

1 **Section 5 Part 2 A General Commission on Ministry Competency**  
2 **Areas**

3 **Competency Areas**

- 4 1. Biblical Knowledge  
5 2. Church Administration and Planning  
6 3. Communication  
7 4. Cross Cultural and Anti-Racism Experience 5. Ecumenism  
8 6. Education and Leader Development  
9 7. Ethics  
10 8. Evangelism  
11 9. Mission of the Church in the World  
12 10. Pastoral Care  
13 11. Proclamation of the Word  
14 12. Spiritual Development  
15 13. Stewardship  
16 14. Theology  
17 15. Understanding of Heritage Competency  
18 16. Worship

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20 **Competency Described**

21 **BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE**

22 Be rooted and grounded in scripture and able to interpret and apply the scriptures in ways  
23 that are appropriate to original and contemporary contexts.

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25 **Outcomes**

- 26 • Practice regular Bible study as a spiritual discipline;  
27 • Read biblical texts from both testaments effectively for preaching and worship,  
28 interpreting them in light of the gospel and relating them to the life of faith today;  
29 • Analyze biblical texts using current scholarly methods;  
30 • Assess and use critical commentaries and other resources (for example, print and  
31 online “sermon helps” and lectionary studies);  
32 • Describe in broad terms the historical development of the Bible, including the social,  
33 economic, and political contexts out of which biblical literature grew;  
34 • Distinguish literary genres and theological “schools of thought” that appear in the  
35 Bible;  
36 • Identify the role which the experience and culture of the reader plays in the  
37 interpretation of biblical texts.

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39 **CHURCH ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING**

40 Be able to practice the principles of good administration, planning and implementing  
41 short- and long-range goals to enhance congregational life in collaboration with teams and  
42 committees.

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44 **Outcomes**

- 45 • Select an appropriate leadership style – adjusted according to the constituency and  
46 context – to maximize one’s personal potential;
- 47 • Develop a work plan that demonstrates an understanding of congregational/contextual  
48 dynamics;
- 49 • Identify how race, ethnicity, class, gender and orientation shape, define and influence  
50 leadership needs and expectations;
- 51 • Perform necessary and appropriate administrative tasks (e.g., organizational analysis,  
52 working with ledgers and budgets, giving direction to a team, hiring practices,  
53 computer skills and electronic communication);
- 54 • Practice self-care and time management based on a well-grounded theological  
55 understanding.

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57 **COMMUNICATION**

58 Be an effective communicator and be able to facilitate effective communication within  
59 and on behalf of the church.

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61 **Outcomes:**

- 62 • Use appropriate and effective communication styles and tools in order to inspire,  
63 inform, and invite participation in the life, mission, and purposes of the Church;
- 64 • Effectively use communication skills for public and small group conversations and  
65 speaking;
- 66 • Employ the appropriate pastoral role, given the circumstance – when to guide and/or  
67 when to participate in conversations or discussion;
- 68 • Select and use appropriate technology and media to convey the message and mission  
69 of the congregation;
- 70 • Utilize communication skills that promote effective, positive relations with staff,  
71 boards, agencies, congregation, and other relevant groups/communities;
- 72 • Distinguish between and clarify the formal (explicit) from the informal (tacit) roles,  
73 rules, rituals and relationships in any church structure with which you are working.

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77 **CROSS CULTURAL AND ANTI-RACISM EXPERIENCE**

78 Be sensitive to the different manifestations of racism and prejudice in the culture and be  
79 committed to confronting and overcoming them.

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81 **Outcomes:**

82 General guideline: Be sensitive to the different manifestations of racism and prejudice in  
83 the culture and be committed to confronting and overcoming them.

- 84
- 85 • Articulate images of a God who is manifest and present among members of every  
86 culture and race;
  - 87 • Practice ministry, both within one’s own culture and the Church universal, informed  
88 by domestic and global responses to the needs of God’s people;
  - 89 • Nurture faith in others, understanding and teaching that everyone’s faith is contextual  
90 and influenced by such factors as, race, gender, class, and culture;
  - 91 • Utilize scriptural resources, theology, tradition, and personal experience, to identify  
92 and oppose racism as both unchristian and ungodly;
  - 93 • Model ministry that enhances the church and the world, by embracing and celebrating  
94 racial and cultural diversity;
  - 95 • Help those with whom you do ministry to understand that racism is essentially  
96 systemic, but influences the attitudes and behavior of people of all races;
  - 97 • Draw on the ministry of Jesus Christ, to present the opposition to racism and the  
embrace of every culture, as “welcoming the stranger.”

