



# MANUAL

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## PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY OF WORD and SACRAMENT

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
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## **Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area**

Presbyterians † Building Partnerships † Serving Christ

Welcome!

If you have picked up this manual, you are probably considering ordination to ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or know someone who is. We hope these pages will be helpful to potential pastors, their advisors, and sessions in understanding and navigating the many important steps in exploring one's call to ministry and preparing for ordination – particularly as we go about those steps in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.

Ministry, of course, embraces all those tasks and responsibilities to which all Christians are called. Ministry is first and foremost the work of the whole church. But some women and men are identified and prepared for unique leadership, and the church has outlined procedures and responsibilities for two important dimensions of that preparation: the nurture and preparation of those who have experienced God's call to ministry, and our care for the church, assuring presbyteries and congregations of the fitness and competence of those who wish to lead. As the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, we are committed to providing the best care for the church and those who are preparing for ministry. If there are aspects of this manual that are unclear, we welcome your feedback as we continue to develop a process that is clear, helpful and meaningful.

This is a rigorous and demanding process for inquirers and candidates, as well as, for the members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. It is at the same time a deeply gratifying and important work. We pray that as you consider the possibilities of ordination, or work with those who do, you may experience the grace of God, the presence of Christ, and the discernment of the Holy Spirit.

Peace,  
Members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry

**COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**  
 Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area  
**A MANUAL FOR PERSONS UNDER CARE**

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## **PREFACE**

As Reformed Christians, Presbyterians affirm the church to be a community called into being by Jesus Christ. Christ gives the church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its officers and ordinances. Christ is its head in all things (G-1.0100).

Presbyterians believe in the priesthood of all believers and that all church members, regardless of their occupational choice, are engaged in ministry. It is their Christian vocation. Some among them may be called out by the Holy Spirit through the church to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Thus, the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament is one among many occupations through which men and women express their God-given interests and abilities in life and daily work.

Response to this calling into the ministry is approached through a careful process of exploring gifts and motivations within the community of faith. During this exploration period, candidates are also evaluated in light of the needs of the church and of the world.

The essential role of ministers of the Word and Sacrament is set forth both in the Bible and in the church's constitutional documents. Key concepts have historically included:

- Ordained ministry is a gift of God to the church;
- Ministers of the Word and Sacrament equip church members for their ministry by proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, by teaching faith, by caring for people and, along with elders, by ensuring that the church's life is governed in an orderly way;
- A man or woman experiences God's call to ministry privately as an inner urgency; however, the church experiences that call publicly as it affirms an individual's gifts for ministry and confirms God's call through the acts of ordination and installation;
- The church actively seeks and ordains persons whose gifts and abilities equip them for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. If a person ordained to this ministry is later called by God to other work, the church can release him or her from ordained office.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS**

The purpose of the Preparation for Ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is to help all church members discern and fulfill their Christian vocation. The role of the Presbytery is to provide the best possible leadership for the church by assuring that persons who feel called to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive the fullest personal and professional preparation for this office. To this end presbyteries enter into covenant with all those who are preparing to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

## DEFINING THE PREPARATION PROCESS

The relationship between the Presbytery and a person preparing for ministry of the Word and Sacrament concurs primarily through the phases of **Inquiry** and **Candidacy**. The process of preparation for ministry is most effective when it reflects the Biblical theme of covenant relationship. The covenants that are made in this process are made in light of God's faithfulness and love for all people. All who are involved in the tasks and relationships of preparation for ministry should approach these tasks with diligence, openness, intentionality and faith.

**The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and for those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together in such a way that a decision regarding the inquirer's suitability will be based on full knowledge and experience of one another**

**Inquiry is appropriate for all who show possibility for ministry of the Word and Sacrament. The phase of inquiry lasts until the inquirer, the session and the Presbytery are able to determine whether the inquirer has sufficient promise for ministry and whether it is highly probable that he or she will continue to develop the skills and gifts for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.**

**The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church in all the capacities of ministry of the Word and Sacrament. It is a time of development, guidance and evaluation, and lasts until the Presbytery determines whether the candidate is fully prepared to be ordained.**

This process requires a minimum of two years, beginning with the date Presbytery acts to enroll the applicant as an inquirer. At least one year of the process must be spent in the candidacy phase. The Presbytery in which the applicant is a member is represented in this process by a Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), made up of clergy and elders, each of whom serves as an advisor for one to three inquirers/candidates.

The entire process should nurture and explore the individual's development in the following areas: education for ministry including choice of seminary, evaluation of academic potential and progress, reflection on the purpose of the educational experience, and specific preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament; spiritual development that provides a framework within which reflection on one's personal faith journey takes place; interpersonal relations that provide opportunities for reflection on how one relates to others and what this means to ministry; personal growth that provides opportunities for reflection on individual identity, areas that need growth and development, understanding a call, and development of personal stewardship; and professional development that offers opportunities to develop specific skills that will enhance effectiveness as ministers of the Word and Sacrament and as presbyters.

During both the inquiry and candidacy phases, progress is measured by specific expected outcomes formulated for each of the five growth areas. These will become essential goals, not simply minimum requirements or assignments. The expected outcomes serve as the foci of ongoing, regular consultations between the inquirer/candidate and the CPM.

Every individual who seeks to prepare for ministry comes to the process with unique skills, personality, history, faith, and needs, and the individuality of every inquirer/candidate should be honored. The Church also comes to the process with particular expectations and needs. To this end, criteria for evaluation have been developed for each point of transition in the process: the inquiry phase, the transition from inquiry to candidacy, and evaluation of preparedness for ordination to ministry of the Word and Sacrament. At each transition point, a decision will be jointly made based on these criteria for evaluation to discern whether it is appropriate to continue in the preparation process and when to move to the next stage.

A person is ready for inquiry if it seems likely that he or she has the gifts and skills for ministry. Only in cases in which it is unlikely or highly ill-advised, should a person be turned away from inquiry. An inquirer is ready for candidacy if it is highly probable that he or she will finish developing the skills and gifts for ministry. A candidate will be declared ready for ordination to ministry of the Word and Sacrament when he or she is fully prepared and has sufficiently developed his/her gifts and skills.

Advisors should be in frequent contact with their advisees as this relationship is the basic link in the preparation process. Annual meetings with the CPM and/or advisory group are required of each inquirer and candidate; however, additional meetings may also need to occur. Between the transition points, it will be critically important that careful work is done on the particular areas of growth that are identified at each meeting with the committee. Advisors should keep careful records of all conversations with the advisee as well as noting progress toward fulfillment of all requirements.

### **AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK OF ORDER**

The current Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is the authority under which the Committee on Preparation for Ministry functions. All requirements and procedures of the current Book of Order must be followed in the inquiry and candidacy process (G-14.0400-.0490).

### **PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA REQUIREMENTS**

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area has determined that some additional steps will enrich and enhance the preparation process, and therefore requires some experiences such as Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Students attending non-Presbyterian seminaries may be required to take some classes in another seminary. These course learning goals are listed on pages 35 to 37.

## **PRESBYTERY OFFICE STAFF**

The Presbytery office staff working with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry includes the Executive Presbyter and the Office Administrator. The Executive Presbyter is available to offer advice and counsel to persons interested in the preparation process, to individuals under care as inquirers and candidates, and to give administrative assistance to the committee.

The relationship between inquirers and candidates and their advisors remains the crucial and most important link in the care process; however, the Executive Presbyter is available to assist that relationship in any way possible.

All scheduled meetings of inquirers and candidates will be coordinated with the chair of the committee through the Presbytery office and originals of all forms and supporting documents should be sent to the office with copies to the advisor. The Presbytery staff will distribute these materials to members of the CPM as appropriate. All permanent records are maintained in the Presbytery office.

Our goals are to facilitate the care process for seekers, inquirers and candidates in the most caring and efficient manner possible, to be sensitive to the many issues confronting persons under care, and to provide continuity of service to members of the committee and persons under care.

You can contact the office of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area through the website [www.ptcaweb.org](http://www.ptcaweb.org), by phone (612-871-7281) or by mail at 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 508, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA CPM**

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area at any given time will have quite a few people under its care as inquirers and candidates. The committee is constituted to have 24 members in equal number of laity and clergy, all of whom are elected to serve a specific term or terms by the Presbytery. One member of the committee is elected by Presbytery to serve as moderator. Each member serves as advisor to one to three inquirers and candidates.

Because of the large number of individuals under care, the CPM is divided into three “advisory groups.” Much of the work of the CPM is allocated to the advisory groups, particularly the preparatory work toward major steps in advancement. It is the responsibility of the advisors to maintain contact and communication with advisees and to bring to the advisory group any issues or concerns that need resolution. The advisory groups generally make recommendations to the full CPM.

Whenever possible, seekers will meet briefly to get acquainted with the full CPM prior to meeting with an advisory group. The advisory group will review forms and papers, and have conversation with the seeker in preparation for a recommendation of endorsement for inquiry.

The advancement from inquiry to candidacy, after endorsement by the session, will be undertaken in two steps, first with the advisory group and secondly with the full committee. If the inquirer resides in the Presbytery these meetings will take place on successive months. If the inquirer resides elsewhere and must travel to the Twin Cities, he/she may meet with the advisory group early on the CPM meeting day and with the full committee later the same day if endorsed by the advisory group. The full committee will prepare a recommendation to Presbytery regarding advancement to candidacy. The inquirer will appear before Presbytery for examination on the Statement of Call and if approved will be asked the constitutional questions and enrolled as a candidate.

Annual reviews are mandated by the Book of Order (G-14.0421) and will be conducted by the advisory group. Included as part of the annual review, will be a decision as to whether to continue or terminate the period of inquiry or candidacy. The advisory group will also conduct the readiness review and present a recommendation as to whether the candidate is ready for final assessment. The final assessment is with the full committee and will include preaching a sermon. A vote to certify the candidate is ready to receive a call and be examined for ordination will be taken, and if affirmative, the action will be reported to Presbytery at its next meeting.

At any time, the advisory groups may bring issues or concerns to the full CPM for discussion and resolution. Inquirers and candidates may also request to meet with their advisory group and the full CPM if there is need for clarification or consultation at times other than scheduled annual reviews.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS

### **SEEKER PHASE** (Preliminary phase)

- A person who believes he or she may have a call to ministry of the Word and Sacrament should first have a conversation with his or her pastor about that sense of call.
- Membership in a local congregation for at least six months is required before beginning the preparation process.
- The inquiry application forms (Forms 1 and 2) would be the next step. They can be found at <http://presbyterytwincities.org/resources-2/forms-and-policies/forms/> . These forms as well as two essays [one describing the story of your faith journey, highlighting the people and events which have contributed to your faith development (3-10 pages) and the other briefly describing what led to your choice of seminary or what seminaries you are considering and why] are to be completed.
- The applicant will then share these documents in a meeting with the home church session to seek their endorsement and enter into a covenant relationship of support during preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
- If endorsement is granted, a meeting with the CPM will be scheduled to review the application and supporting documents/essays and to seek their recommendation.
- CPM will consider a recommendation to the Presbytery that the individual be enrolled as an inquirer.
- The seeker will be introduced to the Presbytery when the recommendation is presented. The date of the Presbytery action is the beginning date of the covenant relationship.

