

**Policies and Procedures for  
Presbytery of New Hope  
Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

Presbytery of New Hope  
2309 Sunset Avenue  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

This *Policies and Procedures* manual outlines the practices and requirements in the preparation for ministry process of New Hope Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry. It has been informed and shaped by the *Book of Order* and by many years of practice and refinement by members of the CPM. This manual refers to the following resources:

1. The *Book of Order*. All practices and requirements of the CPM must adhere to the requirements of the *Book of Order*.
2. The *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*. All practices and requirements of the CPM have been informed by the *Advisory Handbook*. The CPM, however, has some requirements above and beyond those outlined in the *Advisory Handbook*.

As of June 22, 2007, the *Book of Order* has been changed and much information pertaining to the preparation for ministry process removed to the *Advisory Handbook*. This manual, *Policies and Procedures for New Hope Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry*, seeks to provide clarity about the specific practices and requirements of the CPM in New Hope Presbytery and to outline the preparation for ministry process as defined by the New Hope Presbytery CPM.

# 1. Handbook for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry

## 1.1. *Statement of purpose*

This Policies and Procedures manual is intended for use by members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of New Hope Presbytery:

1. to provide continuity in the inquiry and candidacy process and
2. to give guidance when the committee must make decisions about exceptional cases.

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry exists by mandate of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-9.0902a):

Structures specified within this Constitution are:

a. In the Presbytery

- A council for the coordination of mission and program (G-11.0103v)
- Committee on Representation (G-9.0105, G-11.0302)
- Committee on Ministry (G-11.0500, G-14.0530)
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry (G-14.0400)
- Nominating Committee (G-9.0800, G-11.0103w)
- Permanent Judicial Commission (D-5.0000)

The purpose of the CPM is defined in section G-14.0401 of the *Book of Order*:

It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the committee on preparation for ministry (G-9.0902). For this purpose, presbyteries shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.

In directing inquirers and candidates through the process of preparing for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry has the following goals and responsibilities:<sup>1</sup>

1. Supporting and guiding inquirers and candidates with understanding and sympathetic interest (G-14.0412).
2. Providing regular, open, candid, and sensitive communication and evaluation of inquirers' and candidates' progress in preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and expecting the same from inquirers and candidates.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted from "Reflections On The Matter Of Committee Development" ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/reflections\\_commdev.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/reflections_commdev.pdf)), January 31, 1991.

3. Providing specific written descriptions of requirements and a time line for meeting inquirers' and candidates' responsibilities to this particular presbytery.
4. Giving guidance to inquirers and candidates regarding: course of study, familiarity with the Bible and with the confessions, practical training and plans for education including the choice of institutions, field education, the inquirer's financial needs, and service to the church. Giving guidance and instruction in the faith and polity of the church (G-14.0412).
5. Receiving from inquirers and candidates annual written reports concerning progress in studies and service to the church, including a report from the inquirer's institution of learning (G-14.0421).
6. Scheduling annual consultations and other meetings with the committee with appropriate consideration of inquirers' and candidates' schedules and responsibilities and providing adequate lead time to effectively complete and return preliminary reports.
7. Conducting annual consultations and preparing jointly with inquirer and candidates a written report of each consultation, submitting copies to the presbytery, the sponsoring session, and to the theological institution (G-14.0421).
8. Maintaining an accurate and appropriately comprehensive file of inquirers' and candidates' records and information regarding progress in preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
9. Promptly processing requests for exceptions, transfers, and transfers of credentials as agreed to by the Committee and the inquirer or candidate.
10. Providing training to and partnering with Sessions to provide guidance, nurture, structure, and care of applicants, candidates, and inquirers.
11. Administering financial aid available to the CPM.

### ***1.2. Adopting and amending this manual***

This Policies and Procedures manual shall be adopted and amended only by a majority vote of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, subject to presbytery approval.

### ***1.3. Structure of the committee***

The committee shall consist of three classes of elders and ministers who are elected to serve three-year terms. Ministers and elders shall be given equal representation on the committee.

Officers of the committee shall include: moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, and treasurer.

The Executive Presbyter shall serve as the staff resource for the committee.

The CPM has been empowered by the presbytery at its stated meeting of February 15, 1997 to enroll an applicant as an inquirer on the day of the inquiry interview. Candidates are approved by presbytery as a whole upon recommendation by the CPM at the next presbytery meeting following the candidacy interview.

### ***1.4. Meeting dates and places***

The regular meeting date of the CPM is the first Thursday of each month. The CPM meets at the presbytery office, 2309 Sunset Avenue, Rocky Mount, NC 27804.

An orientation meeting is held in January, usually on the second Thursday in January.

Regular stated meetings of New Hope Presbytery are held during February, July, and October.

### ***1.5. Record keeping and confidentiality***

Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers, candidates and the CPM are understood to be confidential. It is also understood that information shared with a shepherd will be considered information to be shared with the entire CPM.

Psychological profiles are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately when the process is terminated or completed. Appropriate means of disposing of reports and records include shredding them or returning them to the presbytery office.

In general, CPM members should retain only the files that pertain to candidates and inquirers for whom they serve as shepherd. CPM members will dispose of files when any of the following take place:

- The CPM member rotates off of the committee.
- The candidate or inquirer to whom the files pertain is no longer under care.
- The CPM member is not the shepherd of the candidate or inquirer to whom the files pertain.

