

## **COMMITTEE ON THE PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY HANDBOOK**

### **PURPOSE**

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is responsible for the care and supervision of candidates for Ministry of the Word per the Book of Order, and serves as an Administrative Commission of Presbytery for the purpose of:

- (1) transferring candidates for the ministry to other presbyteries; and,
- (2) receiving candidates by transfer from other presbyteries for the purpose of accepting valid calls to ministry in Mission Presbytery.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The CPM consists of fourteen (14) members in equal numbers of teaching elders (TE) and ruling elders (RE), arranged in three classes. They are elected at the annual meeting of Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominations Committee (NOM). Any vacancy shall be filled upon approval by the General Council if less than one (1) year left on a term or by nomination by NOM at the next meeting of Presbytery. Members are eligible to serve no more than six (6) consecutive years. The CPM elects its own recorder. The NOM, with approval of General Council, nominates the Chair for election by the Presbytery.

### **MEETINGS**

Ordinarily, the CPM will meet for two-day meetings (Friday & Saturday), five (5) times per year at Austin Seminary. CPM is responsible for lodging of committee members housed on the Austin Seminary campus.

### **QUORUM:**

A quorum shall be declared if five (5) members of the committee, which includes the Chair and at least one (1) teaching elder, are present in a face-to-face setting.

### **STAFF RESOURCE:**

The staff resource for this committee will be the Presbytery Executive or designated appointee.

### **REPORTING:**

CPM reports to Mission Presbytery at stated and called meetings. The Chair of CPM shall serve as a member of General Council and report as requires by presbytery policy and budgetary considerations.

### **PROCESSES FOR INQUIRERS, CANDIDATES, SESSIONS, AND CPM**

## **Section One: An Overview of the Process**

- I. Introduction
- II. Purposes of the Process
- III. Theological Background
- IV. Key Concepts
- V. Preparation for Ministry Process – A General Overview
  - A. Phase 1: Inquiry
    - 1. Admission to Inquiry
    - 2. During Inquiry
    - 3. Completion of Inquiry
    - 4. Expected Outcomes of Inquiry
  - B. Candidacy
    - 1. Admission to Candidacy
    - 2. During Candidacy
    - 3. Completion of Candidacy
    - 4. Expected Outcomes of Candidacy
  - C. Requirements To Be Certified Ready For Examination, Pending a Call

## **Section Two: Roles and Responsibilities of Participants**

- I. The Inquirer and Candidate
  - A. Role of Inquirers and Candidates
  - B. Responsibilities of Inquirers and Candidates
    - 1. Before the process begins
    - 2. Planning where to go to seminary
    - 3. Before meeting with the CPM for Inquiry
    - 4. The Inquiry Conversation
    - 5. Between Inquiry and Candidacy
    - 6. The Candidacy Conversation
    - 7. Between Candidacy and Final Assessment
    - 8. Final Assessment and After
- II. The Session
  - A. Role of the Session
    - 1. Developing Vocational Awareness
    - 2. Developing and Awareness of the Call to the Ministry of Teaching Elder
    - 3. Exploring the Call to the Ministry of Teaching Elder
    - 4. Some Issues for Attention and Evaluation by the Session When Examining the Gifts and Motivations of a Prospective Inquirer/Candidate
    - 5. Supporting Inquirers and Candidates
  - B. Responsibilities of the Session
    - 1. Phase I: Inquiry
    - 2. Phase II: Candidacy
- III. Committee on Preparation for Ministry & the Presbytery
- IV. The Top Ten Things to Remember
- V. List of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Seminaries
- VI. Checklist for CPM Paperwork

## Section One An Overview of the Process

### I. Introduction

*“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.”*

I Corinthians 12:4-6

*“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here I am; send me!’”*

Isaiah 6:8

If you are reading this, you or someone you know has begun to think about what it might mean to be called to be a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Perhaps you are ready to explore what it might mean to embrace the vocation of a pastor; perhaps you know someone in your congregation who you sense might be called to service as a minister; perhaps you are in the midst of the preparation process already, and seek clarification as to what the next steps are; or, perhaps, you are merely testing the waters, not quite ready to articulate what has already begun to work its way to the surface in your journey of faith, what very well may be God calling you to service as a teaching elder. A person responds to God’s call to faith in Jesus Christ and service in His name through Baptism and through life and worship in the community of faith. Certainly, your pastors, as well as elders in your congregation, trusted friends and mentors have already been engaged in some form of vocational discernment with you – and will continue to be some of your closest companions and supporters along your journey.

As part of the wider community of faith, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of Mission Presbytery stands ready to explore God’s call with you, if and when you are ready to do so as part of the formal process of preparation for ministry.

In addition to the information found in the Book of Order (G-2.06, Preparation for Ministry), helpful information about vocation and preparation for ministry may be found by contacting the chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, or by visiting the following websites:

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/vocation>  
[http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/prep4min.](http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/prep4min)

This process outlines the principles, procedures, and practices of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of Mission Presbytery. The content of the process is based on the Book of Order and the Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook. It is to be a guide for Inquirers, Candidates, sessions, and the presbytery as together we seek to discern God’s call to individuals in our midst.

We welcome you to the journey, and look forward to working with you as together we pray, talk, wrestle with and listen for God’s call to you, and to Christ’s Church!

## **II. Purposes of the Process**

The purposes of the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are as follows:

- To help all church members, whatever their occupations, discern and fulfill their Christian vocation; and
- To provide the best possible leadership for the church by assuring that persons who feel called to the ministry of teaching elder receive fullest personal and professional preparation for that office (G-2.0601).

## **III. Theological Background**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is firmly grounded in the Reformed tradition in its relationships with men and women who feel themselves called by God to be teaching elders. Both in exploring with these persons their sense of vocation and in all subsequent procedures leading to ordination, the Reformed understanding of the church underlies what the Book of Order calls full preparation for ministry (G-2.0601).

As Reformed Christians, Presbyterians understand the church as a community called into being by Jesus Christ. It is Christ who gives the church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its offices and ordinances, and Christ who is its head in all things (F-1.02).