**INQUIRY PHASE** (Time of exploring issues around one's sense of call) *Begins with date of Presbytery enrollment and shall be of sufficient length to decide whether the inquirer should apply to become a candidate. (G-14.0403)*

In addition to serving as a time of exploring issues around one's sense of call, the time of inquiry is a time during which a number of the requirements of preparation are normally to be completed. These are as follows:

- participate in annual consultations with advisory group
- participate in a consultation with the North Central Ministry Development Center
- begin or continue course work toward a Master of Divinity degree at an accredited seminary
- begin or continue additional course work that may be recommended by the CPM
- complete an approved field education experience **OR** an approved accredited unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (the CPM may require both field education and CPE prior to candidacy if it deems it necessary)
- prepare for and take the Bible Content Exam (ordination requirement)
- complete the six "Inquirers' Statements" and Statement of Motivation that are part of the candidacy application
- meet with home session to review seven statements and application for candidacy to request endorsement to become a candidate (forms #5A/B)
- meet with the CPM advisory group and full committee for review of status and to seek endorsement for advancement to candidacy

- appear before Presbytery with Statement of Motivation to be examined and approved as a candidate by responding to the constitutional questions
- always stay in touch with advisor for advice and counsel regarding progress through requirements and for friendly chats

**CANDIDACY PHASE** (Time of development toward full readiness for ministry) *Begins with the date of Presbytery enrollment and requires at least one year as a candidate to complete (G-14.0405)*

Candidacy is the time for completing the preparation requirements along with the finishing touches of readiness for ministry. Specific requirements are as follows:

- annual reviews with advisory group
- complete field education and CPE and submit self and supervisor's evaluations
- complete M.Div degree and have final transcript showing graduation sent to the Presbytery office
- pass ordination and Bible content exams
- finalize Statement of Faith, description and analysis of contemporary need, exegesis and sermon text for final assessment
- complete Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training – Level 1
- participate in a Fiscal Fitness Workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions
- meet with CPM advisory group for a **readiness review**
- after advisory group approval, meet with full CPM in a **final assessment** to preach sermon and review exegesis and Statement of Faith (form #6)

Permission may be granted to circulate the Personal Information Form following successful completion of the ordination exams and after one's annual consultation. Action will be reported to Presbytery at its next meeting—And the real fun begins!!

**ORDINATION PHASE:** *Begins when a call is received and accepted. Confirms and certifies full readiness for ministry in a congregation*

When a candidate has received and accepted a "call" to serve a congregation, the calling Presbytery will verify the call and send the "terms of call" to the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. The candidate is not required to meet again with the CPM if the final assessment took place within the previous twelve months. At the candidate's request, however, a final meeting with the CPM may be scheduled.

**Examination on the floor of Presbytery** ordinarily takes place with the calling Presbytery; however, in certain circumstances the Presbytery of care will be asked to examine on their behalf. Examination will be on the candidate's Statement of Faith (a one page document printed for the Presbytery), Christian theology, readiness for ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and any other related topic presbyters wish to ask. Following a successful examination, the Presbytery will form an Administrative Commission for the ordination service, which is ordinarily held in the candidate's home church (form #7B) – see pages 54-55.

## DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROCESS

### I. SEEKER PHASE: APPLICATION FOR INQUIRY

- The purpose of inquiry is for the applicant, the session of the home church and the CPM to explore the nature and appropriateness of his or her call to ministry. The application process includes the following steps:
  - active membership in a particular Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation for at least six months
  - preliminary conversation with pastor about the sense of call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, desire to start the preparation process
  - call to the CPM chairperson to receive instructions about getting started
  - download forms #1A/B, #2A/B and this manual from the Presbytery website
- A representative from CPM will meet with the session to discuss the process and assist the session to define its responsibilities.
- When the application forms, and essays on describing what has shaped you as a person of faith and what led you to your choice of seminary are completed and submitted to the pastor, the **session will receive copies, schedule a meeting time** with the applicant to review the materials, discuss the responses to the questions for reflection, and begin the covenant relationship. The moderator of the session will sign appropriate forms that are part of the application. A member of the session needs to be appointed to serve as the liaison or advisor to the inquirer for the duration of the preparation process. The originals of all forms should be submitted to the Presbytery office following the session meeting.
- A **completed application** includes forms #1A/B and forms #2A/B with appropriate signatures, a final transcript that shows one's undergraduate degree, and a transcript of any graduate and/or seminary study and degrees. The first visit with the CPM will be coordinated by the chairperson and will be accomplished as soon as possible after the application and supporting documents are on file in the Presbytery office.
- The CPM moderator will assign a member of the committee to serve as **advisor** and request the advisor to contact the applicant to establish a time to get together to become acquainted, and to prepare the seeker for his or her initial meeting with CPM.
- The applicant will **meet briefly with the CPM** to get acquainted prior to the **advisory group meeting**. Conversation with the advisory group will be about the applicant's vision for ministry, process of discernment, etc. followed by a vote as to whether to recommend the applicant to Presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer. If the decision is affirmative, goals for the year will be planned and discussed. If the decision is not affirmative, discussion will center on additional steps the applicant might take to prepare for inquiry or other options for ministry. The meeting will close with prayer by the advisor.

- The recommendation to **enroll the applicant as an inquirer** will be presented to the Presbytery at its next meeting. The applicant will be presented to the Presbytery at that time but does not speak or answer questions. Attendance is not mandatory. The Presbytery can act on the basis of the recommendation without the seeker present.

## II. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS DURING THE INQUIRY PHASE

The inquiry phase is meant to be a time of exploration, questioning, testing, and growth in the discernment process toward ordination to ministry of the Word and Sacrament. There are a number of requirements to be met during this phase:

- **Psychological Assessment at North Central Ministry Development Center**  
Applicants will arrange a consultation with NCMDC. It is the hope that the inquirer's church will pay for 60% of the incurred fee and that the Presbytery will pay 40%. In case the church is unable to do so, the inquirer is liable for the fee, but if necessary, financial assistance from the Presbytery may be available. Following the completion of the assessment, the inquirer must give approval for NCMDC to send a (confidential) written report of the consultation to the Presbytery for use by the CPM.
- **Field Education and Clinical Pastoral Education (certified unit)**  
During the preparation process, the inquirer/candidate is required to complete both a certified unit of Clinical Pastoral Education **and** a field education. One of these must be completed before advancement to candidacy. The advisory group may require both be done in the inquiry phase if it deems it necessary. Self-evaluations and supervisor's evaluations must be submitted to CPM as part of the evaluative material that is collected during the preparation process (see pages 31-33).

Ordinarily field education is completed during the course of seminary study and should be in a Presbyterian congregation. CPM expects to approve the site prior to the beginning of work. The term should be at least nine months of part-time (10 - 15 hours/week) or full-time for three months. The placement shall not be in the home church of the inquirer/candidate, but ideally in a context that offers a balance and contrast to the home church environment. Supervisor's mid-term and final evaluations as well as the student's evaluation must be submitted to CPM for review.

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area requires at least one unit of certified CPE in a hospital or other setting (see page 33). The advisory group must pre-approve the proposed location. A copy of the supervisor's evaluation must be submitted to CPM.

- **Annual Consultation**  
The CPM is required by the Book of Order (G-14.0421) to hold an annual consultation with all inquirers/candidates during the time they are under care of the Presbytery. Forms #3 and 4 are used to compile information for this review. The CPM moderator coordinates the annual consultation schedule.

The CPM will ordinarily pay 80% of the travel costs for annual consultations (up to \$300/person). Such payment requires receipts for public transportation or voucher for

mileage from the inquirer/candidate and action on the part of the CPM. Mileage reimbursement will be at the Presbytery's volunteer rate.

The CPM requires at least one annual consultation prior to review for candidacy.

An annual consultation will ordinarily include the inquirer/candidate, his/her Session liaison, his/her pastor (when possible) and his/her advisory group. The consultation will begin with introductions and a time of touching base with the inquirer/candidate about their experiences, education and growth since last meeting with the committee. The growth objectives established at the previous meeting will be reviewed and new growth objectives will be discussed together. After about 40 minutes the inquirer/candidate will be invited to leave the group and a short discussion will be held with the Session liaison and pastor. They will join the inquirer/candidate while the advisory group finalizes recommendations to the full CPM. All are invited to return. The advisory group then shares its affirmations of the inquirer/candidate and its recommended growth objectives. The gathering will close in prayer. Shortly after this meeting, the advisor and inquirer/candidate will meet to fill out Form 4 reflecting the outcome of the consultation and to debrief the meeting. Copies of Form 4 will be shared with the inquirer/candidate's Session and seminary.

- **Seminary Education**

Persons in the preparation process must attend a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS).

The seminary course of study must meet all requirements of the Book of Order, and additional requirements established by the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. If an inquirer/candidate is enrolled in a non-Presbyterian seminary, he/she may be required to take specified courses in another seminary as required by the CPM (see page 36-39 for expected course learning goals and page 31 for "Choice of Seminary in Preparedness for Ministry").

- **Bible Content Examination**

The Bible Content Exam is one of the five required exams for ordination in the PC(USA). It is offered twice a year; the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in February and the Friday before Labor Day. Inquirers are encouraged to take it as soon as possible during their time under care. Anyone may take the exam. Visit <http://www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm> for application and further information.

- **Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training**

Passage from inquirer to candidate will not be approved unless the individual has completed the basic sexual misconduct prevention training course which is offered two times during the year in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. If an inquirer wishes to request approval for equivalent training in another setting, that request for equivalency approval should be made to the CPM to the Presbytery's committee responsible for the sexual misconduct prevention training. Costs will be borne by the inquirer.

- **Fiscal Fitness**

Pastoral care for students and clergy includes caring for their financial well-being and that of their families. To that end, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area strongly

recommends every seminary student under care 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.)

- **Inquirer's Pre-candidacy Statements**

Inquirers are required to complete six statements on specified topics that are a major part of the application for candidacy.

1. A statement of his or her understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to his or her sense of call;
2. A statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;
3. An analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships;
4. A statement of what it means to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church;
5. A statement of self-understanding which reflects the Inquirer's personal and cultural background and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical, and mental health;
6. Statement of his or her understanding of the task ministers of the Word and Sacrament perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for ministry of the Word and Sacrament and of areas in which growth is needed.

(See "Guidelines for Application for Candidacy" on page 46)

These statements will be submitted along with application forms #5A/B to the session for review and consideration for advancing the inquirer to candidacy. In addition, a one page Statement of Motivation is required. This is not a Statement of Faith but is an opportunity to address one's faith experience, participation in the life and mission of the church, and indications of how God has been guiding the person toward ordained ministry.

- **Requests for Exceptions ("Extraordinary Inquirer or Candidate")**

If for some reason an inquirer cannot meet all requirements, a request for an exception may be considered by the advisor and advisory group. Such a request must be made in writing to the advisor and the advisory group at least two weeks prior to the next meeting. Careful consideration will be given by the advisory group, and if it is determined that the request merits review by the full CPM, a recommendation will be prepared by the advisory group. All requests for exceptions must meet requirements of the Book of Order G-14.0400) and some may require approval by the Presbytery.

### **III. TRANSITION TO THE CANDIDACY PHASE**

Acceptance into the candidacy phase indicates high probability for ordination to ministry of the Word and Sacrament. During candidacy, full and final preparations of an individual for ministry will be completed and the candidate will be declared ready to receive a call.

- **Application for Candidacy**

An inquirer, advisor and advisory group will determine the appropriate time to apply for candidacy. Along with assessment of the inquirer's gifts and skills for ministry, there are specific requirements to be met during the inquiry phase as follows:

- at least one annual review
- completion of either field education or CPE and evaluations (self & supervisor) successful passing of the Bible Content Exam (expected but not required)
- NCMDC assessment and report submitted to and discussed with CPM
- official transcripts on file
- six inquirer's statements (see above) and Statement of Motivation (see p. 44)
- evidence of completion of the basic sexual misconduct prevention training course

- **Procedure for Application**

When it has been determined that an inquirer is ready to apply for candidacy, the he or she needs to complete Forms #5A and B found at <http://presbyterytwincities.org/resources-2/forms-and-policies/forms/>. The seven statements are to be included as part of the application. The inquirer will arrange with the pastor to meet with the session to discuss the seven statements, call to ministry and to make recommendation for endorsement. If approved, the session moderator will sign the appropriate forms and they will be submitted to the Presbytery office for referral to the advisory group and CPM.