### ***1.6. Caring for inquirers and candidates***

The CPM takes under its care persons who apply to become inquirers and candidates for the office of minister of Word and Sacrament. In caring for inquirers and candidates, the CPM assumes three major roles:

1. To interview persons who apply to be enrolled as inquirers and candidates.
2. To conduct annual consultations with all inquirers and candidates under care of the CPM.
3. To assign to each inquirer and candidate under care of the CPM shepherds who provide individual nurture and guidance.

#### **1.6.1. Interviews**

Individuals under care of the CPM will normally have three interviews (excluding annual consultations) with the committee:

1. To be enrolled as an inquirer.
2. To be enrolled as a candidate.
3. To be certified ready for examination pending a call.

Persons seeking an interview with the CPM will be required to complete the necessary forms (listed in Appendix 4.3) and supply the CPM with their responses at least one month prior to their scheduled appointments to meet with CPM.

At each interview with the CPM, inquirers and candidates need to be assessed as to their progress in preparation for the office of minister of Word and Sacrament. Section 4.1 provides tools that may be used to make such assessments.

#### 1.6.1.1. Inquiry

The *Book of Order* defines the inquiry phase of the preparation for ministry process as follows (G-14.0404):

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and 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 for ministry of the Word and Sacrament will be based on knowledge and experience of one another.

The CPM understands the inquiry phase of the preparation for ministry process to be a wide gate, a time for an individual, in concert with the session of his or her church and the presbytery, to explore the possibility that he or she may be called to serve the church as a minister of Word and Sacrament. The purpose of an inquiry interview is to help the CPM become acquainted with the prospective inquirer.

At this stage in the preparation for ministry process, questions asked of inquirers focus on getting to know the inquirer better and understanding how an inquirer's emerging sense of call has grown out of his or her life of faith. Members of the committee focus especially on formulating questions from the written reports the inquirer has submitted and the report of the Career and Personal Counseling Service.

#### 1.6.1.2. Candidacy

The *Book of Order* defines the candidacy phase of this process as follows (G-14.0405):

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the guidance and evaluation of candidates, using learning contacts [sic] within a context of supportive relationships.

The CPM understands the candidacy phase of the preparation for ministry process to be a much narrower gate than the inquiry phase, a time for an individual, in concert with the session of his or her church and the presbytery, to examine the results of the inquiry phase, to consider more closely the implications for the inquirer's life of continuing to prepare for the office of minister of Word and Sacrament, and to begin final preparations for serving the church as a minister of Word and Sacrament.

#### 1.6.1.3. Final assessment

Becoming certified ready for examination pending a call is the final phase in the process of preparing for ministry of Word and Sacrament. The *Book of Order* defines this phase in G-14.0450.

In addition to the requirements outlined in the *Book of Order*, the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*, and the candidate's responses to questions on the standard PC(USA) forms, the CPM may use the following documents and evidence in making a final assessment: <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Final Assessment" ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/final\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/final_assessment.pdf)), Preparation for Ministry Office, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Feb. 2002.

- Pre-interview report (Form 3) for senior year identifying covenant agreements and responses
- Previous Annual Consultation Reports
- Report of outcome of inquiry phase
- Field education reports
- Clinical Pastoral Education reports

### 1.6.2. Annual consultation

“The presbytery shall require the inquirer or candidate to submit an annual written report on progress in studies and service to the church. The seminary or institution of theological education shall make an annual report on the progress of the inquirer or candidate toward preparation for ministry. The presbytery shall conduct an annual consultation for the evaluation and nurture of the inquirer or candidate. In no case shall an inquirer or candidate be excused from these annual consultations.” (G-14.0421)

#### *1.6.2.1. Schedule, location, and attendance*

The annual consultation ordinarily is held on the first Saturday of June at a local church within New Hope Presbytery. All persons enrolled (including certified candidates who have not yet received a call) are required to attend. If the inquirer or candidate has an exceptional reason for not attending a scheduled annual consultation, he or she must request an excused absence and, if approved, must reschedule an annual consultation with CPM members before the date of the scheduled annual consultation. An inquirer or candidate cannot proceed in the preparation process until an annual consultation has been completed and the CPM has voted to continue the period of inquiry or candidacy. As a last option, a phone or e-mail consultation will be held with the inquirer or candidate. This exception must be approved by a majority vote of the CPM.

The annual consultation shall not be used to consider applicants for inquiry, candidacy, or final assessment. At no time will an annual consultation take the place of an interview for inquiry, candidacy, or final assessment, or vice versa.

The purpose of the annual consultation of New Hope Presbytery’s CPM shall be the annual consultation interview, education (in plenary sessions), interaction with other inquirers and candidates, and interaction with CPM members. The schedule of the annual consultation shall include morning meetings and interviews with lunch following. Plenary sessions may include various topics such as pastoral etiquette, session liaison training, Board of Pensions and financial planning, ordination exams, and the call process.

#### *1.6.2.2. Annual consultation interviews<sup>3</sup>*

Some goals and tasks for annual consultation interviews include the following. Many of the tools and questions provided in Appendix 4 can also be used during the course of an annual consultation interview.

- Re-establish relationship with the inquirer or candidate and introduce new committee members.

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<sup>3</sup> From “Guidelines for the Annual Consultation” ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/guidelines\\_consultation.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/guidelines_consultation.pdf)).

