

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area
Policies and Requirements for Committee on Preparation for Ministry

NORTH CENTRAL MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT CENTER (NCMDC)

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area requires all inquirers to participate in a comprehensive career counseling and psychological assessment offered by NCMDC in New Brighton, MN. This program helps the participant understand how his/her values, interests, personality, potential and learned capabilities all fit into an occupational choice of ministry. This evaluation and career testing gives the individual opportunity to gain deeper appreciation of their own strengths, commitment and growing edges.

Evaluation by NCMDC should be completed within three or four months prior to the first annual consultation after the person becomes an inquirer, and **must** be completed before candidacy is approved. The NCMDC telephone number is 651-636-5120. Fax is 651-636-5124. Call soon, as it may take several weeks to get scheduled.

Occasionally the Committee asks an individual, at some point in the preparation for ministry process, to return for a follow-up visit in response to changes in a person's situation, a candidacy of extended duration, or to explore a particular issue. Also, occasionally the NCMDC recommends a follow-up visit.

Note: Costs of the NCDMC assessment will normally be shared with the inquirer's home church paying 60% and the presbytery paying 40%.

CHOICE OF SEMINARY IN PREPARING FOR MINISTRY

One of the important factors in preparation for ministry is the seminary, which provides the academic preparation required for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. To this end, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will discuss each person's choice of seminary and how that seminary's curriculum will benefit the inquirer/candidate. In accordance with the Book of Order, the seminary must be certified by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and acceptable to the presbytery.

Inquirers should be prepared to answer the following questions:

- a. Describe how your research of theological schools informed you in making a seminary selection.
- b. What are the specific reasons you chose your seminary?
- c. How will the seminary you selected strengthen your identity and professional functioning as a future Presbyterian pastor?

Inquirers/candidates who choose, and are approved, to attend a non-Presbyterian seminary may be required to supplement their education with Presbyterian related studies as directed by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

FIELD EDUCATION

The Book of Order encourages those in the care process "to engage in some form of service to the church with the approval of and under the guidance of the inquirer's/ candidate's CPM" (G-14.0307). In the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, this is a required part of the care process. The following guidelines apply:

Requirements for a Field Education Site are as follows:

- Approval of the CPM advisory group before work begins
- A qualified on-site supervisor who is willing to be the student's guide and mentor
- A PC(USA) congregational setting (not home church) in which the student will be exposed to and have experience in a wide range of ministry roles and responsibilities
- A learning covenant, which describes the expectations and goals of the field education experience and is signed by both the candidate and the supervisor. This learning covenant must be approved by the CPM advisory group prior to commencement of the field education.
- Written evaluations, based upon the learning covenant, of the student's practice of ministry and a final evaluation which will be added to the presbytery CPM file
- Time commitment of a minimum of 9 months part-time (12-15 hours per week) OR three months full-time (40 hours per week)

Recommendations:

- Ordinarily, field education will be completed under the supervision of the student's seminary.
- Experience should be sought which will expand the student's knowledge and experience of the life of the church. The ideal situation is one that is significantly different from the student's previous church experience -- in size, type of ministry, culture, etc.
- Opportunity to engage in ministry beyond minimum requirements is strongly encouraged. Inquirers/candidates should consider internships, additional ministry in agencies, additional congregational placements, and international opportunities.

Guidelines for a possible learning covenant:

The intern will have the opportunity to:

1. Participate in worship leadership
 - a. At least twice a month the intern will help lead the worship service – gaining experience in leading the various elements of the service (Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Assurance of Forgiveness, Children's Sermons, Scripture Readings, Pastoral prayers and Offertory invitations and prayers).
 - b. At least three times during this internship the intern will be invited to preach at the primary Sunday morning worship service.
 - c. The intern will sit in on at least one baptism orientation with a family seeking to have their child baptized.
2. Participate in administrative leadership
 - a. The intern will help to resource at least one committee throughout the internship with careful attentiveness to learning what it means to resource a committee rather than do the committee's work, and with an emphasis on learning on how to empower the committee members and discern their interests and gifts.
 - b. The intern will attend at least three Session meetings (or two Session meetings and a Session retreat)