Presbyterians believe in the priesthood of all believers – that is, that all church members, regardless of their occupational choice, are engaged in ministry. That is their Christian vocation (G-1.0304). Some among them may be called by the Holy Spirit, through the church, to the ministry of teaching elder. Thus the ministry of teaching elder 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, as to every other, is approached through a careful process of exploration and testing carried on within the community of faith during which gifts and motivations are evaluated in light of the needs of the church and the world.

The essential role of teaching elders is set forth in both the Bible and in the church's constitutional documents. Key concepts which have been proven valid by the church's experience through the years are the following:

- Ordained ministry is a gift of God to the church;
- Ordained ministers equip church members for their ministry by proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith, caring for people and, along with elders, by ensuring that the church's life is governed in an orderly way;

- The church actively seeks and ordains persons whose gifts and abilities equip them for the ministry of teaching elder; 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;
- A man or woman experiences God's call to ministry privately as an inner urgency. The church, however, experiences that call publicly as it affirms that individual's gifts for ministry and confirms God's call through the acts of ordination and installation.

The relationship between the church and those who feel called to be teaching elders carries important responsibilities for all involved.

- For congregations, it means educating all members in the biblical and Reformed understanding of Christian vocation and helping believers understand that the call of discipleship includes making responsible occupational choices. It also means nurturing and encouraging persons seeking to discern their call to teaching elder.
- For inquirers and candidates who enter into the process, it involves a sense of solemn obligation to God and to the church. In some cases this means that it is the individual's responsibility to recognize and accept the fact that she or he is called to a ministry other than teaching elder.
- For presbyteries, it means developing effective means of testing and validating the calls of those seeking to become teaching elders, providing them with guidance and oversight, and bringing to active candidacy those with appropriate abilities and motivation. To ensure that this important work is effectively carried out, those chosen to serve on the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry need particular gifts, skills and commitment.
- For theological institutions, it means upholding the Reformed standards of an educated ministry by providing scriptural, historical, doctrinal, and ecclesiastical disciplines, as well as opportunities for students to develop personal and professional skills.
- For all participants involved in preparation for ministry, it means relating to one another in continuing openness to God's grace, with mutual trust and respect based upon the assurance that God has given everyone gifts to use in the church's ministry. Integrity demands that each partner in the preparation process speak the truth with love to other partners at all times. It is important for partners to function in a way that reflects mutual accountability and honesty in all dealings with one another.

#### **IV. Key Concepts**

The preparation for ministry process is grounded in an understanding of Christian vocation as a response to God's grace which calls all Christians to ministry, whatever their occupations. Some among them are called by the Holy Spirit, through the church, to the ministry of teaching elder.

Covenant relationships acknowledge that the Christian community's primary commitment is to God. In the context of this commitment to and covenant relationship with God, the inquirer or candidate and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry negotiate between themselves additional covenant agreements. These agreements affirm their mutual responsibility and provide the means for planning and evaluating the inquirer's or candidate's progress in preparing for the ministry of teaching elder.

The resulting ongoing relationships take seriously the unique background, experience and personal attributes that each person brings to the process. They enable the sharing of deep convictions, an enhanced understanding of the demands of ministry, and the self-evaluation that are essential to the process. Professional and spiritual guidance and personal support develop naturally within the context of such relationships.

Consultations with the inquirer or candidate are based on specific goals in five areas of growth development (see page 7) and on specific expected outcomes for both the inquiry and candidacy phases (see pages 8 and 10). The purpose of consultations is to help the Committee on Preparation for Ministry work with the individual at her or his current level of achievement and, through guided conversations and the mutual negotiation of new learning contracts, to stimulate further growth in specific areas.

The process of examination and ordination is shared by both the candidate's presbytery and the presbytery of call. Having guided and evaluated the candidate's progress through the cumulative series of consultations, the candidate's presbytery meets with the candidate in a final consultation to assess her or his readiness to receive a call. When a call is extended by a church in another presbytery, the presbytery of call ordinarily has the responsibility of examining candidates for ordination and the presbytery of care ordinarily ordains the candidate.

Shared mutual accountability characterizes the preparation for ministry process. The inquirer or candidate shares responsibility for her or his movement through the process and for planning for evaluating her or his growth.

The pastor and session are responsible for helping members of the congregation understand what Christian vocation means. This is the critical foundational step in the preparation for ministry process. The pastor and session are expected to provide the context within which individuals can discern the call to the ministry of teaching elder and understand the nature of this ministry. They help inquirers evaluate the suitability of their gifts and provide pastoral care and support during the preparation for ministry process. Acting as advocate for the inquirer or candidate, the session, through its moderator and presbytery commissioner(s), can call the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to accountability in fulfilling its responsibilities.

The presbytery, through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, provides pastoral care, guidance, support and evaluation of inquirers and candidates.

The theological institution provides academic, field education and professional resources in the guidance and evaluation of inquirers or candidates.

The preparation for ministry process is one of continuing development. By providing a supportive community in which the inquirer or candidate assumes increasing responsibility for decisions made throughout the process, it introduces him or her to skills for self-development, goal-setting and self-evaluation. The individual is encouraged to develop these skills into conscious, disciplined planning for personal and professional growth which should continue throughout his or her ministry.

## **V. Preparation for Ministry Process – A General Overview**

The preparation for ministry process involves two phases: inquiry and candidacy. These two phases are designed to explore the call, evaluate the gifts, and support the preparation of men and women who feel themselves called to be teaching elders (G-2.0601). To do this effectively, the presbytery charges a Committee on Preparation for Ministry to work closely with those persons within its congregations who wish to prepare themselves for this ordained office. Since the model for the teaching elder is the ministry of Jesus Christ, it is the committee's particular responsibility to help these individuals grow toward maturity in Christ.

Both the inquiry phase and the candidacy phase of the process nurture and test the individual's development in five key growth areas:

- Education for Ministry, which includes evaluation of the individual's academic potential and progress and reflection on the purpose of educational experiences and on their relation to preparation for the ministry of teaching elder;
- Spiritual Development, which provides a framework in which individuals can reflect on their personal faith journeys and their spiritual practices to discern the will of God in their lives;
- Interpersonal Relations which provide opportunities to reflect on how an individual relates to others, one's own leadership style, and what this means in terms of the ministry of teaching elder;
- Personal Growth, through which persons reflect on who they are, what areas they need to develop, how to understand their call, and how to develop personal stewardship;
- Professional Development, to help persons develop specific skills that will enhance their effectiveness as teaching elders and as presbyters. To understand one's ministry context, the congregation, is important. Also needed is the ability to deal with conflict that may emerge in the congregation one serves.

