

Who are Clergy Mentors?

1. Clergy Mentors are clergy in full connection, associate members or full-time local pastors who have completed the Course of Study and are trained to provide ongoing oversight and counsel with CLMs and local pastors
2. Clergy Mentors are nominated by the Cabinet. The dCOM, in consultation with the District Superintendent, assigns local pastors (who have not completed educational requirements, such as Course of Study) and CLMs to a mentor/mentoring group.
3. Mentors are not supervisors, experts, counselors or “just friends.” When done well, clergy mentoring helps establish and maintain healthy practices for developing in effectiveness throughout ministry
4. Clergy Mentors focus on ministry practice and developing effectiveness. This is distinct and different from Candidacy Mentors, who work with candidates to discern their calling and guide them through the candidacy process
5. A dCOM Clergy Mentor helps to create a sacred space for the members of the group to share and explore their call, roles, educational journey, and vocational office. To have a positive group process, it is vital that the mentor be at ease with group processes and be clear about his or her role in these processes.
6. The “client” for clergy mentors is the dCOM, and the mentor will provide an annual report to the dCOM (<https://arumc.wufoo.com/forms/ar080/>) concerning their mentees. The report is shared digitally with the mentees.

Local Pastor Mentor Responsibilities

- Connect every few months as a group and individually to discuss:
 - Calling to ministry,
 - Local pastors’ growing edges in ministry (strengths and future areas of growth),
 - Plans for future ministry, and
 - Educational plans.
- Become familiar with Course of Study and Extension School for local pastors and the educational materials used. Discuss specific assignments from Course of Study/Seminary instructors and offer feedback. Offer feedback about coursework.
- Know about resources, contact persons, and procedures relevant to continuation as a Local Pastor – including any dCOM deadlines related to the application process for continuation and interviews.
- Write annual mentor reports for the dCOM.

Mentors as Mentoring Group Facilitators

- A. In the Arkansas Conference, we have chosen to do clergy mentoring within groups. Two mentor-facilitators are assigned to every mentoring group, and they will share duties as a group facilitation team.
- B. This kind of group mentoring is not the same as Circuit Elder Meetings, where the ministry context is the focus. Neither is it the same as Clinical Pastoral Education with its controls and limits. It is also not a therapy group or a consulting group. Note that there are limits on group confidentiality: as a dCOM mentoring group, the mentor is expected to share an evaluation of the clergy to the dCOM, and to contact the dCOM if a concern is raised.

- C. The mentor-facilitator is not a “fix-it” person for group members. Nor should a mentor be expected to be an expert in every issue of ministry. The role of the mentor is to help group members focus on issues of role, authority, and office. Mentors help group members to reflect theologically about their calling and ministries and to talk about the struggles, anxieties, and joys of ministry. Mentors may contact the DS or dCOM Chair any time throughout the year for backup support, questions, or assistance.
- D. Spiritual formation in the group begins with members telling about their call, vocation, spiritual disciplines, and authority. The prayer, worship, and ritual practices of the group deserve attention and preparation. The whole group should make the decision about these practices, not just the mentor-facilitators. Usually, the facilitator team will lead worship and prayer during the first session and then allow the pastors to rotate leadership the rest of the year. As part of “Check-in” a form of Wesley’s question: “How goes it with your soul?” will be asked. How are you really doing? What pains and burdens are you carrying today? How can the group pray for you today?

MENTOR RESOURCES

Arkansas Annual Mentor Report (online form) AR-080

<https://arumc.wufoo.com/forms/ar080/>

GBHEM Clergy Mentoring (2013-2016 edition)

https://www.bomlibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Clergy_Mentoring_2013.pdf

Arkansas Area Extension Course of Study School (COSS)

<https://arumc.org/our-resources/board-of-ordained-ministry/course-of-study-school/>

Arkansas Conference BOM Educational Financial Assistance

<https://arumc.org/our-resources/board-of-ordained-ministry/financial-assistance/>

GBHEM 2016 BOM Handbook, Chapter 15 (Clergy Mentoring)

https://www.bomlibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/BOM_Sec5_Chpt-15-rvsd1.pdf

Regional Course of Study Schools and Extension Course of Study Schools

<https://www.gbhem.org/clergy/course-of-study-schools/>

Annual Template Schedule of Mentor Group Meetings

July - August

Clergy Mentor Training
Email, text, and/or phone contacts with new mentoring group

August

Welcome Gathering

- Devotional
- Expectations & organization
- Share time (call to ministry & current appointment)
- Question of the day: What are three things you want the group to know about you?

September - October

Meet at least once (in-person and/or zoom)

- Devotional, Check-in and “how goes it with your soul” time
- Discuss current Course of Study Classes/Seminary Classes and assignments
- Question of the day: Tell me about a time that you were thankful that God called you into licensed ministry? *OR* What risk have you taken in the last year?

November - January

Meet at least once (in-person and/or zoom)

- Devotional, Check-in and “how goes it with your soul” time
- Discuss current Course of Study Classes/Seminary Classes and assignments
- Question of the day: What are three goals you have for the coming year that are measurable?

January Reminder

One of the group mentors will need to submit a AR080 Mentor Discernment Report in early January for each mentee clergy. An individual phone contact between the mentor(s) and mentee clergy may be needed to prepare for this report.

February - April

Meet at least once (in-person and/or zoom)

- Devotional, Check-in and “how goes it with your soul” time
- Discuss current Course of Study Classes/Seminary Classes and assignments
- Question of the day: How are you equipping and connecting your congregation for ministry *with* its community?

April-June

Meet at least once (in-person and/or zoom)

- Devotional, Check-in and “how goes it with your soul” time
- Discuss experience of Spring interviews
- Question of the day: What are you doing to pay attention to your spiritual life?