3. Participate in congregational life
 - a. The intern will be involved in planning at least one Advent or Lent activity or worship for the congregation.
 - b. The intern will participate in one or two fellowship events to get to know members better.
4. Participate in pastoral care
 - a. The intern will “shadow” the pastor(s) in working with a family to plan a funeral.
 - b. The intern will “shadow” the pastor(s) through at least one pre-marital counseling session.
 - c. The intern will do at least five visits to shut-ins of the congregation.
 - d. The intern will make at least one hospital visit with the pastor(s).
5. Evaluation
 - a. The intern and supervisor will meet monthly to review these goals and the learnings of the month (for a nine month experience; weekly for a three month experience).
 - b. The supervisor will submit a written evaluation to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry mid-way through the internship regarding the intern’s continuing preparation for ministry as experienced by the congregation.
 - c. Both the intern and supervisor will provide written evaluations, signed by each other, to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the end of the internship reflecting on the learnings of the internship and the progress the intern has made in preparing for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA).

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is a program of deepening critical awareness of oneself as “pastor” and learning pastoral skills integrated with life experience in a setting under extensive supervision. It is theological and professional education that allows qualified students to minister to people while integrating their pastoral experience with personal history, behavioral theory and method, and spiritual development. CPE students are challenged to improve the quality of all their pastoral relationships through an intense involvement with supervisors, fellow students, people with whom they minister, and other professionals.

Learning is through clinical practice, theological reflection, written case studies and verbatims, individual supervision, seminar participation and relevant reading. Through viewing complicated life situations from different viewpoints, students are able to gain new insights and understanding about the human situation. One unit at a site approved by Association of Clinical Pastoral Education is required of all inquirers and candidates in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

INDEBTEDNESS POLICY

Pastoral care for students and clergy includes caring for their financial well-being and that of their families. This extends to insuring that no student or clergy takes on more debt than can be reasonably repaid from expected earnings. To that end, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area adopted the following policy in March 2002:

When Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area is the Presbytery of Care:

1. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall monitor the financial status of inquirers and candidates under care, suggesting that the total educational debt level of seminary students upon graduation should be no more than 50% of the latest available church wide median salary.
2. Every seminary student under care is required to attend a financial planning workshop such as the Fiscal Fitness Workshop provided by the Board of Pensions. (Students will note that the Fiscal Fitness Workshop of the Board of Pensions is required for participation in the PC(USA) Seminary Debt Assistance Program which forgives debt if a person takes a call in a small, rural congregation.)

When Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area is the Presbytery of Call:

1. Any minister who is serving a first call following graduation from seminary, who comes with any educational indebtedness, shall be required to show evidence of having attended a financial planning workshop such as a Fiscal Fitness workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions. If the minister has not attended such a workshop, he/she shall be required to do so within twelve months of start-up.
2. The Committee on Ministry shall encourage calling congregations to utilize further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating terms of call with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

During your seminary studies you should take courses that ensure that you have gained all of the following competencies. You and your CPM advisor should review your course syllabi and relate course objectives to this competency list to be sure that everything is covered in your M. Div. studies.

BIBLICAL STUDIES

- Knowledge of the basic content of the Old and New Testaments
- Knowledge of the literature of the Old and New Testaments, its composition and contexts
- Knowledge of history of Israel and ancient Near Eastern context
- Knowledge of the theologies and theological themes of the Old Testament literature
- Knowledge of the history of the early church and its Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts
- Knowledge of the theologies and theological themes of the New Testament literature
- Knowledge of Hebrew sufficient to translate Old Testament prose texts
- Knowledge of Greek sufficient to translate New Testament texts
- Knowledge of various approaches to interpreting Biblical texts
- Ability to articulate their own approach to Biblical interpretation
- Ability to exegete the OT and NT taking account of their ancient contexts and using the original language texts
- Ability to use the results of their interpretation of Biblical texts to interpret contemporary reality