During both the inquiry phase and the candidacy phase, the individual's progress is measured by specific expected outcomes formulated in light of these five growth areas. It is important that the expected outcomes be understood as essential goals rather than simply as minimum requirements to be met or papers to be written. These expected outcomes serve as the focus of ongoing consultations between the inquirer or candidate and the session and the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

The process of inquiry and candidacy is most effective when it reflects the biblical theme of the covenant relationship. That is, when it is both a response to God's faithfulness and an expression of the concern people have for one another. The process further affirms that all aspects of the church's life are based upon God's gracious promises and on the belief that God's self-giving love uplifts and upholds all that the church is and does. Throughout the entire process, all who are involved in the covenant relationship need to approach their tasks with seriousness and diligence, communicating openly and intentionally with one another.

## **A. Phase I: Inquiry**

The purpose of inquiry is to provide opportunities for the church and for those who believe they may be called to the ministry of teaching elder to explore and test that call together. To make this exploration as effective as possible, a network of caring, supportive relationships is initiated – first, between the inquirer and the church session, then with the presbytery through its Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and with the theological institution. In regular consultation with the committee, the inquirer evaluates the personal implications and the suitability of a church occupation, is guided in prayerful examination of his or her motivation, personal faith and experience in the congregation, and makes a serious assessment of the gifts needed by teaching elders, comparing them with his or her own gifts. This phase also provides the church with opportunities to respond directly to the inquirer's questions and concerns.

### **1. Admission to Inquiry**

A member of a congregation is considered for enrollment as an inquirer when he or she approaches the session about the possibility of becoming a teaching elder and formally agrees with the session and with the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to explore the implications of this quest. Enrollment is intended to be a thoughtful and deliberate step; people are encouraged to take this formal action soon after they have made their personal decision to explore this ministry so that the presbytery's CPM can provide them with support and counsel as early as possible. The process and requirement of the inquiry phase is as follows:

- a. A person desiring to become an inquirer shall indicate to the session of his or her particular congregation a desire to explore the personal implications of becoming a teaching elder.
- b. The person shall have been an active member of that particular congregation for at least one year.
- c. The session shall contact the Committee on Preparation for Ministry for orientation to the process of preparing for ministry.
- d. The session shall consult with the person and, if the individual requests to be enrolled as an inquirer, shall make a recommendation to presbytery through the chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry with respect to the request.

- e. Upon receipt of the recommendation of the session, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall recommend to the presbytery whether to enroll the person as an inquirer. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall interview the person before making its recommendation. The date of the presbytery's action to enroll shall be the beginning of the covenant relationship. This period shall be at least two years, at least one year of which shall be as a candidate (G-2.0602).
- f. The phase of inquiry shall be of sufficient length for the inquirer, the session, and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to decide whether the inquirer should apply to become a candidate. During this time, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall make use of resources such as information provided by the inquirer, personal references, and reports from counseling services, the session, and the Inquirer's institution of learning, if the inquirer is a student.

## **2. During Inquiry**

Before deciding whether to apply for candidacy, the inquirer consults at least once a year with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. During each consultation, the committee and the inquirer assess her or his progress toward previously established goals in each of the five growth areas, and together negotiate appropriate new goals. Annual consultations are just that: they must happen annually. If an inquirer remains in the preparation process for two consecutive years without an annual consultation, he/she may be removed from the roll of inquirers by the committee, and thus from the process of preparation for ministry.

## **3. Completion of Inquiry**

The inquiry phase concludes when the Committee on Preparation for Ministry knows the inquirer well enough to determine whether or not to recommend that the presbytery receive him or her as a candidate, and when the inquirer expresses a sense of call to this next step by fulfilling the expected outcomes of inquiry.

## **4. Expected Outcomes of Inquiry**

By the end of the inquiry phase, each inquirer can demonstrate adequate promise for ministry by presenting:

- a. 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;
- b. A statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;
- c. An analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships;

- d. A statement of what it means to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church;
- e. 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;
- f. A statement of his or her understanding of the task teaching elder perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for the ministry teaching elder and of areas in which growth is needed.

## **B. Phase II: Candidacy**

The purpose of this phase is to provide opportunities for the church to support persons received as candidates in their preparation for the ministry of teaching elder. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to create an environment in which the uniqueness of each individual candidate is taken seriously. As partners in a covenant relationship, both the committee and the candidate are encouraged to work together as they plan for and evaluate the candidate's growth and development.

### **1. Admission to Candidacy**

An inquirer becomes a candidate by action of presbytery. At that time the candidate formally agrees to accept the presbytery's supervision in her or his preparation for the ministry of teaching elder. The process of the candidacy phase can be as follows:

- a. An inquirer shall apply to the presbytery through the session of his or her church and the stated clerk to become a candidate for the office of teaching elder.
- b. The session shall confer with the inquirer, review the evidence of the inquiry phase, and make recommendations to the presbytery through the moderator of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry with respect to the inquirer's application.
- c. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall confer with the inquirer and review the evidence which indicates whether the inquirer is ready to proceed to candidacy.
- d. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall make a definite recommendation to the presbytery with respect to whether the inquirer should be received as a candidate. Presbytery shall act on every committee recommendation regarding application for candidacy.
- e. The presbytery shall receive the report and recommendation of its committee and shall examine the inquirer in person with respect to his or her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry.
- f. If the examination is approved, the presbytery shall receive the inquirer as a candidate after the following manner. The moderator shall propose the following questions to the inquirer:

- Do you believe yourself to be called by God to the ministry of teaching elder?
- 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 teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

g. If these questions are answered in the affirmative, a brief charge shall be given, the candidate's name shall be recorded on the presbytery's roll of candidates, and the proceedings shall close with prayer.