- **Preparing for the CPM Advisory Group**

The discussions with the advisory group and the full CPM will be held on two meeting dates, generally in successive months, for persons living in the Presbytery. If an inquirer does not reside locally, an advisory group meeting may be scheduled early on the day of the CPM meeting for the candidacy review and if approved, the inquirer will meet the same day with the full CPM.

The advisory group interview will last about one hour. All relevant forms, evaluations, transcripts, other documents as available and the six statements will be reviewed. The inquirer will be excused from the meeting while the group reviews the discussion and formulates a recommendation for the full committee. The inquirer will be invited back to the meeting to receive the recommendation. If it is affirmative, the recommendation will be presented to CPM. If the advisory group decision is for the inquirer to continue in inquiry, recommendations will be offered regarding additional work to be completed. Care will be taken to be compassionate and supportive in this step. The meeting will be closed with prayer by the advisor.

- **Meeting with the Full Committee**

The inquirer's candidacy application and statements will be distributed to the full committee prior to the meeting at which the inquirer appears. It will be assumed by CPM that all requirements during inquiry have been met. The seven statements will form the basis of the discussion and review, along with any other concerns or issues that the advisory group desires to present. The inquirer will be given opportunity to ask questions or make comments and observations about the preparation process thus far. At the close of the discussion, the inquirer will be asked to leave the room while the CPM decides whether to recommend to Presbytery at its next meeting that the inquirer be enrolled as a candidate. The review will close with prayer by the advisor.

- **Appearance before Presbytery**

Advancement to candidacy is a step that must be approved by the Presbytery after recommendations by the session and CPM. It is the time when the Presbytery affirms the gifts and skills of a person under care, and pledges its support in the final stages of preparation. The Presbytery will receive a copy of the Statement of Motivation in advance of the meeting.

The inquirer will be presented to the Presbytery to read and receive questions about his or her Statement of Motivation. When the Presbytery has been satisfied with the questioning and responses, and the motion “to arrest the examination” has been made, the inquirer will be excused while the Presbytery votes to proceed to candidacy. If the vote is affirmative, the Presbytery moderator will invite family, pastor, advisors and session representatives to be present with the inquirer when the constitutional questions for candidacy are asked. A member of CPM offers a prayer, presents a charge and offers some gifts to the candidate. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery will sign the appropriate forms that will be distributed to the candidate, session, and the General Assembly Office.

If the CPM recommends a move to candidacy, it does so with a high level of confidence that the Presbytery will affirm this recommendation. In the rare situation where the Presbytery vote is negative, the applicant will continue as an inquirer. A prayer will be offered. As soon as possible, the advisory group will meet with the inquirer to process what happened.

#### **IV. THE CANDIDACY PHASE**

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide a time for further development toward full readiness for ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and to provide an opportunity for both CPM and the candidate to address issues of experience, integration, competency, and theological maturity. At least one year is required in the candidacy phase.

There will be continuous assessment with the advisor and advisory group of the final materials, seminary course work, CPE or field education (whichever was not completed during inquiry), and any other issues or concerns raised by either party. Candidates and the CPM will continue to be in prayerful discernment and theological discussion related to the call to ministry of Word and Sacrament and their fitness and readiness for this ministry.

Annual reviews during the candidacy phase are part of this continuous assessment process. They are also the occasions for CPM and candidates to make decisions about next steps in the process according to the Book of Order. Candidates should be engaged in theological discussions related to the call to ministry and their preparation process.

The advisor and candidate should remain in close contact during this period in order to assure that the candidate is on track to meet expectations in order to be certified ready to receive a call in a timely manner.

In addition to preparing and presenting various written reports, evaluations and assessments, the candidate should take the four required ordination examinations at the earliest possible time (a person does not have to be a candidate to take the exams, but must have completed at least two full years of seminary to be eligible). Registration and instructions are available at <http://www.pcusa.org/exams/registration.htm>. See also “Preparing to Write Ordination Examinations” on page 57 and following. The originals of all ordination exams (whether successfully completed or not) are to be sent to the Presbytery office for one’s CPM file at the earliest possible convenience so they can be reviewed prior to approving a request to retake an exam. Candidates are encouraged to make a copy of the originals for their own records.

## **V. CIRCULATION OF THE PIF & SEEKING A CALL**

The CPM of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area generally grants permission for candidates to circulate their Personal Information Form (PIF) following successful completion of the five standard ordination exams. The national referral system, however, will not allow a PIF to be posted on the Church Leadership Connection until a candidate is certified ready to be examined for ordination pending receipt of a call. The CPM Moderator must attest that all requirements, including final assessment, have been met in order for the PIF to be matched.

The question is frequently raised about the possibility of working in a setting in which a candidate has been employed or has done an internship. Such a call is feasible under two conditions: that the search is an open search (i.e., the candidate is just one of the persons being considered for the position) and that there must be at least six months since the candidate has worked or interned in the congregation.

## **VI. COMPLETION OF THE CANDIDACY PHASE**

It is a time of great rejoicing when all preparations and requirements have been met and the time for final assessment of readiness for ministry has arrived.

- **Readiness Review**

During a readiness review with the advisory group, the candidate’s Statement of Faith, description and analysis of the contemporary need to which the sermon is addressed, exegesis, written sermon text and PIF will be reviewed in preparation for presentation to the full committee. If necessary, suggestions for revisions will be made at this time.

Specific materials to be presented are:

- Statement of Faith
- A description and analysis of the contemporary need to which the sermon is addressed
- An exegesis of the Biblical passage(s) (using a full range of interpretive tools, including the Biblical languages),
- A bibliography of the works consulted for this sermon and exegesis, and
- A sermon based on the analysis of contemporary need and exegesis (see “Guidelines for Description of Need, Exegesis and Sermon”).
- Draft of Personal Information Form (PIF)

**\*\*The CPM advisor and sub-committee will be certain that the candidate's file contains the following\*\*:**

- Forms #1A and B, 2A and B, 3, 4, 5A and B,
- Career assessment report
- CPE supervisor's evaluation & student evaluation
- Field education supervisor's evaluation & student's self evaluation
- Six inquirer's statements & Statement of Motivation
- Transcript showing bachelor's degree being received
- Current official transcripts and evidence of anticipated or past seminary graduation with completion of all CPM required subjects
- All (five) ordination examinations successfully completed and filed
- Statement of Faith approved by the advisory group
- Description and analysis of the contemporary need to which the sermon is addressed, exegesis and sermon approved by the advisory group
- Certificate indicating completion of Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training

Following are the steps for preparation for the "readiness review":

- When the candidate and the advisor have determined readiness for the review, all materials must be submitted to the Presbytery office no later than two weeks in advance of the date the review is to take place
- Advisory group discussion will center on the Statement of Faith, analysis of contemporary need, exegesis, sermon, ministry experience, general theology, PIF and call
- The file will be reviewed for completeness and arrangements made for missing materials to be supplied
- The candidate will be excused from the meeting while the group discusses the review and forms a recommendation
- If the vote is affirmative, the advisory group will recommend the candidate to the full committee for a "final assessment"
- If the vote is negative, the advisor will appropriately discuss the group's findings with the candidate and develop a strategy for meeting the requirements
- The meeting will be closed with prayer by the advisor

- **Final Assessment**

When the advisory group has determined that a candidate is ready for the final review with the full CPM, a "final assessment" will be scheduled. Following are the steps for the preparedness review with the full CPM:

- Review of all relevant materials by the full committee, identifying issues and questions to discuss with the candidate
- Candidate will preach the sermon
- Discussion before CPM will review the written materials and the outcomes of inquiry and candidacy (as spelled out in the Book of Order)
- The candidate will be excused while the committee discusses the review and votes whether to certify the candidate ready to receive a call
- If the action is affirmative, it will be reported to Presbytery at its next meeting. The meeting will be closed with prayer by the advisor. Form #6 will be completed and signed.
- If the vote is negative, the full committee will decide whether to recommend that the candidate continue and determine what further work is needed before another review is scheduled. A small group of CPM members may be asked to

meet with the candidate on particular issues of concern. The meeting will be closed with prayer by the advisor, and care and support will be offered to the candidate.

## **VII. LEAVING THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS (G-14.0460)**

At any time during the process it may be determined that an inquirer or candidate will not continue.

If the **inquirer/candidate decides** to leave the process, the pastor and session should be informed of the decision. A request to be removed from the Presbytery roll of inquirers and candidates should be presented in writing to the CPM moderator. The CPM will act on the request in consultation with the inquirer or candidate. If the request is affirmed, the inquirer/candidate's name will be removed from the rolls, form #7 will be signed by the Stated Clerk and sent to the appropriate parties, and the action will be reported to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

An **advisory group** may decide that it is not in the best interest of all that an inquirer or candidate continues in the process. Such recommendations are not undertaken lightly. The CPM will receive the recommendation but not act upon it until the following meeting. In the intervening time, the advisor and/or a small group from CPM will meet with the inquirer/candidate. The inquirer/candidate or other parties of interest may request a hearing by the full CPM at the meeting at which the decision is scheduled to be made. If the committee votes to concur with the advisory group's recommendation, the advisor will inform the inquirer/candidate about the decision. The CPM moderator will inform the pastor and session liaison of the recommendation. Presbytery will vote on the recommendation at its next meeting. If Presbytery votes to remove the name from the roll, form #7 will be signed by the Stated Clerk and sent to the appropriate parties. In all cases, the Presbytery may arrange for continued guidance and support of those who are removed from the rolls.

## EXPECTATIONS: CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The following criteria have been developed by the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area's Committee on Preparation for Ministry for use by the CPM advisors, applicants, and all sessions involved. These criteria are intended as general evaluative guidelines and should not be used legalistically.

