

United Church of Christ Covenant and Polity
2020-2021 Syllabus

Session 1

Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry:

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

- Being called to authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ.
- Continuing discernment of one's call in community.
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship.

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity, and theology.
- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ

Building Transformational Leadership Skills

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.

Participating in Theological Praxis

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity.
- Articulating a theology and practice of ministry consistent with the UCC Manual on Ministry.

Strengthening inter and intra-personal assets

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.
- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.

First half of class: Services of Authorization in the United Church of Christ
Local Church Installation of Officers, Service of Ordination, Service of Installation

Second half of class: Justice Issues and the United Church of Christ

What are some of the most important practical justice issues that we deal with day to day within the United Church of Christ-particularly through the 3 loves. (i.e. salaries of our employees or called pastors, working towards creation care, issues around hunger, addiction)?

Guest Speaker (s) from Justice and Witness Team

For Next Session-Read Catholics in the United Church of Christ-\$5 to download PDF

<https://www.uccresources.com/products/catholics-in-the-united-church-of-christ-luti-and-warner?variant=711091177>

Also read <https://www.ucc.org/about-us/hidden-histories-the-calvin-synod-500-years>

And visit www.bethlen.com/

Session 2

Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry:

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ.
- Holding active membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ
- Participating in the various settings of the United Church of Christ
- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity, and theology.
- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ

First half of class: Discussion of Catholics in the United Church of Christ and New Member Orientation for all people whether they come from other Christian Traditions or not.

Second half of class: A Hidden History Among Us- The Calvin Synod Representative from Bethlen Communities

Session 3

Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry:
Participating in Theological Praxis

- Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships of the United Church of Christ.

Class: Ecumenism. How do we maintain the integrity of our identity in the United Church of Christ in the midst of varying Christian Traditions and other faiths traditions and still work within the ecumenical community?

The impact of other faith traditions on the United Church of Christ. The impact of the United Church of Christ on other faith traditions.

Guest Speaker-Liddy Barlow, Executive Director of Christian Associates of Southwestern Pennsylvania

Paper for next session: Describe a difficult encounter with a person or persons who are not members of the United Church of Christ and how you gave witness to the United Church of Christ. (Hint to students seeking ecclesiastical authorization: this may be included in your portfolio as your case study.)

1. Describe the setting or situation.
2. Name the participants (Please use your own name but use pseudonyms for other persons.)
3. Verbatim:

Mary: (what did Mary Say?)

John: (what did John Say?)

Meredith or you: (what did you say?)

(And so forth... or course you will not remember everything that everyone said, but get the general gist of the conversation)

4. What were my strengths in the conversation?
5. How did I feel during the conversation?
6. What was I thinking during the conversation?
7. How might I have approached this differently?

Overall, I felt _____ (how?) about my responses.

Session 4

Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry:

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity, and theology.
- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ

Building Transformational Leadership Skills

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Witnessing in the public square God's redeeming power.

Participating in Theological Praxis

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity.
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching and ecclesial and community leadership.
- Articulating a theology and practice of ministry consistent with the UCC Manual on Ministry.

Strengthening inter and intra-personal assets

- Demonstrating excellent communication skills.

Class: Discussion of verbatims

Updates on General Synod.

The anatomy of a Resolution.

The job of a delegate

Guest speakers: Delegates to General Synod

Summer assignment-How would you teach History and Polity of the United Church of Christ to a confirmation class without boring them silly?

For viewing and reading -Videos, resolutions, and important decisions of General Synod.