## **2. During Candidacy**

The covenant relationship between the candidate and the presbytery is expressed through the negotiation and review of a series of learning contracts based on the expected outcomes for this phase. In consultations that occur at least once a year, both the committee and the candidate assess her or his progress toward completion of previously established goals and negotiate appropriate new goals. It is essential that during each consultation the decision be made as to whether candidacy should be continued, especially if it becomes clear that adequate growth is not taking place.

Annual consultations are just that: they must happen annually. If a candidate remains in the preparation process for two consecutive years without an annual consultation, the committee may recommend that the presbytery remove him/her from the roll of candidates, and thus from the process of preparation for the ministry of teaching elder.

## **3. Completion of Candidacy**

Candidacy continues until the presbytery acts in one of three ways to remove the candidate's name from the roll of candidates:

- a. Completion of the preparation for ministry process with a call to the ministry of teaching elder. In this case, the following steps are involved:
  - the Committee on Preparation for Ministry determines that the candidate is ready to be examined for ordination;
  - the candidate receives a call; and
  - the candidate is ordinarily examined and approved for ordination by the presbytery of call and is ordinarily ordained by the presbytery of care.

- b. Withdrawal by the candidate; or
- c. Removal by the presbytery.

#### **4. Expected Outcomes of Candidacy**

By the end of the candidacy phase, each candidate to be ordained shall demonstrate readiness to begin ministry of teaching elder by:

- a. presenting evidence of competence in the fields of theology, Bible, polity, and worship and sacraments, ordinarily attested by completion of the requirements of G-2.0607;
- b. presenting evidence of ministerial skill attested in the supervised practice of ministry;
- c. expressing theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church;
- d. expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination (W-4.4003) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings;
- e. revealing commitment to the ministry of teaching elder within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry.

#### **C. Requirements to be Certified Ready for Examination, Pending a Call**

To be certified ready for examination, pending a call, each candidate is required to fulfill the following:

- a. Demonstration readiness to begin ministry of teaching elder as required in the expected outcomes above.
- b. Presentation of a diploma and a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university.
- c. In lieu of an anticipated diploma, presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. This transcript shall show satisfactory grades and presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts.
- d. Presentation of satisfactory grades with the examination papers in the five areas covered by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.
- e. Present to the CPM an exegesis paper of a particular Biblical text; a sermon manuscript based on the above text (preached to the CPM as part of the Final Assessment); a one-page statement of faith; and a draft of the candidate's Personal Information Form (PIF).

Ordinarily, it takes a minimum of two years (usually three or more) to proceed from admission to the inquiry phase to ordination as a teaching elder. During this time, the inquirer (or candidate) and members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry strive to discover and be faithful to God's purpose. The committee's recommendations to begin and to continue the candidacy phase are based on prayerful reflection, on common negotiations with the candidate, and on their mutual discernment that God has called that person and that he or she has adequately developed in response to that call.

When conducting final assessment and certifying candidates ready to seek a call, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry gives particular attention to, and prepares the candidates for, some of the first-call issues which include:

- self-understanding in their role as pastor;
- help for understanding the congregation they will serve in terms of history, ethos, programs, and status in the community, and in relation to the denomination;
- assistance in establishing an appropriate pastoral relationship style for their situation;
- support in dealing with conflict that may emerge in the congregation.

The candidates are reminded of the resources and programs available to them as newly ordained pastors: New Pastors Seminars, Seminary Debt Program, presbytery mentor programs and pastor support groups.

## **Section Two**

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Participants**

#### **I. The Inquirer and Candidate**

##### **A. Role of Inquirers and Candidates**

Responding to God's call to ministry is an exhilarating and demanding experience. The ministry of teaching elder is particularly challenging to prepare for and to fulfill. It stretches every human capacity and touches every dimension of life.

As a person discerns his or her call and begins the process of preparation for ministry, the counsel and guidance of the pastor and session of the home church are available, along with that of presbytery and the theological institution.

The denomination has designed the process of preparation for ministry to enable one to participate fully in discerning the type of ministry for which she or he is best suited and to plan and evaluate one's own preparation and development in consultation with the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Although demanding, the process is not

intended to be simply a series of imposed requirements; its focus is, rather, on the covenant relationships between persons who are deeply committed to the church and those who are preparing for ministry. As an individual enters into these relationships and assumes responsibility for moving through the process according to the guidelines provided, and maintains regular and open contact with the persons and committees involved, he or she can expect a rich and rewarding experience.

## **B. Responsibilities of Inquirers and Candidates**

### **1. Before the Process Begins**

- a. Participate actively in the life and mission of the Church.
- b. Commit to engaging in an ongoing process of discernment with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, as well as with pastors, elders, and other trusted mentors and friends, giving particular attention and thought to the following:
  - Presbyterian/Reformed understanding of church membership, service, and vocation.
  - How serving the church as a teaching elder differs from and/or shares similarities with other forms of Christian service.
  - Why do you want to be ordained as a teaching elder?
  - The ongoing journey of faith: the various joys, struggles, doubts, and fears regarding one's faith and sense of call.
  - Financial planning prior to enrolling in seminary, including consideration of long-term financial implications (e.g., retirement issues, cumulative debt, etc.).
- c. Be an active member of a congregation within the bounds of Mission Presbytery (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)) for at least one year.
- d. Remember that, when someone enters seminary, and pursues theological education, he/she most likely embarks upon a three-year (or so) educational journey leading to a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree. The ecclesiastical process of preparation for ministry (related work and conversations with the CPM) often mirrors and follows that academic/educational time frame, but many times, and for many reasons, the two tracks of preparation for ministry do not begin and end exactly at the same time.

### **2. Planning Where to Go to Seminary**

A Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminary intentionally offers a climate and a community that nurtures a Presbyterian pastoral identity; therefore, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry believes that such academic and theological education provides vital preparation and essential

formation for persons who will be serving PC(USA) congregations. A list of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries is located on page 27.