### I. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING APPLICANTS TO INQUIRY

**Acceptance into Inquiry indicates a POSSIBILITY for ministry**

- **GOALS OF THE APPLICATION PERIOD ARE TO:**  
determine whether the person has at least basic potential for ministry of the Word and Sacrament • begin to question the nature of call • begin to discern the nature of the applicant's vocation, whether to ministry of the Word and Sacrament or to another calling  
• prepare the applicant for the highly evaluative period of inquiry and candidacy • offer suggestions for further exploration of vocation and development in the event the applicant is not accepted
- **DESIRABLE QUALITIES AND COMPETENCIES FOR THE APPLICANT INCLUDE:**  
evidence of spiritual development through vital, searching faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ • commitment to biblical faith • exploration of personal spirituality and disciplines • active participation in a congregation of the PC(USA)  
  
readiness for education toward ministry with intellectual ability for ministry • academic interest, motivation and proficiency • capacity to deal with abstract ideas and symbols • understanding of the dynamics of a worshipping community, particularly in the context of a PC(USA) congregation  
  
healthy interpersonal relations exhibited by positive qualities of compassion, listening skills and caring • realistic sense of self • sensitivity to one's environment (roles and culture)  
• ability to communicate with and listen to others • ability to maintain relationships  
  
personal qualities as shown through a reasonable level of emotional health and self-awareness • a positive, hopeful approach to life • commitment to personal growth, including knowledge and use of tools for self-assessment • accord between understanding of self and others' perceptions of self • appropriate openness to counsel  
• strong sense of personal integrity • flexibility • awareness of personal limits • healthy acceptance of risk  
  
professional qualities for ministry such as a stirring to serve God as a minister of the Word and Sacrament • awareness of the larger church (Presbytery, synod, general assembly) and its mission • commitment to participation in the PC(USA) • awareness of the covenantal relationship and mutual accountability that Presbyterians have to one another  
• sense of vocation of all Christians • sense of the importance of "equipping the saints" and ability to motivate others • beginning awareness of the tasks of, and one's suitability for, ministry of the Word and Sacrament • awareness of one's own gifts, skills and areas where growth is needed

- **MEANS OF ASSESSMENT WILL INCLUDE:**  
written information provided by the applicant and church (forms #1 and 2) • CPM conversations with the pastor/clerk of the home church • endorsement by and input from the session of the home congregation • two seeker essays • first interview with the CPM advisory group • references from personal references in a variety of appropriate contexts (college/seminary, family, friends, employers, and church) • academic transcripts (college and seminary, other)
- **GOALS OF THE INQUIRY PERIOD ARE TO:**
  - assess the person's skills, gifts and development (strengths and weaknesses) • determine whether those gifts, skills and abilities best suit the ministry of the Word and Sacrament or another calling • decide whether to proceed to candidacy, continue in the inquiry phase, or leave the process and explore a more suitable calling

## II. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING APPLICANTS TO CANDIDACY

Acceptance into Candidacy indicates **HIGH PROBABILITY** for ministry of Word and Sacrament

- **DESIRABLE QUALITIES AND COMPETENCES**  
education for ministry will be demonstrated through evidence of intellectual ability and capacity to integrate academic learning and practical experience in ministry • academic interest, motivation and proficiency demonstrated by moderate to high performance in seminary • ability to deal with abstract and concrete issues appropriately • ability to articulate one's faith vis-à-vis the Reformed tradition • seminary training including an appropriate balance of courses, both academic and practical (Book of Order and Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area requirements for ordination are: Greek and Hebrew [language and exegesis], Old Testament, New Testament, Reformed theology, church history, Reformed worship and sacraments, Presbyterian polity, preaching, pastoral care and counseling, Christian education, and ethics.)

spiritual development will be shown by the ability to articulate one's faith, personal experience, essential elements of the Reformed tradition, and their interrelation • evidence of strong personal faith in God, revealed in Jesus Christ, and experienced through the Holy Spirit • response to faith through service to the church and the world • engagement in intentional practices to nurture one's own spiritual life, including forms of Bible reading and prayer • participation in a worshipping community and experience in a PC(USA) congregation • understanding of the relationship between faith and the issues faced by people in the contemporary world

interpersonal relationships must have evidence of qualities of compassion, caring and empathy • clarity about one's own values, gifts and priorities matched with an appreciation of those gifts in others • sensitivity to one's setting and the ability to perform successfully in a variety of environments (school, church, other field education, home, etc.) • understanding of and effective response to issues of authority, roles and expectations • effective communication skills in one-to-one, small and large group settings • ability to deal productively with conflict, failure and pain (one's own and others') • ability to maintain appropriate relationships, acknowledge limits and set boundaries

personal growth will be evidenced by good mental health, including emotional stability, authenticity, a sense of humor, energy, motivation, comfort with self and others, appropriateness, and an adequately low level of anxiety • openness to learning, self-exploration, and counsel • a high degree of congruence between one's self-image and others' perceptions • commitment to continued personal growth, knowledge of and appropriate use of tools for growth (e.g. counseling, reading, mentors, spiritual advisors, prayer, etc.) • ability to set priorities (pursue challenging goals, acknowledge realistic limits, and manage time effectively)

professional development is evidenced by an understanding of the larger church (Presbytery, synod, general assembly) and its mission, polity and theology, and a commitment to participate in the PC(USA) • commitment to the covenantal relationship and mutual accountability in the PC(USA) • demonstrated leadership (initiative, self-confidence, organizational and communication skills) and ability to motivate others and cultivate leadership • clear sense of call and appropriateness of vocational choice which includes compatibility of interests and gifts with those required for ministry of the Word and Sacrament • basic ability to think objectively about the church in specific settings such as the home church, field education, the seminary community • experience in and understanding of the practice of worship in the Reformed tradition • an understanding of Word and Sacrament as service with God's people to the world

- **THE MEANS OF ASSESSING READINESS FOR CANDIDACY WILL BE:**
  - seminary transcripts and course evaluations • statement of motivation • statement of faith • North Central Ministry Development Center report • six inquirer's statements prepared as part of the candidacy application • seminary field education supervisor's evaluation and/or CPE supervisor's evaluation • interviews by CPM advisor • endorsement by the session (forms #5A/B) • CPM conversations with the pastor/clerk of the home church • information from personal references (persons in a variety of appropriate contexts such as college/seminary, field education supervisors, family, friends, employers, and/or home church) • written information provided by the applicant and home church (including annual consultation goals, forms #3 and 4) • interview with the CPM advisory group • usually successful completion of the Bible content exam (required for Readiness for Ministry) • affirmative answers to the constitutional questions (W4.4000) which will be asked at the time of presentation to Presbytery
- **GOALS OF THE CANDIDACY PERIOD ARE TO:**
  - determine whether the candidate is ready to receive a call and be ordained to ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and if not, how the person can further prepare for ordination or identify another vocation • identify areas of strength, weakness, continued growth and development • identify plans for transition into ministry

### III. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING READINESS FOR MINISTRY

**Approval for readiness for ministry certifies FULL PREPARATION for ministry of the Word and Sacrament**

- **EXPECTATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION OF READINESS ARE:**
  - evidence of completion (or pending completion) of all the educational requirements of the CPM • awareness of the scope and tasks of ministry of the Word and Sacrament • ability to articulate core doctrines of the Reformed faith as they have integrated them in

their personal faith • an articulate expression of personal faith which is compatible with the Reformed tradition, especially as seen in the confessional documents of the church • a responsible, continuing struggle with difficult areas of faith such as sin, evil, the sovereignty of God, individual freedom, corporate responsibility, the atonement, etc.

spiritual development will be evidenced by authentic faith (beliefs and commitments practiced, coherence between theology and life, and ability to interpret life through the lens of theology) • the integration of theology and spiritual formation • continuing growth in personal spiritual disciplines and mission

interpersonal relations must show evidence of increasing depth of sensitivity, compassion and empathy • ability to evaluate and articulate one's own values, gifts and priorities and to identify and appreciate those of others • healthy interdependence with maturing balance between self, family, friends, and community, especially in the areas of authority, responsibility and needs • ability to analyze one's setting including history, location/culture, personalities, dynamics/conflicts, spiritual and emotional health • well-developed communication skills, oral and written, for a variety of settings (counseling, preaching, teaching, writing, and administration) • ability to deal productively with conflict, failure and pain (one's own and others') • ability to maintain appropriate relationships, acknowledge limits and set boundaries

personal growth will be shown by maturity and integrity demonstrated by trustworthiness, openness, flexibility, healthy level of self-esteem, sufficiently low levels of defensiveness and anxiety, and an appreciation of one's role, expectations and context • commitment to the life-long pursuit of growth and self-discipline • balance in life with a commitment to work and play, and activities beyond the work place • self-motivation and ability to set priorities to pursue challenging goals, acknowledge realistic limits, and manage one's time effectively • ability to assume responsibility for physical, emotional, spiritual and financial health

professional development will show a commitment to the church, its people, mission, theology and polity, and to ministry of the Word and Sacrament • understanding of and commitment to being an active presbyter • ability and commitment to communicate the mission of the church and inspire faithful discipleship in others • ability to articulate and share the faith in the practice of ministry of the Word and Sacrament and the ability to discern and discuss theological issues in the life of the church and the world • effective skills for ministry of the Word and Sacrament which include preaching, worship planning and leadership, teaching, spiritual guidance, counseling, administration, polity, etc. • ability and commitment to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love • awareness of and commitment to continuing education

- **THE MEANS OF ASSESSING READINESS FOR MINISTRY WILL BE:**  
successful completion of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee five standard ordination examinations (Bible Content, Polity, Theology, Worship and Sacraments, and Biblical Exegesis and Sermon) G-14.0431 • Statement of Faith (one page) • exegesis, bibliography, description and analysis of contemporary need, and sermon text • transcript from college showing successful completion of a Bachelor's degree • transcript from seminary showing satisfactory grades and successful completion (or pending completion) of a M.Div. degree from an accredited theological institution

approved by the CPM • North Central Ministry Development Center report • evaluations from field education and CPE supervisors • ongoing conversations with the CPM advisor • personal references • written information provided by the candidate including annual review consultation goals from forms #3 and 4 • successful completion of a “Readiness Review” by the CPM advisory group and a “Final Assessment” by the full CPM which will certify readiness to receive a call and be examined for ordination as Minister of the Word and Sacrament • completion of Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training

**The Relationships of  
An Inquirer/Candidate with  
CPM Advisor and  
Session Liaison:  
A Covenant Relationship**

## **The Relationships of An Inquirer/Candidate with CPM Advisor and Session Liaison: A Covenant Relationship**

The preparation for ministry process is a covenant relationship between an individual, his/her Session and the Presbytery. Together they share the task of nurturing that individual's gifts into their most appropriate expression, and enhancing the welfare of both the Church and the individual.

The liaison between the Presbytery and the individual seeker/inquirer/candidate is the CPM advisor. The goal is that the relationship with the advisor and the committee will be supportive, helpful, productive and smooth. Every covenant entered into requires faith in God, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and a commitment by the advisor, the session liaison, and the person under care to work with one another openly and with constant concern for one another.

### **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN INQUIRER OR CANDIDATE**

Suggestions for building positive, supportive relationships:

- Always show a human face to your advisor. He or she is genuinely interested in you. Inform your advisor promptly of major events in your life, such as marriage, divorce, deaths, change of schools, etc. If you feel there is a communication problem, say so. If you are struggling with something, it is hoped that you will be able to discuss whatever it is with your advisor. If this is not the case, please discuss the situation with the committee chair or Presbytery staff resource person.
- Ask questions! Ask them early! Ask them frequently!
- Arrange through your advisor and the CPM Chair to meet with your advisory group for your annual consultations, move to candidacy and final assessment. The responsibility for making sure these appointments happen in a timely way belongs to you. All papers should be emailed to the Presbytery office with a copy to your advisor, Session liaison and pastor by the stated deadlines.
- Whenever you send originals of transcripts, all reports, and other materials relating to preparation for ministry to the Presbytery office, also send a copy to your advisor and Session liaison so they are informed.
- Stay in touch with your advisor. Always give your advisor, Session liaison and the Presbytery office your current address, phone number and e-mail address.
- Initiate communication with your advisor at least twice each year; monthly contact is not too frequent. Meet face-to-face whenever possible.
- Read and re-read this manual so that you thoroughly understand the preparation process. We hope these processes will not be a burden to bear, but rather provide the support and guidance that will serve as an adequate rudder to guide you as you navigate through the waters of discernment as an inquirer, candidate, seminarian and prospective pastor.

## The Relationships of An Inquirer/Candidate with CPM Advisor and Session Liaison: A Covenant Relationship

### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CPM ADVISOR

The advisor is the key to the effective work of the CPM and is the continuing liaison with individual inquirers and candidates. The primary tasks of the advisor are to: act as a contact person, serve as a support person for the advisee, and explain the process. The advisor will also communicate and interpret the committee's actions and recommendations to the advisee.