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101 **ECUMENISM**

102 Exhibit a commitment to working with other Christians and denominations and with  
103 other faiths in programs of common witness and service, and to articulating the vision of  
104 the ecumenical and global church as a starting place for mission.

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106 **Outcomes:**

- 107
- 108 • Articulate why the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) highly values ecumenism,  
drawing on resources from our tradition;
  - 109 • Articulate a theology of ecumenism, drawing on resources from scripture and tradition;
  - 110 • Articulate a theology of Christians relating to non-Christian faiths, a theology that is  
111 respectful and truthful, a theology that reflects the candidate’s own faith stance, all the  
112 while recognizing multiple ways in which such relationship can be construed;
  - 113 • Use ecumenical resources and design ecumenical worship services;
  - 114 • Describe and theologically reflect upon at least one significant ecumenical experience, be  
115 it a worship, a social justice activity, or a dialogical activity in which you took an active  
116 role;
  - 117 • Describe and theologically reflect upon at least one significant interfaith experience, be it

118 a worship service, a social justice activity, or an interfaith dialogue in which you took an  
119 active role.

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122 **EDUCATION AND LEADER DEVELOPMENT**

123 Know the foundations of Christian education and the principles of leader development.  
124 Show competency in teaching children, youth, and adults, including lay leaders and staff.

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126 **Outcomes:**

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- 128 • Use analytical skills for assessing, evaluating and selecting curriculum and Christian  
129 education materials best suited for a ministry context;
- 130 • Practice respect for the ways culture, community and experience, inform and shape the  
131 teaching task;
- 132 • Participate in the dynamic educational process that involves both teaching and learning  
133 for the teacher and the learner;
- 134 • Utilize knowledge of the foundations for Christian education and principles for leader  
135 development when teaching children, youth and adults;
- 136 • Employ an understanding of the issues characteristic of each stage of human development  
137 and how those issues impact learning and shape various learning styles.

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140 **ETHICS**

141 Be able to help parishioners think critically about the relationship of their faith to issues  
142 of justice, ethics and morality.

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144 **Outcomes:**

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- 146 • Adhere to The Ministerial Code of Ethics in the conduct of ministry, and model personal  
147 behavior consistent with the fundamental principles of Christian ethics;
- 148 • Lead in ways that call forth ethical conduct among individuals and groups within the  
149 church;
- 149 • Relate resources from scripture and tradition to specific ethical issues today;
- 150 • Preach and teach effectively about social and economic justice as core concerns of  
151 Christian faith;
- 152 • Address ethical issues raised by culturally-imbedded racism, sexism, heterosexism, and  
153 classism;
- 154 • Describe the role personal/communal experience and cultural perspective play in ethical  
155 reasoning and be able to apply a variety of approaches.

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157 **EVANGELISM**

158 Be able to motivate Congregational members to share their faith through word and action.

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160 **Outcomes:**

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- 162 • Articulate a theological and biblical basis for evangelism consistent with the faith
- 163 perspectives and approaches of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
- 164 • Understand evangelism as it is linked to discipleship and faith development;
- 165 • Use various media and technologies in proclaiming the gospel in current contexts and
- 166 social milieus;
- 167 • Show sensitivity to how cultural and generational differences call for a variety of
- 168 evangelistic approaches;
- 169 • Implement evangelistic expressions that are informed by the pluralistic realities of
- 170 contemporary life, being respectful of matters of race, culture, and interfaith
- 171 relationships;
- 172 • Understand the church as an evangelical community in which people are invited to
- 173 participate in and to themselves become good news for one another and the world;
- 174 • Understand the differences between evangelism and church growth strategies.

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177 **MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD**

178 Be able to understand and articulate the centrality of the call to mission given by Jesus

179 Christ and the prophets. Be able to empower congregations to engage in mission from our

180 doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

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182 **Outcomes:**

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- 184 • Articulate an understanding of the world as a place of God’s activity—witnessing and
- 185 participating in God’s mission of redemption, liberation, reconciliation, and renewal of
- 186 creation in our immediate communities and in the world;
- 187 • Teach and practice in the Christian community what it means to be participants in and
- 188 recipients of God’s mission activity in the varied contexts of congregation, community
- 189 and the world;
- 190 • Articulate a theology of mission which is consistent with both our immediate Christian
- 191 community’s context, as expressed in our Church’s document “From our doorsteps. . . ,”
- 192 and our global mission philosophy as proposed by Global Ministries/DOM;
- 193 • Identify an array of practices of Christian mission in the immediate and global
- 194 community and discover connections with theologies that undergird those practices;
- 195 • Exercise an understanding of the Disciples of Christ Division of Overseas Ministry’s
- 196 understanding of “critical presence” in its global work and the role of congregations to
- 197 serve as “Global Mission Partners” in the mission of the church worldwide;

