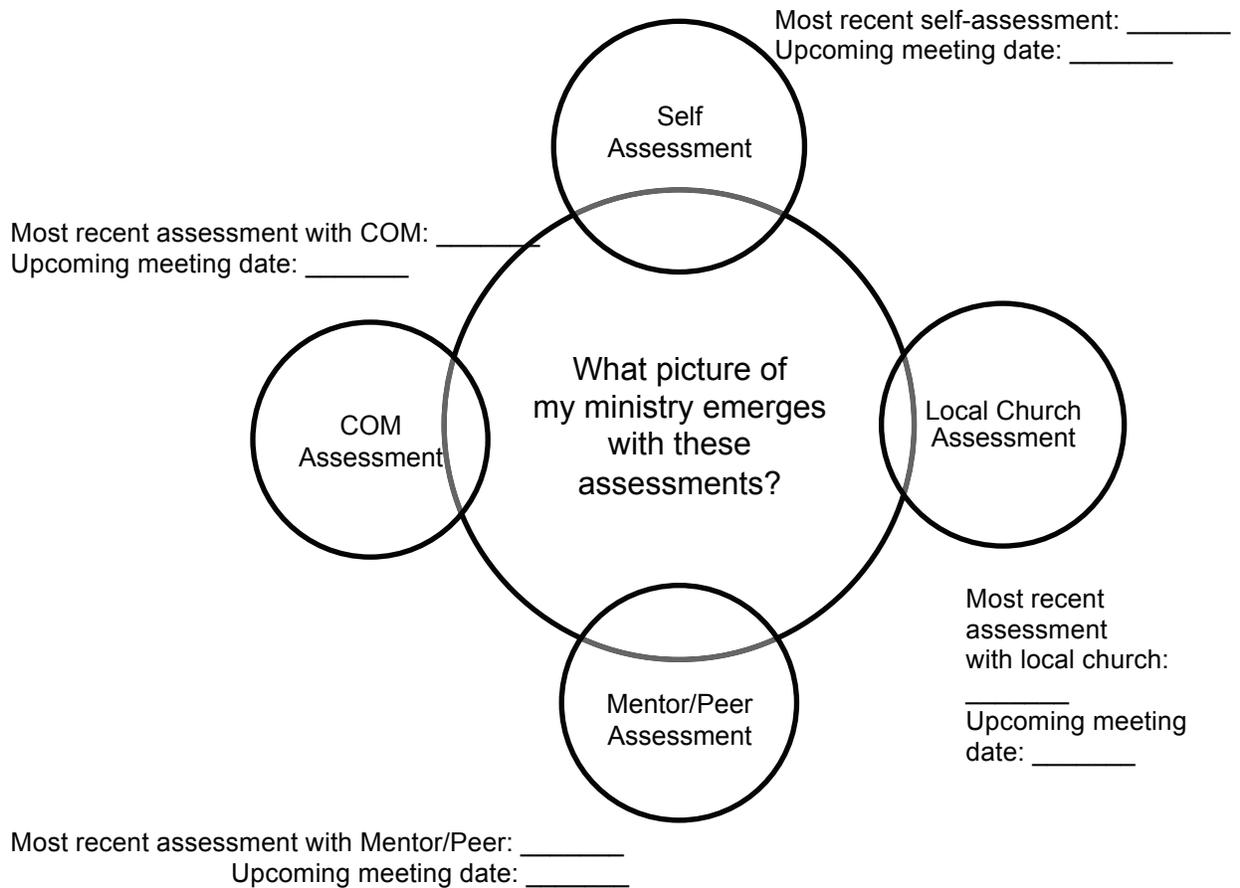
Association/Conference: _____

Advisor/Mentor (for MIDs): _____

Peer/Colleague (for authorized ministers): _____

Season of Discernment: _____
(e.g. Member in Discernment, Periodic Review of Authorized Minister, Privilege of Call)

Assessment Overview: *In the spaces below, note the dates of each assessment conversation with these covenantal partners, and indicate the anticipated date for continuing conversations.*



**Assessment with the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers
Spiritual Foundations for Ministry (Section 1)**

1. A lived faith showing love of God, trust in Jesus, and openness to the Holy Spirit.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
2. Devotion to the word of God as revealed through scripture and Christian traditions.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
3. Commitment to life-long spiritual growth and practice, individually and in community.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
4. A sense of being called by God and the community to authorized ministry in the church.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
5. Openness to continuing discernment of one's call in community.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
Discuss and decide what ACTIONS are needed for continued growth in Spiritual Foundations for Ministry.	No further work needed	An area for informal continuing development	Formal formation needed; specify learning plan	Additional notes	

**Assessment with the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers
UCC Identity for Ministry (Section 2)**

	ASSESSMENT				
1. Acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as sole Head of the Church.	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
	ASSESSMENT				
2. A passion for the oneness of the body of Christ as expressed through commitment to ecumenism, justice, and the full embrace of all persons in the radical hospitality of God.	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
	ASSESSMENT				
3. Active membership in a local church of the United Church of Christ.	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
	ASSESSMENT				
4. An understanding of the concept of covenant and how it informs the nature, purpose, and polity of the United Church of Christ.	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
	ASSESSMENT				
5. A willingness to live in the covenants of mutual accountability that characterize authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ.	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark

6. Ongoing demonstration of commitment to the United Church of Christ.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
7. Stewardship of resources, including financial support of the church in all of its settings.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
8. Participation in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including the conference/ association and local church.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
9. The ability to articulate diverse histories that comprise the United Church of Christ, to situate them in the broader evolution of faith traditions and to relate them to the theology, polity, and practices of the Member's local church, association, and conference.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
10. The ability to explain and work within the current polity of the UCC and its denominational structure, and to describe the covenantal relationships among the General Synod, national setting, conferences, associations, and local congregations of the United Church of Christ.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark

11. The ability to share key elements of the UCC's statement of faith, constitution with its preamble, and bylaws regarding the governance, mission, and theologies of the UCC and their implications for the life of the church.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
12. The ability to articulate the UCC's commitment to being a united and uniting, multiracial and multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all and just peace church.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
13. The ability to envision how the UCC in its various settings may respond to religious, social, economic, and political trends, changing demographics, and other emerging factors.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
14. The ability to use and promote the informational and educational resources available through UCC publications and websites.	ASSESSMENT				
	Demonstrates no understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates basic understanding of this Mark	Demonstrates the ability to integrate this Mark into one's ministry	Demonstrates the ability to engage and critique this Mark in light of one's ministry	Actively exercises leadership in the broader church around this Mark
Discuss and decide what ACTIONS are needed for continued growth in UCC Identity for Ministry.	No further work needed	An area for informal continuing development	Formal formation needed; specify learning plan	Additional notes	