Suggestions:

- Get to know the inquirer or candidate as a person.
- The advisor is the primary person to understand and communicate the process, procedures, care and concerns of the Presbytery. Be the advisee's advocate if there are points of tension with the advisory group or committee.
- Explain the process and functioning of the committee to your advisee. Include what is expected of him or her and what he or she can expect of the committee.
- Put a human face on the process.
- Help advisees get in touch with their strengths and weaknesses. Be honest and kind.
- Initiate communication with advisees at least twice a year and meet face-to-face whenever possible. **Always** respond to communications from an advisee.
- Have conversations with the advisee prior to a meeting with the advisory group or committee in order to review materials and prepare for the meeting.
- Periodically review the advisee's progress toward ordination, including required course work, field education, CPE, and Standard Ordination Examinations, as well as forms and documents that are due.
- Be willing to consult with advisees as they prepare the inquirer's statements, the candidate's statements, Statement of Motivation, Statement of Faith, exegesis, description and analysis of a contemporary need and sermon.
- Discuss the advisee's developing faith and sources of spiritual growth.
- Follow-up each CPM appointment with a conversation with the advisee. Be faithful about filling out Form 4 after each annual consultation so that the concerns and affirmations of the advisory group are recorded in a timely manner that is helpful to the advisee. The form needs to be signed by both the advisor and advisee and sent in to the Presbytery office before the next CPM meeting.
- Offer a charge to and prayer for the advisee at the Presbytery meeting at which they become a candidate.

## **The Relationships of An Inquirer/Candidate with CPM Advisor and Session Liaison: A Covenant Relationship**

### **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SESSION LIAISON**

The Book of Order provides for the appointment of an elder (or a group of persons including at least one elder) to act as the Session's liaison with the inquirer/candidate and with the Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry. This elder will represent the session and participate with the inquirer/candidate and the Presbytery's committee as they explore and evaluate his/her progress in the preparation for ministry. Outlined below are some of the ways in which such liaisons may be helpful.

- Remember the inquirer/candidate in prayer.
- Get to know the inquirer or candidate as a person: family, education, interests and abilities, work experience, seminary life, progress toward ordination, financial needs, etc.
- Become acquainted in ways that seem natural to you and to the inquirer/candidate. If the inquirer/candidate is attending seminary away, arrange a visit when they are home. At other times, find ways to stay in touch.
- Take an interest in his/her particular activities related to preparation for ministry such as field education, course work, CPE, annual consultations and the Ordination Exams.
- Attend annual consultations with your inquirer/candidate and encourage your pastor to do so as well.
- Share with the CPM, especially at the time of an annual consultation, any areas of particular need of the inquirer/candidate -- whether financial or personal.
- Initiate conversation with the session on the possibility of providing financial assistance or other tangible support.
- Become familiar with the "Preparation for Ministry" manual of the Presbytery in order to be able to assist with requirements and procedures and to provide support at times such as appearances before Presbytery, annual consultations, ordination examinations, etc.
- Be present at any meeting of Presbytery at which the inquirer/candidate will appear, including the service of ordination and/or installation when a call is received.
- The role of the spouse of the inquirer/candidate is particularly important. Be supportive, sensitive and understanding of the spouse and family.

- In a word, be a friend who offers a sense of personal, moral and spiritual interest in and support of the inquirer/candidate in all aspects of training for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Hopefully, in so doing, you will also grow in faith and grace.

## **SESSION ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The pastor(s) and the session are responsible for communicating to church members what is meant by “the ministry of all believers” and for helping members discern and fulfill their Christian vocations. To ensure that committed, knowledgeable persons continue to be involved in the life and mission of the church and the world it is essential that the session take seriously its responsibility for developing vocational awareness among members of the congregation. Members of congregations should also be aware of the ministry of Word and Sacrament as an occupation through which many dimensions of Christian service can be realized. This opportunity should be emphasized in all church programs, from Christian education classes and youth and young adult groups, to men and women’s programs. It is, therefore, essential that pastors, sessions and local congregations:

- Challenge all members to become aware of their Christian vocation;
- Develop and implement thoughtful and creative means by which highly qualified persons may be challenged to consider a vocation in professional ministry;
- Help potential inquirer’s get in touch with the Presbytery’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry as soon as possible;
- Give high priority to developing and maintaining vital, theologically sound youth programs which are in harmony with the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions; and
- Assure that youth ministry leaders are carefully selected and trained, theologically competent and appropriate role models.

### **Exploring the Call to Ministry of the Word and Sacrament**

The local church is provided with a challenge and an opportunity when a member of the congregation approaches the pastor and session to express the possibility that she or he has been called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. It is the session's responsibility to provide a supportive relationship through which to explore with the individual the personal implications and suitability of a church vocation.

Such awareness and experience emerges through prayerful examination of the individual's personal faith, through his/her motivation and experience within the congregation, and through a shared assessment of all the responsibilities and gifts which will be needed for ministry. These are important first steps in discerning whether the individual is called by the Holy Spirit to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

### **Possible Issues for Attention and Evaluation by the Session**

- What personal qualities show clear evidence of a healthy and vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?
- How are faith and spirituality currently being expressed through participation in the life, mission and worship of the congregation?
- What motivations impel the sense of call? Are they healthy and positive?
- What real and potential talents for ministry are evident in this individual (e.g., the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, compassion, leadership, administrative abilities)?
- What is the level of his/her academic interest, ability and motivation?

- What is the level of his/her physical health and stamina?
- What is the evidence of his/her emotional stability and well-being?
- What is the evidence of his/her self-discipline?

### **Offering Support to Inquirers and Candidates**

The pastor(s), session and congregation communicate with and support this individual throughout the entire period of preparation. This can be a deeply meaningful experience for all involved. In all matters relating to preparation, the individual will be under the oversight (care) of the Presbytery. To facilitate this relationship, the Book of Order provides for appointment of one elder from the church to act as liaison with the individual and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) throughout the process.

It is important that the session contact the individual and his/her family at significant times during the preparation process, such as annual and special consultations with CPM, appearances before Presbytery, academic examination periods, ordination examination periods, when a call is being negotiated, and when ordination takes place.

Providing financial assistance is another very tangible expression of support. The session is asked to pay 60% of the fee for the required assessment at North Central Ministry Development Center. Other financial gifts, however small, are helpful and are a concrete way to show support (e.g. a gift for seminary books).

### **Initiating the Preparation Process and the Inquiry Phase**

The session or pastor should contact the Executive Presbyter or Chair of the CPM when a church member indicates a strong desire to pursue his/her sense of call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. A session meeting for orientation to the preparation process will be scheduled and a representative from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will participate. The session will interview the applicant and hear his/her request to become enrolled as an inquirer by the Presbytery and will make a recommendation to the CPM and the Presbytery regarding this request (Forms #1A and B and #2A and B). In addition, the Session will be asked to articulate gifts for ministry they perceive in the seeker as well as any concerns they may have.

If the session, CPM or the Presbytery decides not to accept the individual for enrollment as an inquirer, the session will continue to provide support, counsel and guidance to the individual as he/she seeks to discover an appropriate occupational expression of Christian vocation.

During the inquiry phase, the session will participate with the inquirer and the CPM in an evaluation of the inquirer's growth and progress. When an inquirer desires to become a candidate, the session will participate with the inquirer in a process of discernment to review the evidence indicating readiness to proceed to candidacy. This process will include a personal interview with the inquirer, CPM annual consultation reports, and the inquirer's clear demonstration of adequate promise for ministry along with the inquirer's application for candidacy. The session will make a decision whether or not to recommend to CPM and Presbytery that the inquirer proceed to candidacy (Forms #5A and B).

### **The Candidacy Phase**

When the inquirer is ready for admission to candidacy, the session will provide a report and the pastor will make a statement, if requested, when the inquirer is examined before Presbytery. After the inquirer is received by Presbytery as a candidate, the session will continue to provide

support to the candidate and his/her family, and maintain the liaison relationship with both the candidate and the CPM.

The session will continue to receive and review reports of each annual consultation with the candidate and the Presbytery committee, and act as advocate for as long as needed. As an advocate, the session can call the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to accountability in fulfilling any of its responsibilities.

When notice is received of the candidate's ordination, it is the session's responsibility to remove the candidate's name from the church roll.

*For constitutional procedures relating to ordination requirements, inquiry, candidacy, and presenting and receiving a call, see Book of Order, G-14.0400 to G-14.049.*

# **PTCA Policies And Requirements**

### **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.

The program utilizes various interest inventories, psychological tests, a meeting with a psychologist and reflection to help both inquirers and the CPM assess suitability for ministry. The inquirer and NCMDC counselor discuss the results of the inventories and tests, and a written report is sent to the inquirer with a release form for a copy to be sent to the CPM. Such reports include biographical information, interpretation of the results of the various inventories, assessment of the individual's promise for ministry and any recommendations for growth or future directions. These reports are considered highly confidential and are released only with the inquirer's written permission. They are to be seen by CPM members but no copies are circulated. All copies are kept in the Presbytery files.

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 and discussed 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.

Some criteria to be explored with NCMDC include the inquirer's:

- Openness to learning and self-exploration
- Ability to assess themselves realistically
- Emotional stability
- Vocational history and financial situation
- Family situation (both family of origin and current family setting)
- Effective style of inter-personal relating
- Adequate motivation as it pertains to a sense of call and value system
- Level of maturity
- Level of autonomy and authenticity
- Leadership potential (initiative, self-confidence, enthusiasm, etc.)
- Compatibility of interests with elements involved in the exercise of ministry
- Chance for the inquirer's needs as a person to find reasonable fulfillment in ministry
- Innate abilities commensurate with the demands of ministry and the capacity to develop new skills
- Academic ability to complete the rigorous demands of seminary education

**Note: Costs of the NCDMC assessment will normally be shared with the inquirer's home church paying 60% and the Presbytery paying 40%. In 2010, the total cost was approximately \$837.**

## **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.

## **POLITY COURSE POLICY**

We require all our students to take a course in Presbyterian polity, in which the principles of polity are connected to Presbyterian history, Presbyterian worship practice as encountered in the Book of Common worship, and Presbyterian theology as encountered in the Book of Confessions. Students are asked to submit a syllabus in advance.

These topics may be covered in more than one course.

## **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-14.0420). 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 an ideal 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 has the following policy:

### **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 strongly encouraged 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.

**PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

**CARL H. BOSSMAN SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Description**

The Carl H. Bossman Scholarships are perpetually endowed by the earnings from funds given by Mr. Bossman and others, and administered by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

At current earnings rates, at least \$5,200 is available for scholarships each year.

There are very few requirements for recipients of the scholarships:

- They must be in a covenant relationship with the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, that is, candidates or inquirers;
- The financial awards must be used for seminary education.

There are a few guidelines for the decision-making process:

- Preference is given to applicants from St. Croix County, Wisconsin, Mr. Bossman's county of residence;
- Preference is given to applicants who are inclined to serve smaller congregations.

The primary criterion for awarding the scholarships is the degree to which an applicant shows a need for financial assistance to meet seminary education costs. Although most seminarians know whether they need money or not, the application blank is designed to lead the applicant through the process of recording the details on paper.

Applications for the scholarships are sent out annually in early winter for each award cycle, and decisions are announced on or about May 1. The monetary awards are available at the beginning of the academic year for which they are awarded.

These application materials are required:

- A completed application blank;
- A current seminary transcript, if a current one was not requested in the past two months;

In general, the scholarships are open to all candidates and inquirers who plan on attending seminary during the next academic year. It is renewable and can be applied for on an annual basis.