- One person should chair the consultation. By previous agreement the additional participant(s) might lead or take turns in leading discussion in each of the five areas (Education for Ministry, Spiritual Development, Interpersonal Relations, Personal Growth, Professional Development), as appropriate; or after initial conversation in each area between the inquirer or candidate and chairperson, the additional participant(s) might enter into the conversation. In committees having many inquirers and candidates it is suggested that a team of two person conduct each consultation, with presentation to and approval of the report by the whole committee.
- Initiate and continue the conversation in ways that allow the inquirer or candidate to develop ideas, make comparisons, elucidate, and encourage the sharing of experiences, concerns and self-evaluation. Build on factual material in the Pre-Interview Report and cumulative record, concentrating on one issue at a time.
- Recognize the inquirer or candidate's accomplishments, providing pastoral care, guidance, support, and encouragement.
- Discuss in depth those areas and issues which need further clarification and amplification. Identify areas in which further work is needed.
  - Negotiate and develop new growth objectives with inquirer or candidate.
  - Discuss with the inquirer or candidate whether he or she should continue the process of preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
  - Clarify next steps.
  - If the process is to continue, discuss forthcoming procedures and expectations.
- If it is apparent that another occupation rather than ministry of Word and Sacrament would be more appropriate, discuss with the inquirer or candidate the continuing guidance, resources, and support you and others can provide.

### **1.6.3. Shepherd's responsibilities**

Upon taking an inquirer under care, the CPM appoints one member to be the inquirer's shepherd. A shepherd's role is to encourage inquirers and candidates, to help nurture their growing sense of call, and provide prayer and support as inquirers and candidates navigate the process of preparation for ministry. Shepherds have the following responsibilities:

- To make a quarterly contact (at least) with the inquirer or candidate.
- To make contact one month prior to ordination examinations in August and January. Advise the inquirer or candidate of your thoughts and prayers during this time and ask if there is specific help needed during preparation for the exams.
- To make contact one month prior to annual consultation in June.
- To make a report to the inquirer's or candidate's session liaison after the inquirer or candidate has met with the CPM.
- To develop a line of communication with the session liaison on behalf of the inquirer or candidate.

## **1.7. *Caring for extraordinary students***

### **1.7.1. Students pursuing a degree in Christian Education**

In recognition of the important ministry of Christian Education, the CPM will enter into a covenant with a student who is pursuing a Master's degree in Christian Education. However, that student will not be considered an inquirer. Such a student shall be called an "enrollee." If the student determines that he or she is being called to seek ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, he or she is encouraged to make an application to his or her local session and to the CPM.

Enrollees are eligible for financial aid from the CPM (see section 3.6), and their names shall be kept separate from the listing of inquirers and candidates.

### **1.7.2. Second career students**

The CPM is interviewing an increasing number of persons who are investigating a second career in ministry of Word and Sacrament. It is important that the CPM provide input and guidance for this important decision as early as possible. While many of the dynamics and implications of responding to God's call will be the same for first-career and second-career students, there are certain issues that may be of more concern to second-career students (e.g., realities about the job market, income expectations, validity of the call, etc.).

The CPM should concentrate on identifying, at the earliest possible moment, people who are considering ministry of Word and Sacrament, so the CPM can help them understand the realities and implications of the call to ministry.

The CPM should develop a presentation for people considering ministry of Word and Sacrament, with segments for everyone, and specialized segments for second-career students that address their particular concerns and questions. The information should be in printed form. The presentation could be offered on a scheduled basis with groups of people, or distributed to individuals as needed. (See SEIC for helpful materials for this presentation.)

### **1.7.3. Students requiring an alternative examination process**

Should a student fail to receive a satisfactory grade on two attempts at any one of the five ordination exams, the examinations subcommittee, with approval of the CPM and in consultation with the student and the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates, will determine an alternate means for the student to demonstrate competency in that area.

## **1.8. *Seminary Debt***

At its October 2004 meeting, New Hope Presbytery adopted a candidate indebtedness policy. This policy is included in Appendix 4.5 and at <http://www.nhpresbytery.org/pdf/Candidate%20Indebtedness%20Policy.pdf>.

## **1.9. *Training for sessions***

The CPM is responsible for ensuring that sessions and session liaisons are knowledgeable about the process of preparation for ministry. The CPM provides training for sessions and session liaisons in the following formats:

- By regularly offering training for session liaisons at annual consultation.

- By meeting with sessions and session liaisons at the request of session or when the CPM receives an inquirer or candidate. Resources for training sessions and session liaisons are outlined in Appendix 4.4, “Resources for Training Sessions and Session Liaisons.”
- By providing written guidelines for session liaisons outlining what the CPM expects of inquirers and candidates. These guidelines are available in section 2, “Handbook for Sessions.”

## 2. Handbook for Sessions

### *2.1. Session's role in the preparation for ministry process*

By the time you receive and read this handbook, you have already played a foundational role in the preparation for ministry process by nurturing in your congregation an understanding of God's love and call to discipleship and by inspiring your applicant to consider that God may be calling him or her to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Now that you have a member who has asked to come under care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, you have several specific roles and responsibilities. This handbook describes the preparation for ministry process and session's role in it.

#### 2.1.1. Preparation for ministry process

Briefly, the preparation for ministry process includes the following steps. This process is required to take at least two years, at least one of which is spent in the candidacy phase.

