

# CERTIFICATION

in Specialized Ministries in  
The United Methodist Church

 **HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY**  
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry  
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## Parish Nurse

### About Parish Nurse Ministry

Individuals seeking professional certification in United Methodist parish nursing must meet the standards set by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), Division of Ordained Ministry. These include completion of a bachelor's degree in nursing and completion of the Foundations in Faith Community Nursing Course provided by Church Health Center (or equivalent as determined by GBHEM).

While other organizations offer certification in faith-community nursing, this certification is explicitly United Methodist in that it entails education in United Methodist history, doctrine, polity, resources and mission.

- **Nurses who are ordained, or plan to be ordained,** should pursue the education process delineated for Ordained Certification on this page.
- **Nurses who are local pastors** may pursue either the ordained education path or the Certified Lay Minister path.

### Core Competencies for both Lay and Ordained Certification in United Methodist Parish Nursing

### Education Paths for Ordained or Lay Certification

Certification in United Methodist Parish Nursing is available to clergy and lay people. The educational process is different for these two categories.

- **Nurses who are lay people, and who expect to remain lay people,** should pursue the Certified Lay Minister training route toward certification. Visit [www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/certified-lay-minister](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/certified-lay-minister) or send a message to [info@UMCdiscipleship.org](mailto:info@UMCdiscipleship.org) for more information.

1. Understanding of holistic wellness with skills in assessment and intervention in physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual dimensions of health
2. Skills in teaching and promoting good health practices
3. Understanding of relevant legal issues, standards of practice, code of ethics, and Safe Sanctuaries practices
4. Knowledge of the history and philosophy of parish nursing
5. Communications skills with individuals and groups
6. Knowledge of The United Methodist Church's structure, polity, resources, program and mission

## Other requirements for both Lay and Ordained Certification in United Methodist Parish Nursing

Certification students must hold an active nurse's license in the state where practicing.

Each candidate should express a commitment to continuing education that includes a planned program to enrich both personal and professional growth. Such a program shall include: (1) reading; (2) study in individual and group learning events; (3) participation in professional, community, denominational, and ecumenical groups; (4) renewal of spiritual life; and (5) evaluation by an immediate supervisor.

Other requirements for United Methodist certification in specialized ministry apply.

Candidates for certification are certified by their conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) in cooperation with GBHEM.

## Certification for Clergy Parish Nurses

Deacons and elders (or those in candidacy for ordination) seeking certification as a United Methodist parish nurse, must complete the general core competencies for parish nursing as well as the requirements for ordination. Other requirements for certification include personal and church qualifications and experience in the area of parish nursing, as determined by GBHEM.

Students must complete their graduate studies within ten years. Two years' experience working in parish nursing is required. Experience is defined as a contractual agreement with supervision, accountability, evaluation and continuing education in the area of specialized ministry. Sufficient experience is assessed by the student's annual conference BOM, and may also require BOM pre-approval.

## Requirements for Clergy Seeking Certification in United Methodist Parish Nurse Ministry

### Skills Courses

- A bachelor's degree (at minimum) from a college or university recognized by the University Senate

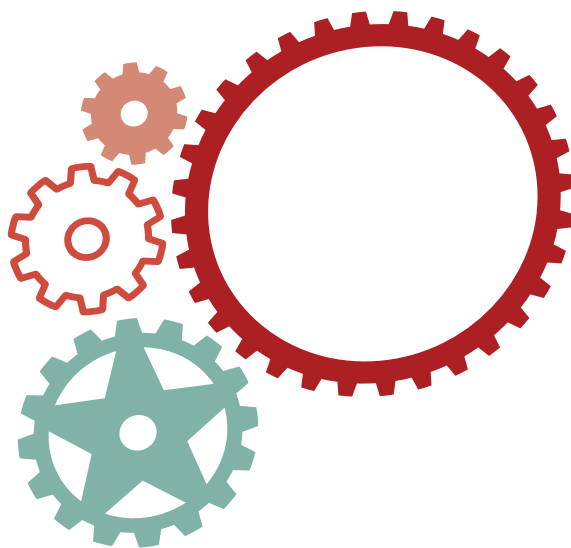
- Completion of the Foundations of Faith Community Nursing course offered through Church Health Center (or equivalent training as approved by GBHEM)

### Graduate Education

The ordained certified United Methodist parish nurse must complete one of the following options in graduate education:

- Master's degree in nursing or public health (option for deacons or candidates for deacon's orders)
- Master's degree in divinity (option for elders, deacons or candidates for either ordination)
- Master's degree in theology (available to deacon or candidates for deacon's orders)
- Eight graduate semester hours in the area of specialization at an accredited institution recognized by the University Senate, such as nursing, public health or counseling (option for deacons or candidates for deacon's orders)

The ordained certified United Methodist parish nurse must also complete the Basic Graduate Theological Studies (B.G.T.S.) courses required for ordination, at a theological school recognized by the University Senate.



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