Because of this, the CPM expects that inquirers and candidates will ordinarily attend a seminary affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Should the potential inquirer wish to pursue the M.Div. degree at a seminary or Bible college not affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or one that does not have a substantive Presbyterian presence on its campus, Mission Presbytery requires prior conversation between the individual and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry in discerning the wisdom of that intention and desire. The CPM may require that the individual take certain core courses at a seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The following courses are required by Mission Presbytery as part of one's theological education and seminary course work:

- Biblical studies – Introduction to the Old and New Testament
- Biblical Languages and Exegesis – Hebrew and Greek, followed by an exegesis course in each language
- Reformed Theology
- Worship and Sacraments
- Homiletics/Preaching
- Presbyterian Polity
- Christian Education and Formation

### **3. Before Meeting with the CPM for Inquiry Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A and 2 B**

- a. Be in conversation with the pastor of your congregation, and with the Chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
- b. Meet with your session to be endorsed as an inquirer.
- c. Prepare, complete, and send to the Mission Presbytery Office Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, and 2B (and all of their respective parts) at least one month prior to the consultation with the CPM. A detailed Budget Worksheet (Form 1C) regarding plans to finance one's seminary education and full disclosure of the amount of debt incurred must be completed and included as well.
- d. Participate in a psychological evaluation through the counseling agency recommended by the CPM. Remember that not only scheduling the evaluation, but the report from the counselor, usually takes at least two months to complete. So, plan accordingly. Authorize the counseling center to send a copy of your evaluation to the Presbytery office for your file.

- e. Be able to speak to the topics/questions for reflection found in Forms 1 and 2, especially the following:
  - an understanding of what it means to be Presbyterian (including polity and Reformed theology)
  - one's sense of call and motives for seeking the ministry
  - your current spiritual practices and disciplines.
- f. Send official transcripts of all completed undergraduate and graduate academic work to the Mission Presbytery office.

#### **4. The Inquiry Conversation      Form 2C**

After you have been endorsed by your Session, completed your psychological evaluation, and sent all of your paperwork to the Mission Presbytery office, the chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will contact you to let you know when you are scheduled to meet with the CPM. The conversation with the committee will be one that focuses on your narrative responses in your paperwork, and is designed for you and the CPM to begin to get to know one another. Be prepared to speak about topics such as: your faith journey, your sense of call (new and unformed as it may be), your church involvement, your understanding of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and what you understand your gifts for ministry to be.

As part of this conversation, the CPM will most likely suggest recommendations and/or requirements for you to be mindful of as you prepare for ministry. These recommendations and requirements will be recorded and documented using Form 2C.

You will also be assigned a liaison to the CPM; this person will be your primary contact with the committee. He or she will be available to you for questions, conversations, and information as you move through the process. Your liaison will make sure that you receive a copy of Form 2C to use as a guide as you make plans about your seminary coursework, field education, and other related ministry experiences.

#### **5. Between Inquiry and Candidacy      Form 3**

- a. Engage in continued conversations with pastors, mentors, your liaison, and your session, paying particular attention and giving consideration to the questions/topics for reflection listed on Forms 3 and 5A.
- b. Maintain regular and open communication with liaisons from your session and from the CPM.
- c. Take and pass the Bible Content Exam (usually during your first year of seminary).

- d. One year after being enrolled as an Inquirer, meet with the CPM for an Annual Consultation. Form 3 should be prepared and sent to the Mission Presbytery office at least one month prior to the consultation with the CPM.
- e. When the Inquirer is ready to explore the possibility of being received by Mission Presbytery as a candidate, he/she should prepare, complete and send to the Mission Presbytery Office Form 5A and Form 5B (and all of their respective parts) at least one month prior to the consultation with the Committee. He/she must also receive a formal endorsement from his/her session, having discussed the questions for reflection on Form 5A with that body. (Note: If the annual consultation and the application to be enrolled as a candidate are to happen during the same interview, Forms 3, 5A and 5B should all be completed and sent to the Mission Presbytery Office the same time.)
- f. When applying to be enrolled as a candidate, the individual should be able to speak to the topics/questions for reflection found in Forms 3, 5A and 5B, especially the following:
  - an understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to his/her sense of call
  - a statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition
  - a growing understanding of the tasks teaching elders perform, including an awareness of his/her specific gifts for ministry (and areas within which growth is needed).
- g. Prior to meeting with the CPM, please send official transcripts of all seminary coursework undertaken to the Mission Presbytery Office to be included in your interview papers for the Committee.
- h. The inquirer shall fulfill, or be in the process of fulfilling, the academic requirements of his/her seminary regarding the component(s) of Supervised Practice of Ministry (or Field Education). The CPM expects that ordinarily, internships/field education will not take place within the person's home church. Exceptions to this must be approved by the CPM. (Note: The CPM may require the Inquirer to complete an internship (of up to one year in length) in addition to the one required to fulfill academic degree requirements. The Committee will base this decision on the inquirer's past church experience, as well as on the specific areas within which he/she needs continued growth and development.)
- i. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry most likely will require the inquirer/candidate to take one basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or its equivalent. This may be taken in conjunction with academic degree requirements, but may be in addition to the degree process. The CPM may also require the person to complete a year-long CPE experience.
- j. After two academic years of theological education, the inquirer/candidate may apply to take the Standard Ordination Exams by contacting the chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

- k. Please note that if an inquirer remains in the preparation process for two (2) consecutive years without an annual consultation, he/she may be removed by the Committee from the roll of inquirers, and thus from the process of preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
- l. Pay attention to and be familiar with the Goals and Responsibilities of Candidates (Form 5A).

## **6. The Candidacy Conversation    Forms 5A and 5B**

The candidacy conversation with the CPM will focus on your narrative responses on Form 5A, so you should be prepared to discuss those topics in detail and depth. One way to discern whether or not the timing is right for this conversation is to consider the questions asked by the presbytery when inquirers are being examined at the presbytery meeting:

- a. Do you believe yourself to be called by God to the ministry of teaching elder?
- b. 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?
- c. Do you accept the proper supervision of the presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?
- d. Do you desire now to be received by this presbytery as a candidate for the ministry of teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

## **7. Between Candidacy and Final Assessment**

- a. Maintain regular and open communication with his/her liaisons from the session and from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, discussing joys, needs, concerns and areas that might need further attention and/or growth.
- b. Complete and pass all required Ordination Exams. In the event of repeated failure to pass a particular exam or exams, the CPM will meet with the candidate to explore reasons for the continued failure to pass a particular exam or exams. If the CPM deems it necessary and good to explore alternative examination options, the CPM and the candidate will work out a specific plan to remedy the situation in a manner acceptable to the committee. The CPM will monitor the candidate's progress in implementing the remedial plan. When the remedial process has been completed to the satisfaction of the CPM, the committee will recommend a waiver to the presbytery, including a summary of the remedial process and a rationale for the waiver recommendation. (This policy was adopted by Mission Presbytery 10/23/04.)
- c. Every year after being enrolled as a candidate, he/she must participate in an annual consultation with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. At the appropriate time, the candidate should prepare, complete and send Form 3 to the Mission Presbytery Office.