1. Beginning the process
  - a. A member of your church who begins to sense that he or she is called to ministry of Word and Sacrament approaches his or her pastor for discussion, clarity, and guidance.
  - b. At the request of session, the CPM meets with session for an overview of the preparation for ministry process.
2. Session endorsement
  - a. The applicant completes form 1 (see Appendix 4.3 for a description of the forms used in the preparation for ministry process) and meets with session to help him or her discern a call to ministry.
  - b. Session either recommends the applicant for inquiry or redirects him or her to another vocation and ministry.
  - c. If session recommends the applicant's inquiry, it assigns one person to be a liaison between the applicant and the session. The session liaison's role is described in section 2.2.4.
3. Enrolling as an inquirer
  - a. The applicant attends career and professional counseling to further explore his or her sense of call and gifts for ministry.
  - b. The applicant submits forms 1 and 2A and the results of career and professional counseling to the CPM and meets with the CPM, which decides whether to enroll the member as an inquirer.
  - c. During the inquiry phase, the inquirer begins his or her seminary education, and attends annual consultation(s) with the CPM.
4. Enrolling as a candidate
  - a. After discerning that he or she is ready to become a candidate for minister of Word and Sacrament, the inquirer completes form 5 and meets with session to review his or her progress in preparation for ministry, discuss his or her seminary experience, and help further discern a call to ministry of Word and Sacrament.

- b. If session recommends the inquirer's candidacy, he or she submits form 5 to the CPM to be enrolled as a candidate.
- c. The inquirer meets with the CPM to review the results of inquiry.
- d. If recommended by the CPM, the inquirer presents to presbytery his or her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry.
- e. Presbytery votes to receive the inquirer as a candidate.
- f. During the candidacy phase, the candidate completes his or her seminary education, completes ordination exams, and attends annual consultation(s) with the CPM.

#### 5. Final assessment

Near the end of the year of candidacy, and when the candidate has completed or is nearing completion of his or her seminary education, he or she can apply to the CPM to be certified ready for examination pending a call. If certified, the candidate can begin circulating a Personal Information Form (PIF) and can be examined for ordination upon receiving a call.

### 2.1.2. Session's role in discerning a call

As the session of the inquirer's home church, you are in the best position to help a member discern a call to ordained ministry. Ordinarily, potential inquirers are longstanding members of a particular Presbyterian church, where they have been nurtured in the faith and where their sense of call has grown out of the church's particular ministry. It is important to discern whether they seem to have the proper motivation and gifts for ministry.

A session's first and greatest responsibility in the process of preparation for ministry is to take very seriously its role in recommending inquirers and candidates to the CPM. It is an awesome responsibility and can be filled with great joy or great disappointment. You need to be prepared to support both those whom you recommend and those whom you redirect with love, encouragement, and respect.

### 2.1.3. Spiritual support of inquirers and candidates

There are many ways you can support inquirers and candidates:

- Pray for them. List inquirers and candidates in your newsletter and worship bulletins and encourage your congregation to pray for them daily.
- Keep them in touch with the church. Be sure to send them church newsletters. Invite them regularly to participate in worship as liturgists and preachers. Invite them to session meetings and encourage them to share their seminary experience. Ask them to write to the church through the newsletter to update the congregation on their education and preparation.
- Recognize each milestone in the preparation process by offering a special prayer or liturgy of celebration in worship.
- Remember them when they are away. Send care packages, Christmas gifts, or birthday cards. Be mindful of mid-term and final exam schedules. Offer extra encouragement and support as they prepare for ordination exams.

- Support their families. If an inquirer or candidate has a spouse or children, remember them with cards and letters.

#### **2.1.4. Financial support of inquirers and candidates**

Support your inquirers and candidates financially as much as possible. Most seminarians have incurred tremendous debt by the time they graduate. In many cases seminary debt is disproportionate to the income pastors can expect to earn in their first years of ministry. By supporting your inquirers and candidates generously, you can help to minimize the amount of debt with which they begin their ministries.

Some specific ways that you can provide financial support for inquirers and candidates include:

- Paying for career and professional counseling. This counseling is a required step in the preparation for ministry process.
- Providing tuition support. You can send this support to your inquirer or candidate or send it directly to the seminary.
- Helping to pay for books.
- Contributing to the 1% Theological Fund for Presbyterian seminaries.

## **2.2. *Inquiry***

### **2.2.1. Eligibility**

A person who requests session's recommendation for inquiry must have been a member of your church for at least six months (*G-14.0403*). If the person has never before been affiliated with a Presbyterian church, we recommend that membership in a Presbyterian congregation be at least two years before applying for inquiry.<sup>4</sup>

### **2.2.2. Session orientation**

On request from the session, or at the discretion of the CPM, the CPM will send a representative to orient session to the preparation for ministry process.

### **2.2.3. Interviewing an applicant for inquiry<sup>5</sup>**

The session has the awesome responsibility of deciding whether or not to commend to Presbytery members of the congregation who seek to be ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. While the session needs to remember that these people are in the first steps of preparation and not "finished products," it is important to determine whether they seem to have the potential to fulfill this occupational pursuit. Some questions you can ask yourself to make this determination are:

- 1.) Does the person's faith enlighten life or obscure it? (Does faith build bridges or walls?)

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<sup>4</sup> 1994 Minutes of the Presbytery of New Hope.

<sup>5</sup> From "Guidelines For Session Interview With Applicant"

([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/session\\_interview.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/session_interview.pdf)), by Rev. William King, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Madison, Wisconsin, 1989; rev. by Preparation for Ministry Office, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Jan. 2002.