- 198 • Articulate the long history of Disciples mission practices and theologies that shaped, and  
199 continue to shape, Disciples of Christ ecumenical relationships, cross-cultural encounters,  
200 interfaith encounters and dialogues;  
201 • Show an appreciation for and commitment to ministries and mission practices that  
202 nourish and sustain healthy local Christian and non-Christian communities, develop  
203 global mission partner congregations, promote justice, foster peace, seek reconciliation,  
204 and live in the expectation of the coming Reign of God.

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207 **PASTORAL CARE**

208 Be able to engage other persons with empathy and assess situations and relationships  
209 with the compassion of Christ, with sensitivity to culture and context. Be able to convey  
210 the healing power of God to those who suffer.

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212 **Outcomes:**

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- 214 • Possess self-knowledge that permits pastoral care to be offered within the context of  
215 one's strengths and limitations and within the resources of the volunteer and  
216 professional communities of the church;  
217 • Articulate an understanding of pastoral authority and its relevance to pastoral care;  
218 • Offer care that is respectful of diversity and differences, including age, culture,  
219 disability, economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social status and religious  
220 beliefs and practices;  
221 • Provide effective pastoral care to those suffering grief and loss, with particular  
222 attention to the dynamics of death and dying;  
223 • Reflect theologically on pastoral care situations, inviting the parties involved into that  
224 reflection as is fitting;  
225 • Assess pastoral situations and make suitable referrals from the broad range of  
226 available services by developing a comprehensive list of, and relationships with  
227 (programs names and descriptions, personnel, locations, and contact data) referral  
228 resources (community, county, state and national) that are available given the locale  
229 where you are ministering;  
230 • Employ a working knowledge of psychological and sociological disciplines, human  
231 development and spiritual growth.

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236 **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

237 Know the practice and theory of Christian preaching. Be able to proclaim the Word of  
238 God, share the Good News of Jesus Christ, and help Congregational members apply their  
239 faith to daily life.

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241 **Outcomes:**

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- 243 • Develop sermons that help congregations recognize and respond to God’s presence
- 244 and purpose as the divine as experienced in the stories of the faith;
- 245 • Use diverse homiletic possibilities relating appropriate form and styles of preaching
- 246 to different situations;
- 247 • Employ an understanding of homiletic possibilities with respect to form and genre
- 248 relating appropriate form and styles to different situations;
- 249 • Manifest a warm and engaging bodily presence in the pulpit;
- 250 • Be sensitive to the use and impact of words, employing language and idioms that are
- 251 meaningful – and not offensive – to listeners;
- 252 • Engage a biblical text in ways that respect its historical and theological integrity and
- 253 preach so as to help the listener celebrate the diversity of the faith of the biblical
- 254 community.

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257 **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

258 Establish and maintain spiritual disciplines that lead to personal growth and help others  
259 develop a rich spiritual life.

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261 **Outcomes:**

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- 263 • Develop and draw from a broad awareness of the full range of spiritual practices,
- 264 freely using practices which emerge from one's own tradition;
- 265 • Engage in a variety of spiritual practices, as a faithful response to God's calling and
- 266 continued creation;
- 267 • Practice spiritual discipline(s) that engage one with the world;
- 268 • Use spiritual practices to deepen and maintain a vision for justice and compassion;
- 269 • Teach spiritual practices and advise about their use in pastoral care contexts both one-
- 270 on-one or in groups;
- 271 • Identify individuals and groups with whom spiritual practices can be engaged in
- 272 accountable relationships.

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277 **STEWARDSHIP**

278 Be able to develop and encourage healthy stewards who recognize and share generously  
279 God's abundant gifts for all creation.

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281 **Outcomes:**

- 282 • Practice the spiritual discipline of giving and serving; Identify and use pertinent  
283 biblical texts, Christian traditions, and spiritual practices to foster generosity and  
284 giving;
- 285 • Articulate a coherent theology of wealth, work, and care for creation, rooted in  
286 biblical themes of abundance, generosity, Sabbath rest, and economic justice;
- 287 • Teach and preach effectively about money;
- 288 • Teach and preach effectively about giving time, talent, and money to help accomplish  
289 the ministry and mission of the church;
- 290 • Describe how mission is accomplished and funded beyond the local congregation in  
291 the Regional and General expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).  
292 This includes the ability to explain how Disciples Mission Fund works, the purposes  
293 of Reconciliation Offering and Week of Compassion Offering, and what the four  
294 special offerings (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, Pentecost) support;
- 295 • Employ denominational and ecumenical resources for stewardship education and for  
296 helping a congregation conduct a stewardship campaign. This includes the ability to  
297 articulate the difference between stewardship and fundraising.