- d. Please note that If a candidate remains in the preparation process for two consecutive years without an annual consultation, the committee may recommend that the Presbytery remove him/her from the roll of candidates, and thus from the process of preparation for the ministry of teaching elder.
- e. Before graduation from seminary the candidate shall attend:
  - A boundaries workshop which must include a discussion and explanation of sexual ethics and standards of conduct for officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The candidate shall forward certification of such attendance to the chair of the CPM. Such certification shall appear in the candidate's CPM file prior to the final assessment interview.
  - A workshop focusing on financial planning, including topics related to fiscal fitness, debt, tax issues for clergy and retirement savings plans.
- f. Prior to meeting with the CPM for the Final Assessment Interview, please send official transcripts of all seminary coursework undertaken to the Mission Presbytery Office to be included in your interview papers for the committee. Please send a copy of your diploma as soon as it is available.
- g. The candidate shall preach a sermon for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry during the final assessment interview. He/she should be prepared to speak to his/her sermon preparation, having submitted all relevant exegetical work (including a written description of the contemporary need to which it was/will be addressed) and a written copy of the sermon to the committee.
- h. Submit to the committee a one-page Statement of Faith, as well as a draft of one's Personal Information Form (PIF).
- i. Personal Information Forms may not be circulated or sent to Pastor Nominating Committees prior to successful completion of the final assessment interview.

## **8. Final Assessment and After**

- a. Candidates certified as ready to accept a call in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should be willing and able to seek a call within three (3) years of certification.
- b. Candidates shall continue annual consultations with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry until such time as they are ordained to the ministry of teaching elder.
- c. Again, please note that if a candidate remains in the preparation process for two consecutive years without an annual consultation, the committee may recommend that the Presbytery remove him/her from the roll of candidates, and thus from the process of preparation for the ministry of teaching elder.

- d. The person shall inform the Committee on Preparation for Ministry when he/she has accepted a call and completed the ordination process.

## **II. The Session**

### **A. Role of Session**

The pastor and session are responsible for communicating to all church members what is meant by “the ministry of all believers” and for helping members discern and fulfill their Christian vocation.

#### **1. Developing Vocational Awareness**

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. A biblically-grounded, theologically sound understanding of Christian vocation integrated into the church’s program of worship, education, and spiritual formation will help members recognize opportunities to fulfill their Christian vocation within the context of their secular occupations.

#### **2. Developing Awareness of the Call to the Ministry of Teaching Elder**

Members of congregations should also be aware of the ministry teaching elder 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 to youth and young adult groups to men’s and women’s programs.

It is therefore essential that pastors, sessions and local congregations:

- a. Challenge all members to become aware of their Christian vocation;
- b. Develop and implement thoughtful and creative means by which highly qualified persons may be challenged to consider the vocation of teaching elder;
- c. Help potential inquirers become aware of the presbytery’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry as early as possible;
- d. Invite the CPM to offer an orientation for the session to help them understand the process of preparation for ministry;
- e. Give high priority to developing and maintaining vital, theologically sound youth programs which are in harmony with the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions; and,
- f. Assure that youth ministry leaders are carefully selected and trained, theologically competent and appropriate role models.

### **3. Exploring the Call to the Ministry of Teaching Elder**

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 teaching elder, the local congregation is provided with a challenge and an opportunity. It is the session's responsibility to provide a supportive relationship through which it can explore with the individual the personal implications and suitability of a church occupation.

According to the Constitution, the relationship between the session and the individual Inquirer is part of the inquiry phase of the preparation for ministry process. As defined in the Book of Order (G-2.0603), its purpose is "to provide an opportunity for the church and for those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry."

Such knowledge and experience emerge through prayerful examination of the inquirer's motivation, personal faith and experience in the congregation, through examination of his or her knowledge of the responsibilities of teaching elders, and through a serious assessment of the gifts needed by teaching elders. These are the first important steps in discerning that the individual has indeed been called by the Holy Spirit, through the church, to the ministry of teaching elder. Studies indicate that the lives and work of dedicated pastors and effective congregations have a significant impact on the lives of inquirers and candidates.

#### **4. Some Issues for Attention and Evaluation by the Session When Examining the Gifts and Motivations of a Prospective Inquirer/Candidate**

- a. What personal qualities does the individual have that give evidence of a healthy and vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?
- b. How is the individual's faith currently being expressed through his/her participation in the worship, life and mission of your congregation?
- c. What various motivations impel his/her sense of call? (e.g., service to God and the world, compassion for God's children, guilt, the need for power and status)
- d. What real and potential talents for ministry are evident in this individual? (e.g., the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, leadership or administrative abilities)
- e. What is the level and adequacy of the individual's academic interest, ability and motivations?
- f. What is the evidence of his/her physical health and stamina?
- g. What is the evidence of his/her emotional well-being?
- h. What is the evidence of his/her self-discipline?
- i. How does the individual plan to finance his/her education?

## **5. Supporting Inquirers and Candidates**

The pastor, session and congregation communicate with and support inquirers and candidates throughout the entire period of preparation. This can be a most meaningful experience for those involved. To facilitate this continuing relationship, the session should provide for the appointment of an elder from the church to act as a liaison with the inquirer or candidate and with the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

Along with its specifically prescribed responsibilities, it is important that the session continue to express its concern and support by contacting the individual and his or her family at important times, such as annual consultations with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, appearances before presbytery, academic examination periods, Presbyteries' Cooperative Examination periods, when presbytery makes its final assessment of the candidate, when a call is being negotiated, on holidays, anniversaries, etc. Providing financial support is another very tangible expression of support.