- 2.) Does the inner sense of call seem real to you, and healthy? (Is it a call to care for God's people, as opposed to a sense of guilt or a magical mission that sets the person above all other people?) Is it consistent with the person's external life?
- 3.) Does the person have the talents to be a minister of the Word and Sacrament? For instance, a good speaking voice, a bright mind, a compassionate presence, a searching intellect, a genuine affection for people, a love for the church?
- 4.) Would you be pleased to have this person be your pastor? Granted, there is a long journey ahead for the applicant before ordination, but you ought to be able to assume that when the journey is completed, you could accept, with enthusiasm, this person as your pastor.

Additional questions for use by the session, when meeting with an applicant, are found on page 8 of Preparation for Ministry Form 1 and in Appendix 4.1 of this handbook. These questions are designed to assist the session both to dialogue with an applicant and to evaluate the person's natural gifts for ministry, quality of commitment, strength of motivation, and potential for growth.

Since an applicant is a member of the church and known by the session there may be a tendency to approach the initial interview with a "déjà vu" mindset. This attitude and approach should be avoided at all cost. The session interview is the most important first step in the denomination's process for determining who is to enter into covenant relationship with God and the Church to prepare to become a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The session must decide whether to endorse or not endorse an applicant for enrolment as an inquirer. Elders must keep in mind the serious implications of their assessments and recommendations regarding enrollment as they are ultimately determining future Presbyterian Church leadership to serve the whole denomination. Such assessments and recommendations should be undertaken with prayer, compassion, intelligence, faith, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

#### **2.2.4.Appointing a session liaison**

Upon recommending a member to apply for inquiry, session is to appoint a session liaison, who will be the applicant's link to the session. The session liaison must be:

- An elder.
- A person who knows the inquirer or candidate.
- Ideally, someone who will be able to see the inquirer through the entire process.
- Someone who will take his or her role seriously.

The session liaison is responsible for:

- Knowing the steps in the process of preparation for ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (See *G-14.0400*).
- Supporting the inquirer or candidate and insuring care on a continuous basis.
- Being proactive in their communications and relationships with inquirers and candidates; maintaining communication with the inquirer or candidate on a monthly basis while that individual is in seminary, including information about financial support.
- Functioning as a contact person for the inquirer or candidate with the session.

- Attend the annual consultation, presbytery meetings, and other important meetings with the inquirer or candidate. If attendance is not possible, the session liaison should send another elder.
- Motivating the supporting congregation by highlighting significant academic and life achievements of the inquirer or candidate in the newsletter, bulletin, etc.
- Providing special gifts for the inquirer or candidate and family.
- Communicating concerns about the inquirer or candidate to the CPM.
- Advocating for the inquirer or candidate, but being fair with the CPM when there is a difference of opinion.

## **2.3. Candidacy**

### **2.3.1. Eligibility**

When an inquirer is ready to move to the candidacy phase (usually near the end of his or her second year of seminary), he or she contacts and meets with the session for its recommendation. The CPM of New Hope Presbytery requires that inquirers complete at least one field education experience (either Clinical Pastoral Education or a placement in a PC(USA) congregation) before applying for candidacy.

### **2.3.2. Interviewing an applicant for candidacy**

An inquirer applies for candidacy by completing form 5A, which prompts the inquirer to write the following statements:

- 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;
- A 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.

Session should review these statements carefully with the inquirer. Some questions you might consider asking are listed in Appendix 4.1.

# 3. Handbook for Inquirers and Candidates

## 3.1. Overview and timing

### 3.1.1. Overview of the preparation for ministry process

The process of preparation for ministry is defined in the *Book of Order* and in the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*:

- Inquiry Phase (G-14.0404)
- Candidacy Phase (G-14.0405)
- Final Assessment (G-14.0450)

You need to read and understand these requirements as early as possible in your preparation process. The PC(USA) also provides a flow chart of the preparation for ministry process available at <http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/flowchart.pdf>.

### 3.1.2. Timing your application for candidacy

Because the candidacy phase of the preparation for ministry process is required to be one year, you need to carefully plan the date of your application for candidacy. You need to be eligible to circulate your PIF by the time you graduate from seminary. Because becoming a candidate requires you to meet with presbytery, you need to be aware of the timing of presbytery meetings. The Presbytery of New Hope meets three times a year: February, July, and October. In order to be received as a candidate at one of these meetings, you need to have met with the CPM by the month preceding the Presbytery meeting. You need to have your paperwork to the CPM at least one month before this meeting. The following table shows the last possible interview dates for being presented for candidacy at each presbytery meeting:

Presbytery meeting date	Last possible date for paperwork	Last possible date for interview
February	January	February
July	April	May
October	September	October

The CPM does not normally interview candidates in January and June and does not normally meet in July and December. Interview slots fill up quickly, so it is wise to schedule your candidacy interview as early as possible after you have met the requirements.

### 3.1.3. Expectations of the CPM

#### 3.1.3.1. Mutual professionalism

Your paperwork, interviews, and annual consultations with the CPM are part of your professional development. When corresponding with the CPM or attending meetings and annual consultations, please remember to comport yourself professionally. The CPM is committed to treating all inquirers and candidates with professionalism and respect and we expect the same from those who are under our care.

### 3.1.3.2. Confidentiality

Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers, candidates and the CPM are understood to be confidential. It is also understood that information shared with a shepherd will be considered information to be shared with the entire CPM.

Psychological profiles are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately when the process is terminated or completed.