### **BARBARA TILTON SCHOLARSHIPS**

The purpose of this scholarship fund is to provide scholarships to women who are members of churches within the bounds of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area who are inquirers or candidates under care of Presbytery and are enrolled in a degree program of a seminary approved by the Presbytery. This scholarship is a memorial to Barbara Tilton, a former staff member of the Women's Unit assigned to serve within the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

The Barbara Tilton Memorial Scholarship Committee of Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area awards these scholarships annually. It is renewable and can be applied for on an annual basis.

### **SYNOD OF LAKES AND PRAIRIES RACIAL ETHNIC SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Racial Ethnic Scholarship Fund is an educational assistance program designed to encourage Racial Ethnic students in their preparation for service in the Presbyterian Church USA.

Funds for this program are provided by the Committee on Racial Ethnic Ministry of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.

Applicants must be:

1. Racial ethnic students whose permanent residence is within the bounds of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies
2. Active member in a congregation of the PCUSA
3. Studying for preparation for ministry in the PCUSA or in a related ecumenical organization
4. Enrolled at least half-time and in good academic standing
5. Making progress toward a degree
6. Able to demonstrate financial need

Applications are evaluated and awards selected on the basis of information supplied on the application form and a pastor and teacher recommendation. Students must be able to demonstrate their preparation as ordained clergy or other church occupation.

An applicant must provide completed forms for transcript, financial aid, and letters of recommendation to the Committee on Racial Ethnic Ministry at the Synod Office by September 30 of the current year.

Scholarships are reviewed once annually after this deadline and awards are sent to the school to be part of the student's financial aid package. The grant is a supplement to any other financial aid received by the student.

### **OTHER SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

#### GA Scholarships

United Theological Seminary offers a full first year scholarship for all Presbyterian students.

### **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. CPM has the right to require additional coursework at any time in order to ensure these learning objectives are satisfied.

### **BIBLICAL AND LANGUAGE 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.

**Guidelines  
For CPM and Presbytery  
Materials & Meetings**

## GUIDELINES FOR ENROLLMENT OF INQUIRER AT PRESBYTERY

Current process of the Presbytery is to include inquirers in the consent agenda at the beginning of the meetings. As a result, inquirers will be introduced and prayed for and receive the items mentioned from the Presbytery at the time of the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

### **CHAIRPERSON** of Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- Introduces the prospective inquirer who comes forward
  - church of membership is \_\_\_\_\_
  - interest in pursuing ministry: \_\_\_\_\_
  - invites members from the home church to stand in place
- Calls the attention of the Presbytery to the printed response to the question concerning the meaning of inquiry printed on the committee's report
- Presents the new inquirer with a Presbyterian Planning Calendar and a Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study and/or other suitable gifts
- Offers a prayer for the inquirer

## GUIDELINES FOR AN ANNUAL CONSULTATION

Prior to the Annual Consultation, the **advisee** will:

- Complete the necessary forms and have them into the Presbytery office by the deadline given in the appointment letter.
- Request three references and advise them of the deadline as well.
- Make sure that evaluations of completed field education and CPE experiences are into the Presbytery office.
- Make sure that the most recent transcript has been received by the Presbytery office.
- Meet with his/her advisor in preparation for the meeting.

Prior to the Annual Consultation, the **advisor** will:

- Call the field education supervisor for personal input
- Call the seminary liaison for input
- Meet with the advisee to prepare for the meeting

Outline for Annual Consultation:

- The advisor will welcome everyone and invite everyone to introduce him or herself. (Please write down the names of all visitors.)
- The primary part of the meeting will be a time to touch base on the past year in terms of education, spiritual formation, sense of call, personal wholeness and wellness. It is an important time to help the committee get to know the inquirer/candidate.
- Together the group will review the growth objectives from the previous year.
- Together, the group will converse about possible growth objectives for the coming year.
- The inquirer/candidate will be invited to leave for a few minutes while the advisory group converses with the church representative(s). They will then join the inquirer/candidate.
- The advisory group will finalize specific growth objectives for the coming year and make a recommendation about continuing on the rolls.
- The inquirer/candidate and church representatives rejoin the group. Members of the advisory group will share their affirmations with the inquirer/candidate. The advisor will share the recommendations for growth objectives and continuation on the rolls. Opportunities for clarification will be had.
- The advisor will close with prayer.
- When the full CPM convenes again, the recommendations of the advisory group will be brought to them for official action.

Follow Up to Annual Consultation:

- The inquirer/candidate will meet with his/her advisor to complete and sign Form 4, spelling out the approved growth objectives.
- Copies of Form 4 will be sent to the inquirer/candidate's home church and seminary (if an active student).

## GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

1. Inquirers may apply to become Candidates when they are nearing completion of two years of seminary education and when the Inquirer, his or her Session, and the CPM all recognize that the Inquirer has a call to ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. In preparing the application for candidacy, the Inquirer must write six essays
  - A statement of his or her understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to his or her sense of call;
  - A statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;
  - An analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships;
  - A statement of what it means to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church;
  - A statement of self-understanding which reflects the Inquirer's personal and cultural background and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical, and mental health;
  - Statement of his or her understanding of the task ministers of the Word and Sacrament perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for ministry of the Word and Sacrament and of areas in which growth is needed.

These responses will be used by the Inquirer and his/her session as well as the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Generally, each essay should be several paragraphs or up to one page long.

3. The statement of faith must be limited to one page, have each line numbered and have adequate margins. Most importantly, it should be personal enough that the committee knows it is coming from the personal depths of the Inquirer. The statement of faith should reflect a commitment to the Reformed faith and an appreciation of Presbyterian governance and mission. The statement should include beliefs about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, as well as scripture, the sacraments and the mission of the church in the world today. Inquirers should be conscious of how they employ inclusive language.
4. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry also requires the preparation of a one page statement of motivation for choosing ordained ministry as a vocation. This is not a statement of faith but is an opportunity to address one's faith experience, participation in the life and mission of the church, and indications of how God has been guiding the person toward ordained ministry. This document will be shared with the entire Presbytery at the time they make the decision to advance an inquirer to candidacy.
5. The Inquirer must arrange a meeting with the session of his/her congregation, and the session must endorse the Inquirer for candidacy before the Committee on Preparation for Ministry acts on the application for candidacy. The Session should receive the seven essays in advance, discuss them with the Inquirer and then make a clear recommendation about whether or not they believe this individual's call is, indeed, to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Inquirer and the Session are responsible for seeing that Form 5A is

properly filled out, signed by the Inquirer and by a session representative (usually the clerk) and sent to the Presbytery office.

6. The Inquirer should arrange with the chair of CPM for candidacy review with his/her advisory group from CPM. The discussions with the advisory group and the full CPM will be held on two meeting dates, generally in successive months, for persons living in the Presbytery. If an inquirer does not reside locally, an advisory group meeting may be scheduled early on the day of the CPM meeting for the candidacy review and if approved, the inquirer will meet the same day with the full CPM. Both the advisory group and the full committee will carefully review the materials prepared by the Inquirer and will examine the Inquirer with care, recognizing that the transition from Inquirer to Candidate is a momentous vocational step. In contrast to the vocational exploration phase that is appropriate for Inquirers, it is the expectation of the Presbytery that Candidates will meet all the requirements for ordination, receive a call, and proceed to ordination.
7. If CPM votes to recommend that the Inquirer be enrolled as a Candidate, the Inquirer will be presented to the Presbytery. The inquirer will read his/her statement of motivation and then be examined by the Presbytery on his/her personal faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking ordination.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ENROLLMENT OF CANDIDATE AT PRESBYTERY**

### **CHAIRPERSON** of Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- introduces the inquirer who comes forward

### **INQUIRER**

- reads his/her Statement of Motivation to the Presbytery. The statement should address personal motivation, forms of Christian service, and personal faith.

### **MODERATOR** of the Presbytery

- invites members of the Presbytery to ask the inquirer questions. Questions are in order when they pertain to: Forms of Christian service undertaken; Motivation for seeking a call; Faith

### **CHAIRPERSON** of Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- declares the recommendation of the committee to the Presbytery  
(NO SECOND IS NECESSARY)
- invites a commissioner from the inquirer's church to speak in support of the recommendation

### **MODERATOR** of the Presbytery

- invites the inquirer to leave the room
- requests members of the Presbytery if they have questions to ask of the chairperson of the committee
- proceeds to call for the vote

- invites the inquirer to return to the room and announces the results to the inquirer
- invites one pastor and one elder from the inquirer's church to join the inquirer up front
- asks the inquirer to respond to the questions from the Preparation for ministry Advisory Handbook:
  - Do you believe yourself called by God to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament?
  - Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this ministry?
  - Do you accept the proper supervision of the presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?
  - Do you desire now to be received by this presbytery as a Candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA)?
- presents the Certificate of Candidacy and other suitable gifts

**MEMBER** of Committee on Preparation for Ministry (usually the advisor)

- gives a brief charge to the Candidate
- offers a closing prayer

## **GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The purpose of the “Statement of Faith” is for the inquirer/candidate to reflect theologically on specific areas and to state in a concise form his/her faith related to those specific areas. Inquirers are asked to submit a Statement of Faith when applying for candidacy and two-thirds of the way through their theological education. Candidates are asked to submit a statement of faith for their final assessment and for examination for ordination.

Writing a Statement of Faith should begin early in the preparation process and be an on-going process. The committee expects the statement presented at the time of becoming a candidate will differ from the statement presented for ordination. The inquirer/candidate is urged to discuss his/her statement with the CPM advisor, a professor, pastor, or other significant persons in his/her life. The statement should also reveal something of the personhood of the individual.

A statement of personal faith should incorporate an understanding of the Reformed tradition. This statement should be no longer than one page single-spaced, should indicate where the candidate stands on the central doctrines of Presbyterian belief, i.e., the three Persons of the Trinity, salvation, Holy Scripture, the Sacraments, and the mission of the Church, and give some sense of her or his personal theological style.

The Statement of Faith will be the basis by which CPM and the Presbytery conduct their oral examinations of the candidate as part of the examination for ordination. Clichés that might distract a reader should be avoided, and language should be chosen for clear understanding, since the statement will be read by both lay people and ministers. Candidates should be conscious of how they employ inclusive language. The candidate will have the opportunity to discuss it, defend it, explain it, and (sometimes) change it.

The statement must be emailed to the Presbytery office in advance of these discussions and examinations. The statement should be single-spaced on one page, with each line numbered, and maintain adequate margins. The statement will be reproduced as submitted, so typing, spelling and grammar are important.

It is important, even with all of these guidelines, that preparation of this statement encourage you to think and struggle with what you believe. We hope you enjoy the process!

## **GUIDELINES FOR DESCRIPTION OF NEED, EXEGESIS AND SERMON**

The description and analysis of a contemporary need, exegesis and written sermon are major parts of the readiness and final assessment process. This brief guide lists the requirements and recommendations for these important documents. Generally the exegesis and sermon prepared for the ordination examination are used, thereby eliminating duplicate work.