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300 **THEOLOGY**

301 Be able to articulate a coherent view of God's nature and activity in relation to the  
302 Christian tradition, to critically engage human situations from a perspective of faith, and  
303 to help persons recognize theological issues in their daily lives.

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305 **Outcomes**

- 306 • Give a coherent description of the gospel and relate it to the life of Christian faith; □  
307 Articulate foundational theological principles of the Christian Church (Disciples of  
308 Christ), particularly as reflected in the Preamble and first four paragraphs of The  
309 Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
- 310 • Reflect theologically on contemporary issues related to the church's pastoral practice  
311 and mission in the world;
- 312 • Read and critically evaluate theological texts in order to work with multiple  
313 theological approaches from a variety of cultural perspectives;
- 314 • Describe in general terms theological distinctions and similarities of the major  
315 Christian traditions -- Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant/Ecumenical,  
316 Protestant/Neo- Evangelical, and Pentecostal -- and be able to situate Disciples  
317 theology accordingly. This includes the ability to identify points of difference and

- 318 agreement between Disciples and the other major branches of the Stone-Campbell  
319 movement;  
320 • Describe the basic theological issues at stake in the modern ecumenical movement  
321 and in the major periods of church history outlined in the “Understanding Heritage”  
322 competency.

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325 **UNDERSTANDING OF HERITAGE**

326 Have knowledge of and appreciation for the history and thought of Christianity and of the  
327 history, structure, practices, and ethos of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

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329 Outcomes:

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- 331 • Describe the historical context and institutional expressions of Christianity in the first  
332 four centuries.
  - 333 • Describe the general development of the Medieval Church in Europe (5th–15th  
334 centuries), especially with respect to the formation of monasticism and the  
335 relationship between the papacy and state.
  - 336 • Compare and contrast major reform movements in sixteenth century Europe, both  
337 Protestant and Catholic.
  - 338 • Describe major developments in early modern history of Christianity, including the  
339 rise and decline of Puritanism, the impact of the Enlightenment on the faith, and the  
340 rise and spread of Pietism-Methodism-Revivalism.
  - 341 • Describe general developments of Christian movement in Africa, Asia, and Latin  
342 America, paying particular attention to the missions of the Stone-Campbell  
343 Movement.
  - 344 • Articulate the general outline of the formation, development, and contributions of  
345 diverse communities of the Stone-Campbell Movement globally (not just the U.S. and  
346 Canada), paying particular attention to the founding principles of the movement.
  - 347 • Tell the story of key women in the Stone-Campbell Movement and in the Christian  
348 tradition throughout the world.

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355 **WORSHIP**

356 Know the purpose and elements of Christian worship. Have the ability to plan and lead  
357 meaningful worship by working with the worship team, musicians, and congregational  
358 members.

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360 Outcomes:

- 361 • Articulate a theology of worship. The candidate will be able to answer the question,  
362 "What is worship?";
- 363 • Reflect theologically on the various rituals and elements of a worship service. The  
364 candidate will be able to answer the questions, "What are the significant elements and  
365 rituals of worship? Why do we do them? And what do they mean?;
- 366 • Recognize the structure of particular worship services and demonstrate the ability to  
367 plan worship services for varying occasions in the life of the church. This includes a  
368 demonstrated knowledge of an array of worship resources;
- 369 • Integrate the various dimensions and styles of worship (emotional, aesthetic, social)  
370 with the specific needs of the local ministry context;
- 371 • Demonstrate the ability to speak about the history of worship, styles, and elements  
372 within the Christian tradition and within the traditions of the Christian Church  
373 (Disciples of Christ);
- 374 • Be competent in performing the rituals of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
375 including presiding at the communion table, performing baptisms, presiding at  
376 weddings and funerals, etc . . . ;
- 377 • Exercise an understanding of how the church's worship offers a vision of Christian  
378 discipleship--how it relates to and is completed in life and work in "the world."

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382 Developed by:

383 Belva Brown Jordan, Bill Inghish, Carlos Cardoza, Tim Lee, Irvin Green, Rick Lowery,  
384 Dan Moseley, Rebecca Hale

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