

USING THE DRAFTED MANUAL ON MINISTRY

An initial draft of the re-visioned MOM was presented by the Habakkuk Group to judicatory staff, seminary partners, Committee on Ministry members, and national and ecumenical colleagues at AM21 2016 in San Antonio. Feedback received in San Antonio asking for clarifications has been incorporated into the 2017 drafted MOM, which will be used for Regional AM21 events. Feedback received in San Antonio raising questions about concepts drafted by the Habakkuk Group has been incorporated into a discussion guide for the wider church’s ongoing conversation.

The following charts overview which aspects of the drafted MOM received broad affirmation in San Antonio and can be considered “**ready to use**” by COMs, and which aspects of the drafted MOM received more questions than affirmations and should be considered “**still in discernment.**” Those items and ideas “still in discernment” will benefit greatly from the wider church’s thoughtful engagement and feedback, which can be facilitated in part through use of the discussion guide.

SECTION 1 (Theological Grounding)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 1 ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION

The Habakkuk Group’s conclusion based on its theology of ministry and ordination – specifically, that the UCC might shift to one form of authorized ministry – is an idea that remains in discernment at this time. A Discussion Guide is provided in the back of this drafted Manual on Ministry (and as a separate document) to encourage the wider church’s conversation on how many/what forms of authorization best meet the needs of the Church for the 21st century.

READY TO BE USED

- The description of covenantal polity can be used by Committees on Ministry and Conferences/Associations.
- The theology of ministry and ordination did not receive critical feedback or substantial edits at AM21 in San Antonio. (The implications of this theology are still in discernment and conversation.)
- The revised Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministers are affirmed and ready to be used. A new assessment rubric and Journaling the Journey are available through UCC Resources.
- The faithful and effective marks for Committees on Ministry received affirmation, with requests for additional tools for training and assessing the ministry of Committees on Ministry.

SECTION 2: ARTICLE I (Members in Discernment)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 2 ARTICLE I ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

<p>STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The concept of Member in Discernment with Limited Standing is still in discernment and conversation, with questions raised about oversight, transferability, language (“limited”? “provisional”?), and distinctions between current practices of licensure and the proposed limited standing.</p>
<p>READY TO BE USED</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The overall description of the Member in Discernment process, with allowance for local expressions of the process and requests for additional resources related to aspects of the process that may be new to some Associations (e.g. the encouragement of a Local Church Discernment Committee).</p>

SECTION 2: ARTICLE II (Ministers from Ecumenical Bodies)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 2 ARTICLE II ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

<p>STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The feedback at AM21 San Antonio raised questions for clarification, however the processes and ecumenical relationships were not flagged for ongoing discernment.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final adoption of Mutual Recognition and Orderly Exchange between the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada must be approved by both denominations. Guidelines for the interim process can be found at http://www.ucc.org/ministers_regional-ministers.</p>
<p>READY TO BE USED</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The entirety of Section 2 Article II is ready to be used, understanding that final approval is still required between the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Note that ecumenical agreements only pertain to Ordained Ministers, so any consideration of varying the UCC’s three forms of authorization will not impact existing ecumenical agreements.</p>

SECTION 2: ARTICLE III (Ministerial Standing)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 2 ARTICLE III ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The feedback at AM21 San Antonio provided overall affirmation for Section 2 Article III, and several edits were received for the revised Ministerial Code. Continued feedback on the Code will be welcomed by the Habakkuk Group as Committees on Ministry engage its use. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The proposal of “Omega Standing” received thoughtful questions in the feedback from AM21 San Antonio. Alternate suggestions for the name/title of this new standing are welcomed. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Here again it’s worth noting that the concept of MID with Limited Standing is still in discernment.
READY TO BE USED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The entirety of Section 2 Article III is ready to be used, noting the above encouragement for feedback related to Omega Standing, MID with Limited Standing, and the Ministerial Code.

SECTION 2: ARTICLE IV (Covenants and Endorsements)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 2 ARTICLE IV ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The feedback at AM21 San Antonio provided overall affirmation for Section 2 Article IV, with clarification questions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Habakkuk Group encourages reflections and conversations on an expanded use of ordination for ministry in settings beyond the Local Church and traditional institutions and/or for calls that may or may not include full-time compensation.
READY TO BE USED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The entirety of Section 2 Article IV is ready to be used.

SECTION 2: ARTICLE V (Accountability and Support)

BASED ON THE FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS/IDEAS IN SECTION 2 ARTICLE V ARE “STILL IN CONVERSATION” (see Discussion Guide) OR “READY TO BE USED”:

STILL IN DISCERNMENT AND CONVERSATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The proposal of “Admonishment” as a new outcome for the Fitness Review process received thoughtful questions in the feedback from AM21 San Antonio. Alternate suggestions for the name/title of this new outcome are welcomed. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Here again it’s worth noting that the concept of Member in Discernment with Limited Standing is still in discernment.
READY TO BE USED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The entirety of Section 2 Article V is ready to be used.

FEEDBACK

During 2017, the Habakkuk Group will continue to receive feedback on the drafted Manual on Ministry as it is discussed at AM21 regional events and as Committees on Ministry engage the materials (putting some portions to use and holding some portions in conversation). [Feedback forms](#) can be sent to Rachel Hackenberg (hackenbergr@ucc.org and/or 700 Prospect Ave, Cleveland OH 44115) for the Habakkuk Group’s consideration. Some Associations may choose to use materials presented in this drafted MOM as their method of discernment and engagement, with the understanding that changes and clarifications (particularly related to the topics “still in discernment”) will not be finalized until after 2017.