### **Requirements for the description and analysis of contemporary need(s)**

- typed, double spaced; include name and date on cover; all pages must be numbered
- include description of community to which the sermon was/will be preached
- include description and analysis of need(s) this sermon seeks to address

### **Requirements for the exegesis**

- typed, double spaced; include name and date on cover; all pages must be numbered
- include the Scriptural Text and indicate the Bible version(s) used or provide your own translation
- include an outline or description of the exegetical method used
- include use of the original language (Hebrew or Greek)
- sources must be referenced using footnotes, end notes, or notes within the body of the paper
- include a bibliography of all sources used (the majority of sources should be current)

### **Recommendations for the exegesis**

- Good exegesis means knowing what questions to ask of a particular text. Thus, it is impossible to list all the ingredients necessary in every exegesis. You are encouraged to be creative in the development of your exegetical method. However, it is recommended that the following categories of questions be represented in any exegesis for preaching:
  - The language of the text: text-critical issues, translation, syntax, and word use
  - Literary issues: the passage's boundaries, structure and composition, literary context, and genre
  - Principle contents and theology: principle motifs, themes and ideas developed in the passage
  - History of the composition and/or history of use by communities of faith: the passage's historical/sociological setting, authorship, redaction history, and its subsequent interpretation in the faith community
- Sources in the bibliography should include standard reference works, recent commentaries, and other recently published books and pertinent articles.

### **Requirements for the written sermon**

- typed, double-spaced; name and date on the cover; pages must be numbered.
- must be based on the written exegesis
- must correspond to the contemporary need(s) of the community
- CPM expects use of gender inclusive language

### **Recommendations for the sermon**

- when preached, is approximately ten to fifteen minutes in length
- shows an awareness of and sensitivity to the particular context.
- Maintains integrity with the particular biblical text as well as with the whole Bible

## **GUIDELINES FOR ORDINATION EXAMINATION OF A CANDIDATE AT PRESBYTERY**

### **CHAIRPERSON** of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- introduces the candidate who comes forward

### **CANDIDATE**

- reads their statement of faith, which has been available to the commissioners prior to the meeting

### **MODERATOR** of the Presbytery

- invites members of the Presbytery to ask the candidate questions

**CHAIRPERSON** of Committee on Preparation for Ministry

- declares the recommendation of the committee to the Presbytery  
**(NO SECOND IS NECESSARY)**

**MODERATOR** of the Presbytery

- invites the candidate to leave the room
- requests members of the Presbytery if they have questions to ask of the chairperson of the committee
- proceeds to call for the vote
- invites the candidate to return to the room and announces the results to the candidate

NOTE: Plans for ordination are then announced by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and administrative commission is approved if ordination will be done by this Presbytery.

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR PRESBYTERY'S EXAMINATION OF A CANDIDATE**

**(This is what is distributed to the Presbytery to instruct them regarding examination of inquirers and candidates.)**

*The purpose of the examination is to be "fully satisfied of the candidate's qualifications" regarding "his or her Christian faith and views of theology, the sacraments and government of this church" (G14.0482).*

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry presents to the Presbytery persons for examination who are ready to move either to candidacy or ordination and have met all the requirements of the Book of Order and the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. They will have been examined by CPM in preparation for each examination. Examinations on the floor of Presbytery are required and essential in the process of becoming an ordained minister. The CPM expects and encourages presbyters to ask questions to determine readiness of inquirers/candidates to move toward candidacy or ordination.

Inquirers appearing to be enrolled as candidates may be questioned only on their Statement of Motivation. This includes motives seeking ordained ministry, Christian faith and forms of Christian service undertaken.

**Sample Questions For Candidacy:**

- What are your reasons for seeking ordination?
- How has your experience in the Church influenced your sense of God's call on your life?
- What impact do you wish to have through your ministry on the world, on the Church and on individuals?
- What particular gifts do you bring to ministry?
- Describe your personal relationship to God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Questions of a theological or polity nature and on the Statement of Faith should be asked only of candidates who are being examined for ordination.

**Sample Questions For Ordination:**

- What authority does Scripture have for your life?
- What is unique about the Presbyterian tradition and how will it help you in your ministry?
- What is the purpose (or mission) of the Church?
- What is your view of the sacraments?
- What does "evangelism" mean to you and how will you practice it?
- What does "spiritual growth" mean to you?
- In what ways do you encourage your own spiritual growth in Christ?
- How does the church practice "justice" in today's world?

***Note: These are sample questions and are not designed to limit persons from creating their own questions based on the candidate's statement. If an individual feels the candidate has not been responsive in answering the question, one additional question may be presented to further clarify the candidate's answer.***

# **Preparing For Ordination**

## PREPARING FOR ORDINATION

### *Establishing An Administrative Commission*

Pastors are ordained and/or installed at a service conducted by the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. This is done by an Administrative Commission elected by the Presbytery. See the Book of Order (Sections G-14.0480-.0490 and W-4.4000) for guidelines in planning ordinations and installations.

The candidate nominates to the CPM suggested persons to serve on the commission. An Administrative Commission consists of at least five persons from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities as follows:

1. The Moderator of the Presbytery, who is invited to serve as Moderator of the Administrative Commission, or the Moderator's Designee. The Moderator should be one of the first to be consulted about the date of the service.
2. At least two elders, representing two different congregations. There can not be more than one elder from a given congregation on a commission.
3. At least two ministers, representing two different congregations or specialized ministries.

Ordinarily, the commission also needs to be balanced in terms of gender and lay/clergy. One more elder or one more clergyperson is okay but not more than one.

The candidate may invite other persons from inside or outside the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area to participate as corresponding members of the Administrative Commission (i.e., without vote).

The Administrative Commission is convened by the Moderator of the Presbytery (or the Moderator's designee) 30 minutes before the service begins for prayers and for the candidate to review with the participants the leadership responsibilities during the service and other details of the service.

Please remember that Administrative Commissions must be elected at a Presbytery meeting and nominations must be processed and approved by the CPM prior to the Presbytery meeting. Return the attached form to the Presbytery office to the attention of CPM as soon as possible. CPM meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of most months.

### *Scheduling the Installation and/or Ordination Service*

One of the first steps to take is checking with the Presbytery office to see if the date is available, as the Presbytery does not schedule more than one installation or ordination per day. Calling the Moderator to ascertain his/her availability is a close second step.

Information you may need as you plan:

Moderator of the Presbytery

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone

CPM Liaison

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone

CPM's next meeting dates

\_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery's next meetings

\_\_\_\_\_

*The Ordination and Installation Service*

Ordinations and installations are done in the context of a worship service. Please consult the *Worship book* for prayers and suggested readings. It offers both flexibility in planning worship as well as normative guidelines.

*You are encouraged to take an offering:*

As an act of worship, each congregation shall be encouraged to receive an offering at each service of ordination and/or installation conducted by the Presbytery, to provide scholarship assistance to candidates and inquirers through the Carl Bossman Scholarship Fund.

The local church treasurer shall be responsible for forwarding the proceeds of any such offerings to the Presbytery treasurer within thirty days of their receipt.

When any activity is an ordination or an ordination/installation, the Presbytery treasurer shall add the offering to the Carl Bossman Scholarship Fund as "miscellaneous income" and it shall be available for distribution by the Carl Bossman Scholarship Committee during the next academic year.

*Invitations:*

It is appropriate but not required to send invitations to the service of ordination or installation. It is the responsibility of the candidate or congregation to arrange for printing of invitations.

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION FOR ORDINATION REQUEST FORM**

Name of person to be ordained and/or installed: \_\_\_\_\_

Will this be both an ordination and installation? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Church where service will be held: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of service: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

**The following persons are nominated to serve on this Administrative Commission:**

Moderator of Presbytery: \_\_\_\_\_ or

Moderator's Designee: \_\_\_\_\_

Elder \_\_\_\_\_

Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Church or Ministry \_\_\_\_\_

Elder \_\_\_\_\_

Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Church or Ministry \_\_\_\_\_

Elder \_\_\_\_\_

Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Church or Ministry \_\_\_\_\_

**Corresponding Members**

**Representing**

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**Additional Members of Commission (list names and church relationships)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Ordination Exams

Adapted from "Candidate's Handbook for Ordination Examination"  
Office of Examination Services  
PCUSA, Louisville, KY

## INTRODUCTION

The Presbyterian Church (USA) administers Ordination Examinations as a reasonably uniform (standard) process for determining candidates' readiness for ministry. An overture from the Presbytery of San Francisco in 1963 became a provision of the constitution of the former UPCUSA in 1965. Examinations have been given continuously since 1967.

The 115<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1975) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States called for standard written examinations for ordination to begin effective January 1, 1977. This assembly instructed the Council on Theology and Culture, in consultation with the General Executive Board, to prepare a plan by which such examinations could be described, developed and conducted. The 116<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1976) approved the establishment of a Permanent Committee on Ordination Examinations. The committee designed exams in Theology, Bible, Sacraments and the Book of Church Order. Exams were administered and graded by the presbyteries of PCUS.

In October, 1978, discussions were begun to unite the two examining bodies. The first joint meeting of the two groups occurred April 22-24, 1979 in Erlanger, Kentucky.

The "Standard" Ordination Examinations consist of five exams described in the Book of Order (G-14.0430): Open Book Bible Exegesis, Bible Content, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity. All five exams must be passed in order to satisfy the requirements for ministry set forth in the Book of Order.

The Bible Content Examination is a multiple-choice exam, machine-scored, and taken during the first year of seminary to determine one's basic knowledge of the Bible. The other four are professional examinations, not academic tests, and begin one's transition into ministry. They differ from seminary examinations, which measure academic knowledge. They also differ from Presbytery examinations, which assess the acceptability of one's theological convictions.

The focus of the ordination examinations is determining one's entry-level readiness for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Examinations present pastoral challenges whereby candidates can demonstrate how they integrate faith and theological education in ministry. The underlying questions are, "Do these examinations provide evidence that the person who wrote them is ready to engage in pastoral ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA)?" Is there evidence that the intellectual background developed in seminary can be applied to pastoral situations with integrity and skill?"

**WHEN AND WHERE EXAMS ARE GIVEN – please visit the PCUSA website vocations page for the most current information.**

Bible Content Examinations are given twice yearly, see the PCUSA website for more information.

Ordination Examinations are given twice yearly:

- Beginning on the final Friday in January
- The last full weekend in August before Labor Day weekend

The schedule for the Ordination Examinations is:

**Friday**

8:30 a.m. Orientation  
9:00 a.m. Theological Competence (3 hours)  
1:30 p.m. Worship & Sacraments (3 hours)

**Saturday**

9:00 a.m. Church Polity (3 hours)  
12:00 noon Bible passages announced for open book Bible Exegesis; completed examination is due no later than 9:00 a.m. the following Thursday

Examinations are administered on many seminary campuses nationwide. Exams are shipped to proctors two weeks prior to the date of administration in a way that enables accurate tracking of the parcels. Lost or missing packages can be traced. The proctor accepts responsibility for ensuring that materials arrive in a timely fashion. Proctors are also expected to check the contents of the package for omissions or errors. Prompt checking ensures the smooth operation of the system. Proctors are also expected to read the instructions carefully when they arrive. If a candidate is no longer in seminary or is not living near a seminary campus, arrangements for Special Proctors may be made by the candidate and the CPM when registering. There is a special charge for this service. The examinations are administered in as many as a hundred different locations. If a candidate is in a remote area, arrangements should be made well in advance for timely mailing and shipping to ensure that the exam materials will arrive on time.

Fees:

Fee for Bible Content and standard ordination exams is \$80 for each exam for PC(USA) members for early registration (check website for postmark requirements). \$100 per exam for ministers of other denominations and non-early registration. **NOTE: Beginning 2011, there will no longer be a discount for early registration.**

### **THE BIBLE CONTENT EXAMINATION**

The Presbyterian Church considers basic awareness of the content of the Bible to be an essential prerequisite for ministry. The Bible Content Examination seeks to determine the degree of a candidate's awareness. This exam should be taken in the first year of seminary. The two-hour examination contains 100 multiple-choice questions about the Bible, using the New Revised Standard Version for all quotations. The examination is given only once a year. The questions vary in difficulty, but cover the entire Bible as required by the General Assembly in 1978.