### **B. Responsibilities of Session**

- a. To develop among church members an awareness of their Christian vocation and challenge them with responsible Christian stewardship of their talents.
- b. To encourage persons with appropriate motivation and abilities to consider preparation for the ministry teaching elder or other church occupations.
- c. Provide an ongoing and intentional ministry of support, prayer, encouragement and hospitality to the inquirer/candidate. Many sponsoring congregations also contribute monetary support to help with the cost of books, seminary fees and tuition.
- d. Payment of 1/3 of the cost of the required psychological evaluation (the individual also pays 1/3 and the presbytery pays 1/3).
- e. If the inquirer/candidate does not attend Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, payment of 1/3 of the cost of travel expenses for required meetings of the individual with the CPM (transportation, meals and lodging). Usually, this takes place once a year.

### **1. Phase 1: Inquiry Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A and 2B**

Admission to Inquiry begins when a person who has been a church member for at least one year indicates to that church's pastor and session his or her sense of call to the ministry teaching elder. This is the first step toward establishing an ongoing relationship with the session and presbytery's Committee for the purpose of exploring and testing the sense of call.

- a. Ask the applicant to complete all parts of Form 1.
  - Contact the Committee on Preparation for Ministry requesting orientation to the preparation for ministry process.

- Meet with representatives of the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to receive orientation in the preparation for ministry process.
  - At this meeting distribute the applicant's completed Form 1 to session members for review prior to session's meeting with the applicant.
  - Consult with the person requesting enrollment as an inquirer and make a decision whether or not to endorse the applicant as an Inquirer.
  - Appoint an elder (or a group of persons including at least one elder) to act as liaison with the inquirer and with the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
  - Make a recommendation to presbytery, through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, regarding the applicant's request to be enrolled as an inquirer.
- b. Indicate session's endorsement or non-endorsement on Forms 2A and B and submit them to the CPM.
- If the session, the committee or presbytery decides not to accept the individual's name for enrollment as an inquirer at this time, the session continues to provide support, counsel and guidance to the individual as she or he seeks to discover an appropriate occupational expression of his or her Christian vocation.
  - During the inquiry phase, the session participates with the inquirer and CPM in evaluating the Inquirer's growth and progress.
  - For completion of the inquiry phase, the session meets with the inquirer to review evidence indicating his or her readiness to proceed to candidacy. This evidence includes personal interviews with the inquirer, all consultation reports, the inquirer's demonstration of adequate promise for ministry according to the expected outcomes.
  - The session makes a decision regarding whether to recommend to presbytery that the inquirer proceed to the candidacy phase.

## **2. Phase 2: Candidacy Forms 5A and 5B**

- a. When the inquirer is ready to seek admission to candidacy, the session provides support and makes a statement, if requested, when she or he is examined by presbytery.
- b. If the Inquirer is not received by presbytery as a candidate at this time, the session continues to support, counsel and guide the individual as she or he seeks to discover an appropriate occupational expression of her or his Christian vocation.
- c. During candidacy, the session provides support and pastoral care to the candidate and her or his family, maintaining the liaison relationship with both the candidate and the CPM.

- d. The session removes the candidate's name from the church roll when notice is received of her or his ordination.
- e. It is important to recall that the session acts as an advocate for both inquirers and candidates and through its moderator and presbytery commissioner(s), can call the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to accountability in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- f. If at any time the session decides to withdraw their endorsement of the inquirer/candidate, the CPM should be informed of this decision.

### **III. Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the Presbytery**

In addition to being committed to the theological background and key concepts mentioned earlier in this process, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the presbytery are committed to helping each inquirer and/or candidate focus on their Education for Ministry, their Spiritual Development, their Interpersonal Relationships, their Personal Growth, and their Professional Development by attending to the following:

- Provide regular, open, candid, and sensitive communication and evaluation of inquirer/candidate's progress throughout the process of preparation for the ministry of teaching elder, expecting the same from him/her.
- Maintain diligent communication with the inquirer/candidate via a liaison from the Committee. The liaison will serve as the first (and familiar) point of contact for the inquirer/candidate, supporting and guiding him/her with understanding and sympathetic interest, answering questions, praying with and for and encouraging him/her in every way possible.
- Offer orientation, guidance, and support to the session of the inquirer's or candidate's home congregation.
- Payment of 1/3 of the cost of the required psychological evaluation (the individual also pays 1/3 and the presbytery pays 1/3).
- If the inquirer/candidate does not attend Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, payment of 1/3 of the cost of travel expenses for required meetings of the individual with the CPM (transportation, meals and lodging). Usually, this takes place once a year.
- Explore and discuss the session's written report(s), highlighting present or potential problem areas.
- After consideration of a) the session's report and endorsement, b) the results of the psychological evaluation, c) insight and information from references, d) the information

provided by the prospective Inquirer on Forms 1 and 2, and e) the interview with the CPM, the committee will recommend (or not recommend) the person to Mission Presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer.

- If and when it is appropriate to do so, after consideration of a) the session's report and endorsement, b) insight and information from references, c) the information provided by the prospective candidate on Forms 5A and 5B, and d) the interview with the CPM, the committee will recommend (or not recommend) the person to Mission Presbytery to be enrolled as a candidate.
- Remain committed to the covenant relationship with the inquirer/candidate through the entire process: Until the individual receives a call and is ordained to the ministry of teaching elder, or until he/she is no longer part of the process of preparation for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).