THEOLOGY

- Awareness of the contextual character of theological reflection
- Some awareness of the interaction of religion and theology with the natural sciences, the social sciences, and contemporary culture in general
- Knowledge of what is meant by a theological system or world view
- Knowledge of classical formulation(s) of theology, anthropology, ecclesiology, eschatology and revelation

- Knowledge of the Reformed theological thought on each major doctrine
- Knowledge of contemporary reformulations of a major doctrine from a global perspective
- Knowledge of contemporary options in theological method and their own method
- Ability to locate their personal theology in a spectrum of theological models
- Ability to interpret any text, context, situation or material theologically
- Knowledge of the theology of John Calvin
- Ability to use the distinctive resources of the Reformed theological tradition, including the *Book of Confessions*, in one's own theological reasoning

ETHICS

- Knowledge of historic Western Christian moral traditions and their methods
- Knowledge of contemporary Christian moral reflection and its methods
- Awareness of diversity in Christian moral traditions
- Skill in ethical reflection and moral reasoning, including
- awareness of complexity involved in moral reasoning
- awareness of ambiguity of many moral decisions
- ability to develop and articulate own methods of moral reasoning

HISTORY

- Understanding what historical method is and what is involved in historical study of religion and theology
- Attention to interpretive issues in the careful reading of religious and theological texts from the past
- Familiarity with the development of the Church as an institution in global society from its beginnings to the present day
- Understanding of the classical forms of the Eastern and Western Christian theological traditions
- Understanding of how Western Christian tradition was transformed and complexified by Reformation and Enlightenment
- Understanding of how the Christian theological tradition has transformed and diversified in global contexts
- Awareness of how knowledge of this history illuminates the contemporary situation in theology and ministry
- Knowledge of Presbyterian history, especially as it unfolds in the historical context of the United States

ARTS OF MINISTRY

WORSHIP

- Basic knowledge of the history of Christian worship – theology, forms, and practice
- Knowledge of a basic vocabulary of Christian worship
- Familiarity with the worship forms and texts of the Reformed tradition
- Ability to articulate a theology of worship consonant with the Reformed tradition
- Ability to prepare and lead worship services grounded in the Reformed tradition that are appropriate to various circumstances and contexts within a congregation including use of music, arts, movement, word, drama. This includes the ability to empower lay worship leadership in the planning, liturgy, and choreography of worship.

PREACHING

- An understanding of the nature and role of preaching within Reformed Christian worship

- Development of preaching skills, including:
 - integration of Biblical interpretation in homiletical work
 - interpretation of the congregation and its context
 - ability to connect the Biblical witness to contemporary need
- Ability to reflect on and analyze one's own sermons and others
- Ability to engage in good public speaking and preaching

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Ability to articulate the role and responsibilities of education in life of church within the Reformed tradition
- Ability to articulate a framework for one's own theology and theory of education ministries
- Ability to develop educational practices within one's theological and theoretical frameworks
- Ability to plan, teach, and self-evaluate one's own teaching of adults
- Ability to analyze, evaluate, and choose curricular resources consistent with the Reformed tradition
- Knowledge and experience of various spiritual disciplines
- Understanding of spiritual formation within a congregation

PASTORAL CARE

- Ability to understand and use appropriate methods of pastoral theology
- Ability to understand primary and secondary contexts for pastoral care and the knowledge and skills called for by each. These primary contexts include but are not limited to:
 - Bereavement and grief
 - Premarital preparation
 - Suicide threats
 - Domestic violence (including child and elder neglect and abuse)
 - Elderly Persons
 - Alcohol (and other) addictions
 - Hospitalization and illness
 - Family needs and dynamics
 - Short-term counseling requests
- Ability to understand and maintain a clear set of professional ethics and appropriate boundaries of pastoral care and counseling (and the place of self-awareness and self-care in this area)
- Skills in reflective listening and pastoral presence
- Skills in the use of theology and religious resources in pastoral care
- Skills in assessing referral needs, developing referral procedures, and assessing and selecting good referral resources
- Knowledge of short-term pastoral counseling approaches and skills

LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

- Basic understanding of ecclesiology in the Reformed tradition
- Understanding of PCUSA polity as an implementation of a Reformed ecclesiology
- Knowledge of the primary task of ministry: practices that bring God's grace in Jesus Christ into human communal forms and actions, both within the Church and – through the Church's mission – within the world
- Ability to recognize the complexity of working in several sizes of organizations

- Ability to look at the life of a congregation and its leadership needs in a way that draws upon and integrates resources of theology, sociology and other organizational/leadership training
- Ability to innovate institutional forms that effectively implement and promote congregational growth and mission
- Knowledge of a history and current understandings of organizational and leadership theory considered from several fields: sociology, theology, administrative sciences
- Knowledge of and ability to engage in personal and organizational evaluation
- Ability to engage in ethical discernment in organizations
- Knowledge of the ways organizations are economic institutions and of the ways to facilitate and manage that economy
- Knowledge of the theologies and practices of holistic stewardship
- Knowledge of elementary theory and practices of conflict management that empowers the congregation
- Ability to creatively address conflict in a particular community
- Ability to create, facilitate, and sustain small groups
- Ability to develop a personal statement of ministerial vocation
- Knowledge of the self that generates a reflective sense of one's leadership styles and projected practices combined with a flexibility of both understanding and application of those styles and practices
- Ability to differentiate self and other roles in leadership and administrative situations
- Knowledge of PC(U.S.A.) mission and PC(U.S.A.) resources about stewardship, evangelism and leadership development

ADDRESSING CONCERNS REGARDING PERSONAL FITNESS FOR MINISTRY

When issues of professional misconduct, anger management, violence (domestic or criminal), psychological/psychiatric instability, or other circumstances raise a significant concern about an inquirer's or candidate's "personal" fitness for ministry, the Committee will use the following principles and procedures in addressing the concerns:

- There is an obligation to inquire: When the Committee becomes aware of a concern or issue which calls into question an inquirer's/candidate's fitness for ordination, or when the Committee learns of an event or personal quality which is inconsistent with the qualities and competencies desirable and necessary for an inquirer/candidate to be certified as ready for ordination, the Committee has an obligation to explore the concern/issue and determine whether the inquirer/candidate should remain enrolled and under care.
- There is an obligation to determine what is at issue. The Committee, after a thorough inquiry of the concern/issue, will carefully and prayerfully determine the issue(s) that needs to be addressed.
- A plan will be established: The Committee and the inquirer/candidate will develop a plan of action and time frame to address the concern/issue. The plan will include monitoring as well as opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.
- Prayerful discernment will guide: During the process and when the designated time is up, the Committee will seek to prayerfully discern whether the inquirer/candidate is now able to satisfactorily demonstrate the qualities and competencies necessary for ordination and, therefore, should continue to be enrolled under care of the

Presbytery. The Committee reserves the right at all times to recommend to the Presbytery that the inquirer/candidate be removed from the rolls and discontinue the "under care of" relationship.

- Some of the elements that could be included in such a plan are:
 - Involvement of the Session or Session liaison of the inquirer/candidate in the exploration process. The Committee shall carefully weigh the advantages of this involvement against the inquirer's/candidate's interest in maintaining confidentiality regarding the substance of the issues being explored.
 - Interviews or consultations with family members, seminary officials, employment supervisors and/or co-workers, and others as part of exploring the circumstances/concern/issue and as part of monitoring of the inquirer's/candidate's progress and compliance with the plan of action in dealing with the concern/issue.
 - In the case of legal action, the Committee may request copies of police reports and court orders, as well as any sentencing reports or recommendations, probation reports, and parole reports.
 - Professional input, such as counseling and therapy records, including assessments and testing (raw data and profiles as well as interpretations and report) performed by psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, counselors, and other medical professionals.
 - Periodic consultation, assessment and/or testing by professionals of the Committee's choice.
 - Requiring the inquirer/candidate to work with the appropriate professional or consultant to develop a plan for addressing the concern/issue and presenting the plan to the Committee for review and acceptance.
 - Additional consultations with the inquirer/candidate to monitor inquirer's/candidate's progress in addressing the concern/issue; the additional consultations may include providing additional written material for the Committee's review and may include additional personal meetings with the Committee. The additional consultations will be held at the inquirer's/candidate's expense (reimbursement from the Presbytery for part of the travel expense is not available for these additional consultations).
 - Successful completion of additional classes, studies, courses, internships, or other programs (academic or otherwise) in order to further address the concern/issue.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDELINES

(Excerpted from the May 9, 2000, Presbytery Minutes)

On May 25, 1982, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area committed itself to the use of inclusive language:

"The presbytery affirms the importance and value of inclusive language and commits itself to the use of such language in all forms of communication, both written and verbal. The presbytery shall use inclusive language in all meetings, reports, and communications. This includes, but is not limited to, the stated meetings of presbytery, General Council, councils, committees, task forces, worship services, and program presentations."

Guidelines for the use of inclusive language were adopted by presbytery on September 14, 1982. The 1999-2000 Task Force on Inclusive Language recommends the following revised version of Inclusive Language Guidelines:

Because we are called to be one with God and each other in a Christian community, it is appropriate to use language which clearly demonstrates that we intend to be an inclusive community of faith. Words are powerful and both reflect and influence reality and our perception of reality. We encourage presbytery leaders to be cognizant of the power of language and sensitive as to all people as they plan and lead presbytery functions and worship services. Our intended use of inclusive language will focus attention on the following areas of concern:

A. Language About God

God is ultimately indescribable. All words about God are symbols pointing to part of the totality of God's nature. Traditionally, God has been described with predominantly male images. However, since God is spirit and, therefore, neither male nor female, we will, wherever possible, avoid describing God with images that are exclusively either male or female. We will use a variety of metaphors and similes for God. We will use terms that expand rather than limit the experience of God's action in our lives.

B. Language About Persons - The People of God

While terms such as "man" and "mankind" were once understood and accepted generically as well as with reference to human males, increasingly this is not the case. Underlying the accustomed use of male language in a generic sense was the assumption (conscious or unconscious) that males were more representative of humankind than females; indeed, that females were subordinate or inferior. It is imperative that we do not perpetuate such concepts by continuing to use sexually exclusive language even among those who still "hear" it generically. For generic terms such as man, brotherhood, mankind, etc., we will substitute such terms as humanity, humankind, human beings, persons, people, folk, everyone, family, children. Additionally, we will avoid the use of masculine pronouns when referring to men and women together.

C. The Use of Scripture

Scripture, in the original Hebrew and Greek, is more inclusive than most English translations. Therefore, when we read the words and the intention is not exclusive, we will read it inclusively. When preparing for scripture to be read in unison, it is appropriate to rephrase and reprint the passage to eliminate exclusive language.

D. Use of Hymns and Worship Resources

For the worship services of this presbytery and its committees, we will choose hymns and other aids that do not contain gender exclusive images. We encourage the writing and use of new hymns that reflect the sensitivity of our times (See Recommended Resources).

E. Printed Communication and Common Language

In all our verbal communication, we will be sensitive to and aware of the need to use inclusive language in all of our meetings, including the stated meetings of the presbytery. All printed material that is by the presbytery for its work shall use inclusive language. The use of inclusive

language in other materials is strongly encouraged (see A. Language About God; and B. Language About Persons).

Recommended Resources

- a. Toward More Inclusive Language in the Worship of the Church, prepared by the Community Council, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.
- b. All May be One: A Guideline to Inclusive Language, first edition, January 1979, sponsored by the Task Force on Women, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.
- c. Well-Chosen Words, Women's Ministries Program Area, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- d. Dictionary of Bias-Free Usage, Orix, 1992, or The Bias-Free Word Finder, Beacon Press, 1991.