



# *Certification*

**in Specialized Ministries in  
The United Methodist Church**

## **Music Ministry**



### **Educational Requirements**

Individuals seeking professional certification in music ministry in The United Methodist Church must meet the standards set by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry's Division of Ordained Ministry. These include successful completion of five (5) certification courses relating to music ministry. Persons are certified by their conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) in cooperation with GBHEM.

Courses are designed to provide graduate academic experience for persons to qualify them for certification. Other requirements for certification include personal and church qualifications and experience in the area of music ministry as determined by GBHEM.

The five (5) courses include theories and methods of teaching the Bible, exploration of the pedagogical and theological bases for ministries, and equipping persons as disciples for the transformation of the world. Courses also include an understanding of The United Methodist Church, its structure, curriculum, and resources.

Each course must be offered for no less than two (2) semester (or equivalent quarter) hours of graduate academic credit. All certification courses must be taken at a United Methodist seminary or approved graduate schools. Exceptions may be made for other seminaries on the University Senate-approved list in consultation with an annual conference BOM and GBHEM.

Three of the five courses may be taken online.

Candidates may participate in more than one course each year. A maximum of ten (10) years is allowed for the certification studies in ministry careers. Two years' experience working in specialized area is required for certification. Experience is defined as a contractual agreement with supervision, accountability, evaluation, and continuing education in a specialized ministry area. Sufficient experience is approved by the annual conference BOM and may also require pre-approval.

### **Core Competencies for certification in Music Ministry**

1. Ability to develop and administer a music program that leads a congregation in inspirational worship and theological understandings of ways to express their faith through music and song.
2. Skills in choral conducting, service playing and accompaniment if an organist or pianist, choral arranging, selection of music and hymns for liturgical seasons and worship experiences.
3. Knowledge of Bible and theology, the relationship to music, and ways Bible and theology can be taught through music.
4. Understanding of the importance of hymnody and music in the United Methodist tradition and an ability to honor the tradition of the United Methodist movement through music.
5. Demonstrated leadership in the music life of a congregation and a commitment to its music ministry.



## Required Courses for Music Ministry

1. **TEACHING BIBLICAL FAITH:** A study of the biblical message in the Old and New Testaments and the relation of the Bible to music ministry.
2. **TEACHING THEOLOGY:** Thinking theologically about music ministry, empowering laity as theologians and exploring Christian doctrines
3. **MUSIC MINISTRY:** Examination of the meaning of ministry within the context of Christian faith and an exploration of the meaning and practice of music as a specialized ministry career. The following areas are included: church liturgy and worship; experience of singing in church music repertoire from all periods; organizing and directing choirs for children, youth, and adults, instruction and experience in hymn selection and use of the lectionary; music in Christian education; church music organization and staff relationships.
4. **SPECIALIZED SKILL DEVELOPMENT:** Practice of specialized skills needed for the functional areas listed above in music ministry. Instruction and experience in the following are required: (a) choral conducting, (b) service playing and accompaniment for pianists and organists, (c) choral arranging and (d) personal growth, communication and staff relationships. In some cases these courses will be taught in an integrated format.

5. **UNITED METHODIST STUDIES:** Understanding of and grounding in United Methodist doctrine and polity, and the practice of ministry. The course may include a study of doctrine, general rules, social principals, and polity of the UMC as found in the *Book of Discipline*; historical issues in UMC polity (organization and structure of contemporary United Methodism).

**GBHEM may accept** the two (2) courses in Bible and theology required for other areas of certification as meeting the requirements for music ministry certification when these courses have been taken within the past 10 years and a special assignment related to music ministry is completed in consultation with GBHEM.

### Should I seek Professional or Paraprofessional Certification?

**Professional certification** is available to persons with an undergraduate degree and graduate credit courses at a United Methodist seminary, or approved graduate school, or students graduating from a United Methodist-related college, where they have completed the required courses in an area of specialization and served two years in a specialized ministry area.

**Paraprofessional certification** is available to persons who may not have an undergraduate degree and are working in areas of specialized ministry. Paraprofessional certification does not carry academic credit and is designed for persons seeking training in a specialized ministry as a worker or volunteer.



#### General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

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