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**The Top Ten Things to Remember  
(not necessarily in this order)**

1. Do not quit going to church. Do not neglect your worship and prayer life.
2. Please do not assume that you are the exception to the rule.
3. At times, the process of preparing for ministry will seem like it is a difficult one, not because the CPM sets out to make it so, but because ministry and discipleship are joyfully challenging. Growth and transformation call us to change, and that is not always pleasant.
4. The preparation for ministry process takes at least two years; you must be a candidate for one of those years before you can be ordained.
5. Tell the truth. Be honest, genuine, and authentic. Be who you are, not who you think we want you to be. After all, that's what people will want in their pastor – you.
6. Paperwork is due no later than one month prior to meeting with the CPM.
7. Maintain communication with your liaison and your session. Talk to them, and talk to us.
8. This process is about you, but it is not all about you. Ordination to one of the church's ordered ministries is not the simple recognition that a person possesses gifts for ministry, or that an office suits a person's abilities. Ordination is certainly not about access to position, influence, and power in the church. Ordination is the church's act of recognizing the movement of the Holy Spirit in the interactions among the whole church's ordering of ministries, its standards for these ministries, and its current needs, together with prayerful discernment by persons, congregations, and presbyteries. Ordination is a gift, not a right.
9. Plan ahead. We're all in this together, but: Ultimately, your paperwork is your responsibility (not your liaison's, not your session's, and not the presbytery office's). It is your job to make sure your forms, etc. get to the presbytery office by the deadline. You are welcome to call the office if you have questions about what you lack or what's missing. Your session may send in various forms of paperwork for you, but it's your job to make sure that happens, and that your file is complete.
10. The CPM stands ready to pray with you, to rejoice with you, to struggle with you, and to give thanks for your gifts as together we discern where God may be calling you, and where God may be calling us, as members of the church of Jesus Christ.

**Seminaries of the PC(USA)**

**Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX**  
[www.austinseminary.edu](http://www.austinseminary.edu)

**Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA**  
[www.ctsnet.edu](http://www.ctsnet.edu)

**University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA**  
<http://udts.dbq.edu>

**Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY**  
[www.lpts.edu](http://www.lpts.edu)

**McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL**  
[www.mccormick.edu](http://www.mccormick.edu)

**Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA**  
[www.pts.edu](http://www.pts.edu)

**Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ**  
[www.ptsem.edu](http://www.ptsem.edu)

**San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo and Pasadena, CA**  
[www.sfts.edu](http://www.sfts.edu)

**Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary, Atlanta, GA**  
[www.itc.edu/pages/smith.asp](http://www.itc.edu/pages/smith.asp)

**Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, VA and Charlotte, NC**  
[www.upsem.edu](http://www.upsem.edu)

**Seminaries related to the PC(USA) by Covenant Agreement**

**Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, NY**  
[www.auburnseminary.org](http://www.auburnseminary.org)

**Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR**  
[www.se-pr.edu](http://www.se-pr.edu)

## Checklist for CPM Paperwork

The following paperwork must be turned into the presbytery office no later than one month prior to the scheduled meeting of CPM.

Forms may be found on-line at:

[http://www.mission-presbytery.org/committees/committee\\_on\\_prep\\_for\\_ministry.cfm](http://www.mission-presbytery.org/committees/committee_on_prep_for_ministry.cfm).

### Inquiry

- Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D; Forms 2A and 2B.**  
*This includes a response to the nine (9) narrative questions.*
- A copy of one's psychological evaluation report.**  
*Prospective inquirers must "release" the Southwest Ministry Development Center and request them to send a copy of the evaluation to the CPM (the Mission Presbytery office).*

### Annual Consultation only

- Form 3.**
- Up-to-date transcripts of academic work.**
- Evaluation(s)** from 1) the supervisor of Supervised Practice of Ministry placement and/or CPE supervisor, and 2) Self-Evaluation of these ministry experiences.
- Any other relevant information beneficial to the CPM** (e.g., If inquirer has been required by CPM to seek counseling, an evaluation/report from that person. Or, if inquirer has undertaken other tasks or ministry opportunities not highlighted in his/her responses on Form 3).

*For any annual consultation, the inquirer/candidate will meet with his/her CPM liaison and one other member of the CPM at a mutually agreed upon time (not with the entire CPM). Please send forms to the presbytery office (for the official file) as well as to the two designated CPM members (for the consultation).*

### Annual Consultation & Candidacy

- Form 3.**
- Up-to-date transcripts of academic work.**
- Evaluation(s)** from 1) the supervisor of Supervised Practice of Ministry placement and/or CPE supervisor, and 2) Self-Evaluation of these ministry experiences.
- Any other relevant information beneficial to the CPM** (e.g., If inquirer has been required by CPM to seek counseling, an evaluation/report from that person. Or, if inquirer has undertaken other tasks or ministry opportunities not highlighted in his/her responses on Form 3).
- Forms 5A and 5B.** (Note: Only one set of references is necessary for Forms 3 and 5A.)  
*This includes a response to the six (6) narrative questions.*

### **Annual Consultation & Final Assessment**

- Form 3.**
  - Up-to-date transcripts of academic work.**
  - Evaluation(s)** from 1) the supervisor of Supervised Practice of Ministry placement and/or CPE supervisor, and 2) Self-Evaluation of these ministry experiences.
  - Any other relevant information beneficial to the CPM** (e.g., If candidate has been required by CPM to seek counseling, an evaluation/report from that person. Or, if candidate has undertaken other tasks or ministry opportunities not highlighted in his/her responses on Form 3).
  - Exegesis paper of a particular Biblical text.**
  - Sermon manuscript based on the above text.**  
*Reminder: The candidate will preach this sermon for the CPM as part of the Final Assessment.*
  - One-page statement of faith.**
- Draft of Personal Information Form (PIF).

### **Final Assessment only**

- Exegesis paper of a particular Biblical text.**
- Sermon manuscript based on the above text.**  
*Reminder: The candidate will preach this sermon for the CPM as part of the Final Assessment.*
- One-page statement of faith.**
- Draft of Personal Information Form (PIF).**

### **A final note:**

Please **do not** send any of this paperwork to the CPM chair or to your liaison (*with the exception of those anticipating annual consultations*). Please send all paperwork to the presbytery office:

**Mission Presbytery  
Committee on Preparation for Ministry  
7201 Broadway, Suite 303  
San Antonio, TX 78209**

If paperwork has not been received by the stated deadline, then the inquirer/candidate will not be able to meet with the CPM at its next meeting. The CPM will gladly welcome him/her at their next stated meeting once his/her file is complete.

**If prior arrangements have been made** with one's CPM liaison and/or with the chair, those coming for inquiry or candidacy may bring their session endorsement form to the meeting or send it prior to the meeting. For inquirers, this is Form 1D and Form 2B. For candidates, this is the last part of Form 5A, as well as Form 5B. This **applies only** to these forms.