



**HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY**

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# MINISTRY OF ENDORSED CLERGY



Chaplain (Major) Amor Del Rosario,  
Army National Guard

## Ministry Beyond the Church Doors

In addition to serving in the local church, ordained or licensed clergy may be appointed to ministries of chaplaincy or pastoral care that extend Christ's love and justice into the world. The United Methodist Endorsing Agency provides endorsement on behalf of The United Methodist Church for chaplains and other ministries of pastoral care in settings such as the military, healthcare, prisons, children's homes, retirement communities, workplaces, and counseling centers. Many of these settings require ecclesiastical endorsement for employment.

Endorsement signifies that the individual is spiritually grounded, ecclesiastically accountable, pastorally proficient, able to work collegially in a pluralistic environment, and committed to offering appropriate spiritual care for all persons in their ministry setting.

Within The United Methodist Church, endorsement affirms that a person is eligible to be appointed to an extension ministry under ¶344.1.b of *The Book of Discipline*.

## Chaplaincy and Government Employment

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects and accommodates the religious beliefs and practices of citizens. When individuals are entrusted to government

care (e.g., military, veterans' healthcare, and correctional facilities), the state assumes responsibility for their well-being. Chaplains provide or facilitate religious and spiritual care for these individuals.

These settings require chaplains with strong pastoral care skills who can serve within structured protocols and systems. Chaplains become part of a unique community, offering individual and group counseling, supporting organizations during traumatic events, leading worship, providing religious education, nurturing spiritual wellbeing, and honoring the dead.

## Healthcare Chaplaincy

Chaplains in healthcare settings (e.g., hospitals, palliative care, and hospice) accompany patients, families, and staff through illness, disability, dying, and death. They collaborate with medical professionals, doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and social workers, and provide spiritual assessment and care. Healthcare chaplains may lead worship, offer sacraments, support staff, help organizations respond to major traumatic events, and serve on ethics committees addressing complex questions in modern medical practice.

## Preparing for Specialized Ministries

Endorsed ministry requires professional preparation beyond the minimum expectations for clergy in the *Book of Discipline*. Clergy must meet all the requirements to

serve as deacons, elders, or local pastors in addition to the requirements for endorsement. Clergy develop these required competencies through a combination of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), employer-provided training, academic coursework, professional certification or licensing, seminars, self-study, and related experiences.

## Approved Endorsement Settings

- Children's Homes
- Clinical Pastoral Education
- Healthcare (Hospital, Hospice, Veterans Affairs)
- Law Enforcement
- Life Coaching
- Military (Army, Navy, Air Force, National Guard, Reserves)
- National Security Settings (Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), United States Secret Service (USSS))
- Prisons
- Retirement Communities
- Spiritual Direction
- Therapeutic Counseling (Pastoral Counseling, Mental Health)
- Workplace Chaplaincy
- Other Pastoral Care Ministries

## Requirements for Ecclesiastical Endorsement

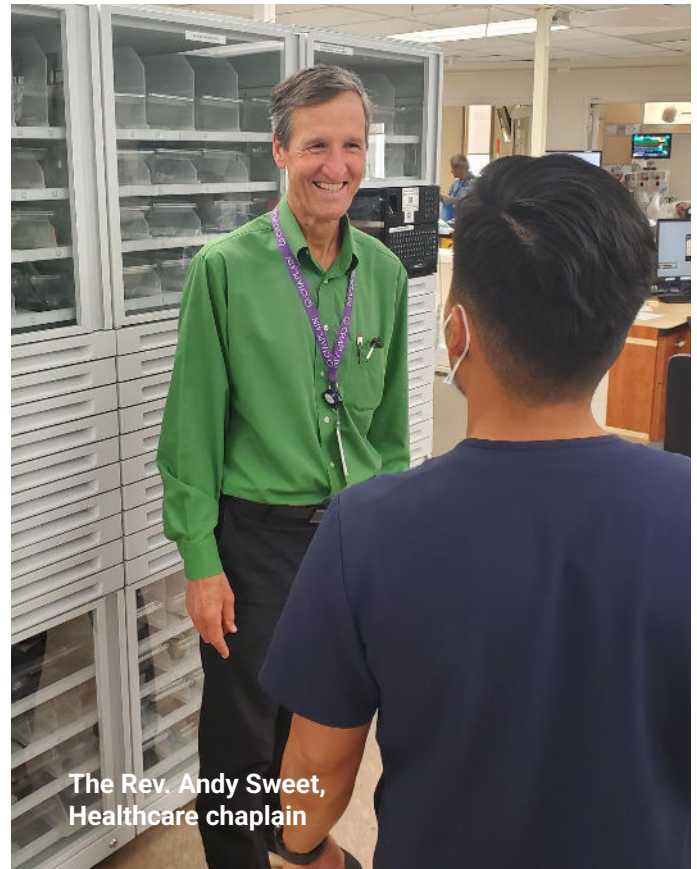
- Provisional or full connection elder; provisional or full connection deacon; associate member; or licensed local pastor
- Only elders in full connection may be endorsed for active-duty military chaplaincy.
- Provisional elders may be endorsed for military chaplaincy in the Reserve or Guard.
- Approval from the applicant's bishop for service in the requested setting
- Professional training and certification appropriate to the ministry context

## The Application Process

Learn more and start your application at [gbhem.org/umea](http://gbhem.org/umea).

You will need to provide:

- Basic personal information
- Three short essays
- Two personal references (with contact information)



The Rev. Andy Sweet,  
Healthcare chaplain

- Contact information for your bishop and district superintendent
- Application fee payment

## The Interview

Applicants are interviewed by a panel of experienced endorsees. The panel evaluates:

- A sense of God's call
- A coherent theory of ministry in a Wesleyan context
- Understanding of the institutional setting
- Ability to work collaboratively in pluralistic environments
- Capacity to connect meaningfully with others
- Moral and emotional stability
- Willingness to grow and learn
- Self-awareness
- Healthy spiritual and emotional practices
- Commitment to ongoing connection with The United Methodist Church

Following the interview, applications proceed to the GBHEM Board of Directors' Endorsing Committee for a final decision.