

PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA  
**Committee on Preparation for Ministry**  
Report to Presbytery  
March 12, 2011

***REPORTS TO THE PRESBYTERY***

**Final Assessment: Lisa Johnson**

The committee conducted the final assessment for Lisa Johnson of The Presbyterian Church of LeSueur, LeSueur, MN who has completed all of the requirements of candidacy, and **VOTED** to certify Lisa Johnson ready for examination for ordination, pending a call (G-14.0450 and G-14.0481).

**Remove from Rolls: Mary Caplinger**

The requirements of G-14.0463 having been met, the committee **VOTED** to remove the name of Mary Caplinger, Candidate, Hope Presbyterian Church, Richfield, MN from the Roll of Candidates, at her own written request.

***RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESBYTERY***

**Enroll as a Candidate: Kathleen Whipple**

**Kathleen Whipple**, who is on the roll of Inquirers of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, having satisfactorily demonstrated adequate promise for ministry by presenting the statements specified in the Presbytery's policy (G-14.0405), met with the session of Presbyterian Church of the Master, Coon Rapids, MN, and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, is presented to the Presbytery to be examined "with respect to her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry," and to be received as a candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. (See Attachment A)

The committee **recommends** that **Kathleen Whipple** be enrolled as a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and that the moderator ask her the questions specified in the Presbytery's policy.

**Enroll as a Candidate: Karen Larson**

**Karen Larson**, who is on the roll of Inquirers of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, having satisfactorily demonstrated adequate promise for ministry by presenting the statements specified in the Presbytery's policy (G-14.0405), met with the session of St. Luke Presbyterian Church, Wayzata, MN, and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, is presented to the Presbytery to be examined "with respect to her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry," and to be received as a candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. (See Attachment B)

The committee **recommends** that **Karen Larson** be enrolled as a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and that the moderator ask her the questions specified in the Presbytery's policy

## **ATTACHMENT A**

Kathleen Whipple

### **Statement of Motivation**

Growing up, I remember singing the hymn, "I love to tell the story." This song tells a love story, not with a person, but the love of God that fills a person so full, they have to share the story of God's redemption to all they meet. This love to share the story comes from the authors love relationship with God, that then spills out into a love to all neighbors, the faithful and not. Their purpose in life is to tell this story of "Jesus and His love."

That song articulates my life. As long as I remember, I have shared the story of God to all who wanted to hear, and unfortunately to some who didn't. As a child, I remember sitting on the monkey bars telling God's story to my best friend who was struggling with her home life. I remember sharing this story with teammates in sports, and even my roommate in college. I thought this passion about God's story meant I was to be a missionary, so off I flew to Poland to share the story to the teens in a government housing area. There, amongst the amazing youth, and unbelievable experiences, God pressed on me... that there was more to this story and many ways to share it. Others would share it in Poland, but God pulled me back to America to study and grow in new ways to share God's story.

In Seminary, I started to understand that sharing God's story is more than just telling the Gospel. That is a part of it, but God's story of redemption is experienced in corporate worship, coming together to grow in community, loving God, loving each other, and loving the world. God's story of redemption is how God is calling people back into relationship with the Trinity. A pastor's role is to tell the story by bringing people together to experience God, through building a loving community, by growing together in relationship with God and each other, worshiping together, and by illuminating the Word of God into a transforming message that is relevant to the culture. God's story is told when we reconcile with each other within the church, within our community and within the world.

This is the story I love to share. This is the passion that God has awakened in me. God has been nudging me towards this throughout my life, and now I am finally hearing this call. Right now, I am drawn towards chaplain ministry or rural pastoral ministry. I have found that I am passionate about working with people in the margins of society, creating space where people can see and experience that they are loved and valued by a community, and by God. I am not certain how God will have me share the Story. What I do know is how much I love to tell the story.

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**Karen R. Larson**

**Statement of Motivation**

I was raised with a deeply embedded sense of geographic place, among the farms of southern

Minnesota. I grew up firmly grounded in family, community and church as my center of meaning and most reliable source of connection. I felt all of it as love.

As I entered adolescence and started to pay attention to the doctrines of my church, my earlier, intuitively loving sense of God gave way to something judgmental and demanding. I was afraid of sin and hell, and tried to resist these possibilities by reading my Bible, praying, and being good in every way. Later, I turned to a false god of social status and achievement. When I got married, my goal became the perfect home and marriage. My children became further opportunities to excel. The financial rewards of my career became indispensable. I sought security in the consumer culture and avoided risk. I didn't trust God or myself.

Yet, all along, I knew to look for a place of belonging. I found it in wonderful Presbyterian churches in Omaha, the Milwaukee area and eventually in Minnetonka, and was nourished in all these places by religious community. For me, at that time, God was simply a reason for gathering, and I knew my family and I needed the gathering. Then, at my current church home, St. Luke Presbyterian, the transforming power of Christ began to act on me and God became very real. This spiritually alive, politically active, highly engaged community challenged my thinking and actions, sparked my spiritual seeking, modeled healthy relationships, spoke openly of failures and emotion, and named God in ways that sang to my heart. People talked of a feminine God, incarnate in the everyday world, calling the world to economic and racial justice, and opposed to violence and reckless consumption of resources. I felt as if the Holy Spirit had worked its way into me and made me come alive. Six years after we joined St. Luke, we learned that my dad's cancer had metastasized. I had always loved and admired my dad. When I was a child, and it was my turn to help him milk cows, we talked history, literature, music, politics and family. So, every Friday for the last eight months of his life, I sat with him to write down his story. I saw how his life had been marked all along by curiosity, humor, a sense of justice, and love for people. I was called to look more closely at my own life, and wonder how it might better serve goodness.

I entered seminary the next year, feeling restless and sure of nothing but a call to study. There I began to journey into my self and my relationship with God. The Spirit moved me in many ways at UTS: through scripture, a variety of faithful voices, and especially the Mayan people I met on a seminary trip to Chiapas, Mexico. It was in worship class that I first felt a call to leadership in ministry. Experiences leading worship in class, in chapel and at church built up my trust—in myself, in the community and in the process. The loving response of the St. Luke community was exhilarating.

I now believe my vocation is to belong to God and to God's people, to love and serve those I meet, and to lead a portion of the community. This latter point—leadership—is the part that has become increasingly clear to me over the last few years of study, prayer and reflective practice. I believe I have been given gifts of faith, compassion, knowledge and prophecy, and encouraged to put these gifts into the service of Christ as a leader in the church.

I am confident of my call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, because it is when I am doing this work that I feel most fully alive. I feel alive when I enter the Word to research, write and deliver a sermon for a particular community at a particular time. I feel alive when a

patient in the hospital opens up her story to me and in the process sees it more clearly herself. I feel alive when teaching children about the love of God and learn anew through their eyes. I feel alive when, in the presence of those at the fringes of our society, Christ opens my heart. I acknowledge the opportunity to pursue the ministry of Word and Sacrament as a great blessing and responsibility. Having received grace upon grace, I respond in gratitude.