### 3.1.3.3. Deadlines

An applicant, inquirer or candidate who desires to schedule an appointment or interview with CPM must submit all paperwork (forms, testing, information, recommendations, etc.) *one month* before the desired appointment of the interview. The CPM generally meets on the first Thursday of each month. Please contact the moderator of the CPM if you have any questions about when your paperwork is due.

## 3.2. *Planning your seminary education*

As an inquirer or candidate under care of New Hope Presbytery, you are subject to educational requirements of the *PC(USA)*, your theological institution, and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. These requirements may or may not coincide with each other. It is your responsibility to ensure that your education meets the requirements of:

- The PC(USA) as defined in the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*.
- Your theological institution.
- The CPM of New Hope Presbytery.

### 3.2.1. Requirements of the PC(USA)

The education requirements for preparation for the office of minister of Word and Sacrament are described in the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook* and include courses in

- Greek
- Hebrew
- Old Testament exegesis
- New Testament exegesis

### 3.2.2. Requirements of the Presbytery of New Hope

All inquirers and candidates will be required to complete satisfactorily a minimum of one basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and a supervised internship in a PC(USA) congregation. One of these must be satisfactorily completed before an inquirer will be eligible to apply for candidacy. Waivers will be granted only at the discretion of the CPM.

All inquirers and candidates will be required to complete seminary courses in the following subjects:

- Presbyterian polity
- Reformed theology

All inquirers and candidates are also required to complete a seminary course or undertake intentional instruction in the area of Reformed worship and sacraments as approved by the CPM.

### **3.2.3.CPE and Sacraments**

An issue that nearly all candidates and inquirers face during their unit of CPE is how to handle requests from patients that you administer the sacraments. These requests can come during the ordinary process of caring for patients or during times of emergency and crisis.

Current PC(USA) polity and theology do not allow for unordained chaplains to administer the sacraments and you need to discuss strategies for arranging for the services of an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament with your CPE supervisor. The CPM does not have the authority to authorize you to do so on behalf of presbytery. Any suggestion in the Book of Order that an elder might be authorized to preside at Lord's Supper is intended for use in a parish setting under supervision of an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament.

Sometimes emergencies happen and there is no time to make any other arrangements. Situations like these call for a great deal of careful discernment and guidance from the Holy Spirit—again with help from your CPE supervisor. The CPM encourages you to discuss this issue with your supervisor early in your CPE unit so that should you find yourself the only chaplain available when an emergency happens and you are called upon to administer a sacrament, you will have reflected and prepared yourself so that you can use your best judgment. Times like these offer fertile ground for deep theological reflection on the nature of the sacraments, the nature of ordained and lay ministry, and the nature of grace in times of doubt and uncertainty.

### **3.2.4.Recommendations of the Presbytery of New Hope**

In addition to the requirements of the PC(USA) and the CPM, outlined above, it is also strongly recommended that inquirers and candidates have course work or educational experiences in the following areas:

- Reformed creeds and confessions
- Ordination exam preparation in the form of a class, study group, or tutorial

Courses in these subjects may be beneficial for preparing for ordination exams.

The CPM does not have a policy prohibiting the use of pass/fail designation for classes taken as a part of the Master of Divinity program. However, it is expected that inquirers and candidates will use extreme discretion in this matter and use no more than three total. It is also expected that such choices be used for core courses (languages, theology, or biblical exegesis) only in consultation with the CPM.

### **3.2.5.Non Presbyterian Seminaries**

At its July 20, 1993 meeting, the Presbytery of New Hope approved the following policy regarding non-Presbyterian seminaries:

Those people wishing to come under care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of New Hope must

ordinarily commit to receive at least ½ of their seminary training at a Presbyterian Seminary.<sup>6</sup>

It is a requirement of the CPM that you receive at least half of your seminary education at a Presbyterian seminary. The CPM, however, reserves the right to waive this requirement under extraordinary circumstances and in close consultation with inquirers and candidates and their sessions. It will benefit you greatly if you plan for your education accordingly and consult with the CPM before beginning your seminary education.

### 3.3. *Inquiry*

The process for applying for inquiry and the requirements of the inquiry stage of the preparation for ministry process are outlined in the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*. Please read and become thoroughly familiar with this process and these requirements. You also might want to begin familiarizing yourself with some of the terms involved in the preparation for ministry process. You can find a helpful glossary at <http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/com/handbook/glossary.htm>.

#### 3.3.1. Applying for inquiry

##### 3.3.1.1. *Requirements for inquiry*

Before you can apply to be an inquirer, you need to secure the recommendation of your church's session. You must have been a member of your church for 6 months prior to applying for inquiry status.

##### 3.3.1.2. *Contact your pastor or session*

The first step in the inquiry process is to contact your pastor and inform him or her of your intentions to apply for inquiry. Your pastor then needs to arrange for you to meet with session for their recommendation. See sections 1.9 and 2 for information on Session orientation and responsibilities.

##### 3.3.1.3. *Meeting with session*

Before meeting with session, you need to complete forms 1 and 2A, make a copy of them for your records, and submit the originals to your church's clerk of session. These forms have several sections, some of which need to be completed by you and some by the session:

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Form 1,<br/>Pages 1-7</b> | To be completed by you. When completing the questions for reflection, please answer as fully and as descriptively as possible. As a general guideline, write about a page (typed, double-spaced) for each question. The budget worksheet is required for your inquiry application. |
| <b>Pages 8-9</b>             | For use by the session during your interview with them. Page 9 must be completed and mailed to the CPM along with the original copies of pages 1-7.  |
| <b>Pages 10-11</b>           | To be retained by the session.   |
| <b>Form 2A,<br/>Page 12</b>  | To be completed by you.  |

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<sup>6</sup> 1994 Minutes of the Presbytery of New Hope.