Applications: Inquirers/candidates may secure application forms for the Bible Content Exam from the pcusa.org website. You do not need the CPM Chair's signature to register for this exam. Applications are due in the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee office prior to December 15. There is a formal confirmation. Because this is a standardized examination, there is no alternate date for taking this exam.

Grading: A grade of 70 correct answers or better is required to pass this exam. Answer sheets are machine-graded. Overall and part scores, along with the original answer sheets, are returned to the inquirer/candidate through the proctor. Scores are also sent to the Presbytery identified by the inquirer/candidate.

Special Arrangements: This exam is translated into Spanish and Korean. Inquirers/candidates with learning disabilities or physical handicaps should discuss special arrangements with their proctors.

## THE ORDINATION EXAMS REGISTRATION and AUTHORIZATION

Candidates or inquirers are eligible but not required to take all four ordination examinations at the first examination date following the completion of two full years of theological education (see G-14.0431). The decision whether to authorize a person to write the examinations belongs solely to the Presbytery. Without explicit authorization of the Presbytery in writing, an applicant is not permitted to write the examinations. When authorizing a person to write the examinations, the signature of the chairperson of CPM certifies that the applicant:

- is under the care of the Presbytery,
- has completed at least two full years of theological education; and
- is judged by the committee to be ready to write examinations.

Retakes: Nearly 40% of candidates fail one or more examination with the first taking. All re-take(s) must be authorized by the CPM and require a new application to take the exam(s). Careful reading of comment sheets and the examination papers identifies specific areas in need of improvement. The CPM is willing to read your exams and give you input as well if you are confused about the reasons for failure. Exams are administered only on dates and times specified above. Candidates must wait until the next administration to retake any failed exams.

Deadlines for Application: Please check the website and forms carefully. If you miss the deadline, you will need to wait until the next time the exams are administered.

Notification: Receipt of authorization is confirmed by letter within ten days. The confirmation letter includes information and preliminary materials as well as the applicant's I.D. number. The I.D. number is used throughout the exam process to ensure candidate anonymity in the grading process. The candidate is asked to verify the accuracy of the information in the letter. **If the name, address, Presbytery or exam location changes, or there are changes in one's exam schedule, the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations/Candidates (PCC) office in Louisville must be contacted immediately.**

Confirmation: If you have not received the Confirmation Letter after a reasonable amount of time has elapsed, contact the PCC office immediately. Do not assume that you are registered.

All subsequent materials and correspondence, including your grades, will be mailed to the exam proctors and Presbytery committee chairs. Upon receipt of the Confirmation Letter, do not expect any further communication or materials from PCC.

There have been many instances where candidates thought that they were registered and weren't. It is most important – ***and the responsibility of each candidate*** – to carefully follow

instructions and to stay in close contact with the links to the process, i.e., proctors and committee chairpersons from each candidate's Presbytery. The candidate is ultimately responsible for the success of this process.

Exam Schedule: Introductory materials indicate the time limits for each exam. The committee that writes the questions understands that a candidate's response would be evaluated on the basis of the time allotted. If students have questions about the specific schedule for exams, they should contact their proctor directly.

Cancellation: Candidates who have registered to take exams, but who, due to circumstances, are forced to cancel, should immediately notify the CPM Chair and call the PCC office as soon as possible. In this way there will be no problem with the candidate's records. There is no penalty for cancellation; and a "no-show" will not be considered a "failure" or an "attempt."

## **WRITING THE EXAMS**

Candidates should read the description of each examination in the Book of Order. There are periodic amendments to these provisions, so this should be done in the current Book of Order.

Instructions: Candidates will receive – either from their seminary or from their special proctor – current cover sheets or instructions for each examination. These instructions indicate the constitutional definition for that area, criteria for grading, and any special provisions, which relate to that examination. Careful reading of this material is essential for the candidate's preparation. The instructions for the (take-home) Biblical Exegesis Examination indicate an Old Testament book and a New Testament book from which passages have been selected – one of which the candidate will exegete.

Because the exams compress a lot into a little time, it is important for the candidate to be prepared for this process. One needs to think about the sequence of the examinations and be prepared to move from one area to the next in each of the exams in an orderly fashion.

The exams are designed to encourage the candidate to express an understanding of ministry, not to "trick" the candidate in any way that would be contrary to life in the community of faith. The examinations are designed to provide opportunity for multiple approaches, rather than to operate on the assumption that there is only one "correct" way of responding.

Special Arrangements: Students with physical handicaps and/or learning disabilities can make prior special arrangements upon approval from the Presbytery of care. These arrangements must be made at the time of authorization. In addition, Spanish and Korean-speaking students may elect to take the exams in their native languages. All four exams are translated into Spanish; but only the Bible Content Examination has been translated into Korean thus far. However, a Korean student may respond in Korean to questions written in English.

Mode of expression: The exams may be written in longhand with pen or typed. Pencils may not be used. Candidates may use a computer word processor. Candidates may bring their own equipment or, at some exam sites, they can use equipment provided by the proctor. Candidates may not consult or copy from personal notes or any other source on the computer or network during the exam. A printed copy of the exam must be turned in before you leave the exam area. Because failure to turn in the exam before leaving will result in failure of the

exam, candidates are strongly urged to make sure that all the necessary equipment (computer, printer, font and printer software, etc) is properly working and coordinated. Please use double spacing and 12 point font size. Please number the pages, include your candidate number on each page of the exam, and staple the printed copy to the first few pages of the exam booklet.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a serious abuse of this system. If plagiarism is discovered, the candidate's exam will be returned not graded. The proctor and the Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be notified, supplied with supporting documentation. Disposition will be determined by the Presbytery committee. To avoid even the appearance of plagiarism, be sure to cite all appropriate references and quotations on your exam papers.

## PROCESS FOR ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCY

**One failed exam:** When the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) has learned that an inquirer or candidate has failed one or more examinations once, CPM will consult with that person to develop a strategy for further preparation for re-taking the failed exam(s).

**Exam failed more than once:** When CPM is notified that a candidate has failed one or more examinations a second time, CPM will consult (normally through the advisor) with that person to review and consider the advance preparations that had been made and to explore possible obstacles. After consultation with the candidate, the candidate's CPM sub-committee will determine whether the candidate should be authorized to re-take the Standard Ordination Exam or pursue an alternative examination. The decision to authorize a retake will ordinarily involve a strategy of further preparation for the given exam.

**CPM decisions:** If the inquirer or candidate wishes to request an alternative assessment of competency (G-14.0472) the inquirer or candidate shall submit a written request with rationale to the CPM. After full and frank discussion with the individual, CPM shall meet in executive session to determine

- (a) whether it deems the circumstances to be extraordinary such as to merit Presbytery consideration of a waiver under G-14.0313b; if so,
- (b) what, if any, will be the method for the individual receiving needed training or instruction,
- (c) what will be the alternative method for determining whether the individual has achieved competence in the area at a level for effective service as a minister, and
- (d) who will be asked to prepare/oversee the alternative means of demonstrating competence and who will make the final decision.

Extraordinary circumstances will be considered only for the following reasons:

- (1) a diagnosed physical disability; or
- (2) a pre-identified learning disability (one that is identified prior to taking the examinations, diagnosed by a medical or educational professional in writing of the Presbytery's choice, and confirmed by the student's history with his or her college or theological institution.); or
- (3) the discernment of the CPM that a waiver is in the candidate's, Presbytery's and Church's best interests.

**Presbytery action:** If CPM determines it will recommend an exception, the committee will make its recommendation to Presbytery. The recommendation shall include full details

concerning why the committee judges the circumstances to be extraordinary, a plan for further training or instruction, if any, and the alternative means for determining whether the required level of competence has been demonstrated. Every effort shall be made to insure the confidentiality of the candidate.

**Implementation:** There are many people within the bounds of this Presbytery who have experience and knowledge of all phases related to this suggested process: professors, educators, standard ordination exam readers, and pastors. Alternative demonstrations of competence shall ordinarily be in a written format. In the case of a candidate who has difficulty with written examinations, an oral assessment or other formats will be considered.

In the case of a written or oral assessment, the CPM shall select a task force of at least three Presbyterians within the Presbytery who have knowledge and experience of the particular content area of the exam to prepare the alternative assessment. In addition, the CPM shall select an Assessment Committee comprised of:

1. One person from the group which prepared the exam,
2. One person who currently serves on CPM, and
3. One person who has previously served on CPM.

There shall be representation of clergy, lay, male and female on this committee. The committee will meet in advance to discuss the parameters for a passing assessment. In the case of a written exam, all members of the Assessment Committee shall read the examination. In the case of an oral examination, all members of the Assessment Committee shall be present and each shall prepare a written evaluation of the assessment. The majority decision of the Assessment Committee is the deciding determination of competence.

**Time frame:** If Presbytery, by the required three-fourths vote of those present, approves the committee's recommendation, the individual shall pursue the prescribed training or instruction and assessment within twelve months of Presbytery's action. If the inquirer or candidate fails the alternative assessment of competence, or the individual has not satisfied the requirements within a twelve-month period, the earlier determination of "extraordinary circumstances" shall be considered to have expired. In such cases, the candidate would need to bring a new request for an alternative assessment of competency to the CPM.

**Results:** The results of the alternative assessment of competence will be reported to the Presbytery and to the appropriate offices of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The written comments of the Assessment Committee will become a part of the candidate's CPM file.

# Preparation for Ministry Forms

You will receive notice of your appointments with the CPM approximately six weeks in advance with information on where to find the forms needed for the appointment. You can now download these forms at <http://presbyterytwincities.org/resources-2/forms-and-policies/forms/> .

## **Form 1:**

Application for Enrollment as an Inquirer: Background Information for Session and CPM (pages 1-11): The potential inquirer's first written communication to the Session and the Presbytery's CPM. It provides basic information about the applicant's background, identity and interests.

## **Form 2A and 2B:**

Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as Inquirer (pages 12-15) and Covenant Agreement between Inquirer, Session, and CPM; and Inquirer Release (pages 16-17) This form records the CPM and Presbytery action regarding the application. It is sent to Louisville to officially enroll the inquirer nationally.

## **Form 3:**

Pre-Interview Annual Consultation Report (pages 18-21). This report is completed by inquirers and candidates prior to each annual consultation. It helps evaluate progress toward mutually established goals and looks holistically at a person's growth.

## **Form 4:**

Report of Annual Consultation (pages 22-23). A summary of the annual consultation, completed by the CPM advisor and advisee. It looks at progress made as well as sets new goals for the coming year. Once completed, it is shared with Session and seminary as well as advisee.

## **Form 5A and 5B:**

Application to be Received by Presbytery as a Candidate (pages 24-29) and Covenant Agreement Between Candidate, Session, and CPM; and Candidate Release (pages 30-31)

## **Form 6:**

Summary Report of Final Assessment of Candidate's Readiness to be Examined for Ordination (pages 32-33). This form acknowledges the CPM has conducted a final assessment of the candidate's preparation for ministry, that all requirements have been met, and the candidate is ready to be examined for ordination.

## **Form 7A and 7B:**

Certificate of Approval of Transfer (page 34) and Report of Withdrawal or Removal of Inquirer or Candidate, or Ordination of a Candidate (page 35). This form is used to transfer an enrollee from one Presbytery to another as well as to report the withdrawal or removal of an inquirer or candidate or his/her ordination.

**Manual for Those Under Care  
of the Presbytery the Twin Cities Area**

Approved by CPM February 24, 2003  
Updated May 14, 2010