**Page 13** To be completed by the CPM.

**Pages 14-15** To be retained by you.

In addition to completing the forms and answering the questions for reflection, you also need to provide the following:

- Transcripts of all academic work completed beyond high school.
- Three letters of reference, including someone from your church, a former employer, and a peer or former professor or school administrator.
- An evaluation by the Career and Personal Counseling Service (see section 3.3.2).

These must be sent to the CPM along with forms 1 and 2A to the following address:

Committee on Preparation for Ministry  
Presbytery of New Hope  
2309 Sunset Avenue  
Rocky Mount NC 27804

#### *3.3.1.4. Your session liaison*

During your interview with session, session is to appoint a liaison to represent you and your needs and concerns to the session during your inquiry and candidacy. Your session liaison may accompany you to your interview with the CPM. Your session liaison is your link to your church while you are attending seminary and preparing for ministry. Your session and your session liaison have been informed of their obligations to you while you are under care of New Hope Presbytery. Please rely on your session liaison and keep in close contact with him or her while you are preparing for ministry. Should you need financial support from your church, you might make this known to your session liaison.

### **3.3.2. Career counseling**

Before meeting with the CPM for your inquiry interview, you need to participate in career and professional counseling. To arrange for this evaluation, contact the Career and Personal Counseling Service at:

Career & Personal Counseling Service  
4108 Park Road, Suite 200  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
Tel: (704) 523-7751 · Fax: (704) 523-7752  
e-mail: [careerserviceinc@bellsouth.net](mailto:careerserviceinc@bellsouth.net)  
Web site: [www.careerservice.org](http://www.careerservice.org)

There is a fee for this service and you are responsible for it. We encourage you to request financial assistance from your church for this service.

### **3.3.3. Meeting with the CPM**

#### *3.3.3.1. Requirements of the CPM*

When you meet with the CPM for your inquiry interview, our main goal will be to get to know you better and to help you discern and better understand your sense of call. Prior to your interview, members of the CPM will have read your paperwork. Many of our questions will be follow-ups to the paperwork you submit to the CPM.

In addition to answering the questions on the standard PC(USA) forms, you should also be prepared to answer questions like those listed in Appendix 4.1.

*3.3.3.2. Your CPM shepherd*

If the CPM approves your application for inquiry, you will be assigned a shepherd, a member of the CPM who will maintain regular contact with you, will pray for you during your preparation for ministry, and will be available to you to answer questions and help guide you through the process. Please do not hesitate to contact your shepherd whenever you have questions or need any particular guidance about the preparation for ministry process.

### **3.4. Candidacy**

#### **3.4.1. Applying for candidacy**

*3.4.1.1. Requirements for candidacy*

Before applying for candidacy you must successfully complete at least one field education placement (either CPE or a supervised placement in a PC(USA) congregation approved by your seminary or the CPM). Send the CPM a copy of your field education evaluation from this experience.

*3.4.1.2. Meeting with session*

As with applying for inquiry, before you can apply to the CPM for candidacy, you need to meet with your church's session and obtain their recommendation. Complete forms 5A and 5B, make copies for yourself, and submit the originals to your clerk of session with a request to meet with them. You can obtain Forms 5A and 5B at: [www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm). These forms have some sections for you to complete and some for session. See also 4.6.5, "Moving from an Inquirer to Candidacy":

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Form 5A,<br/>Page 24</b> | To be completed by you. When completing the questions for reflection, please answer as fully and as descriptively as possible.                               |
| <b>Page 25</b>              | To be completed by you and your church's session. As a general guideline, write about a page (typed, double-spaced) for each statement requested on page 25. |
| <b>Pages 26-<br/>27</b>     | To be retained by you.   |
| <b>Pages 28-<br/>29</b>     | To be retained by the session.   |
| <b>Form 5B,<br/>Page 31</b> | To be completed by you and the CPM.  |

*3.4.1.3. Submitting candidacy papers*

Send the originals of forms 5A and 5B, along with your written statements to the CPM and a copy of your field education evaluation at the Presbytery Office in Rocky Mount at least one month prior to your scheduled interview.

### **3.4.2.Meeting with the CPM**

When you meet with the CPM for your candidacy interview, we will be interested in exploring more deeply your understanding of your vocation, your gifts for ministry, the results of your preparation to this point, and your understanding of the Reformed tradition. Prior to your interview, members of the CPM will have read your paperwork. Many of our questions will be follow-ups to the paperwork you submit to the CPM.

In addition to answering the questions about the statements you submit with your application for candidacy, you should also be prepared to answer questions like those listed in Appendix 4.1.

### **3.4.3.Examination before presbytery**

If you are recommended for candidacy, you will need to appear on the floor of presbytery to be examined with respect to your Christian faith, forms of Christian service, and motives for seeking the ministry. This examination consists of presbytery hearing you speak for three minutes on the following topics:

- Your Christian faith
- Your forms of Christian service undertaken
- Your motives for seeking the ministry

This statement must be limited to 3 minutes or less, so it is imperative that you write it down and practice saying it out loud. The fact that we are limiting you to 3 minutes does not mean that presbytery is not interested in your full faith story; it just means that presbytery trusts the CPM to have already worked through that with you.

Upon approval of your presentation, presbytery formally receives you by asking you to respond to candidacy questions and charging you. See section 4.6.6. You may invite your pastor to deliver the charge to candidates. You will receive complete instructions for this meeting after the CPM has approved your application for candidacy.

## **3.5. *Final Assessment***

### **3.5.1.Applying for final assessment**

#### *3.5.1.1. Requirements for final assessment*

Before applying for final assessment, you must have met the following requirements:

- Been a candidate for at least nine months.
- Completed both CPE and one supervised internship in a PC(USA) congregation and submitted evaluations to the CPM.
- Passed all ordination exams.
- Graduated from seminary or be nearing graduation, including having completed courses in Presbyterian polity, Reformed theology, and worship and sacraments.

### 3.5.1.2. Submitting final assessment papers

Before meeting with the CPM, you need to submit the following paperwork at least one month before your appointment for final assessment:

- A sermon with supporting exegetical notes of the biblical text and a description of the contemporary need to which it is addressed.
- A one-page statement of faith including what you believe about God, the Trinity (including statements on each person), the concept of grace, Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and the church.
- A draft of your PIF.
- A final transcript from your seminary (or your most recent transcript if you are in your last semester).
- A one-page statement of your preparedness to answer the constitutional questions (*BOO*, W-4.4003).

### 3.5.2. Meeting with the CPM

When you meet with the CPM for final assessment you will be asked to preach the sermon you submitted in writing. In the course of the interview, the committee will review your sermon and the paperwork you submitted.

## 3.6. *Financial Aid*

### 3.6.1. Financial aid policy

Financial Aid through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be provided only to persons enrolled in New Hope Presbytery as an inquirer, candidate, or enrollee currently in a program toward a Master of Divinity degree or a Master's degree in Christian Education in a school of theological education acceptable to the CPM.

- These persons shall be enrolled as full-time students, although part-time students will be considered.
- Students attending a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) summer program will be considered.
- Exceptional students will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you are in a dual degree program, you need to be aware of the limitations of scholarship programs with respect to dual degree programs.

### 3.6.2. Loy Scholarship Fund

The donor's intention for this scholarship fund is stated as follows:

"Scholarships shall be awarded to persons desiring to give their full time service to the Church of Our Lord. They should possess the characteristics of dedication, capability and need. The scholarships for young men shall be for students desiring to attend Davidson College or Union Theological Seminary in New York. The scholarships for young women shall be for students desiring to attend the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, VA, in dual degree programs or the Master of Arts program. The young men and women receiving scholarships shall be selected by the appropriate committee of Orange Presbytery (North

Carolina), or its successor, (New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery), with preference given to persons residing in the jurisdiction of the Orange Presbytery (New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery)."

It is further noted by the donor:

"Such amounts of the income from the funds held by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundations, Inc. as may be necessary to provide scholarships awarded by the Orange Presbytery (New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery) shall be sent to the Orange Presbytery (New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery) upon written request by the Presbytery to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Inc. The Orange Presbytery (New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery) shall disburse the funds received by it to the person to whom the scholarships have been awarded. In the event that all of the income is not used in any year, it shall be reinvested by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation, Inc."

#### *3.6.2.1. Administrative Guidelines:*

The Office of Financial Aid for Studies has been assigned the Loy Scholarship Fund and is responsible for sending funds to New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery.

New Hope Presbytery and Salem Presbytery have full responsibility and authority for selecting the recipients of the awards. This can be done in any manner which the two presbyteries deem appropriate.

Each year, the presbyteries will be informed by the Office of Financial Aid for Studies of the amount of funds available for the year. When the selection procedure of each presbytery is completed, the names, together with the amounts of the awards to be made, shall be forwarded in writing to the Office of Financial Aid for Studies.

The Office of Financial Aid for Studies will be responsible for reinvesting any income which is not used during a given year.

### **3.6.3. Jesse Lee Thomas Educational Fund for Candidates**

In 1997, the Presbytery of New Hope received a bequest through the Estate of the late Jesse Lee Thomas, a resident of Durham, NC and a member of Triangle Presbyterian Church. The Gift was given for the purpose of establishing an educational trust for the benefit of candidates for ministry in New Hope Presbytery.

The donor's intention for this scholarship fund is stated as follows in Article VI of his will:

"I further give and bequeath any and all assets as may remain after the above disposition, to the Presbytery of New Hope (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to be set up as an educational trust for the benefit and use of candidates for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church."

#### *3.6.3.1. Administrative Guidelines:*

The Presbytery of New Hope Foundation manages the investment of the funds and the funds are currently lodged with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation.

### **3.6.4. Financial support from your session**

The preparation for ministry process is a partnership among you, your home church, and the presbytery. The CPM encourages you to seek financial aid from the session of your home church. Your church's session has been informed of the nature of this partnership (see sections

1.9 and 2) and the CPM's hope that this partnership results in financial as well as spiritual support.

### **3.6.5. Other sources of financial aid**

For other sources of financial aid, contact the Presbytery office.

### **3.6.6. Expenses**

#### *3.6.6.1. Career counseling fee*

One of the first things you are required to do before becoming an inquirer is to complete a series of inventories at the Career and Personal Counseling Service in Charlotte. (For fee information and to make an appointment, call 704-523-7751.) CPM does not help applicants with the fee for these services. We encourage you to seek financial support for the career counseling fees from your church's session.

#### *3.6.6.2. Expenses for travel to your regular interviews*

Ordinarily an applicant will have three regular interviews with CPM: (1) to become an inquirer; (2) to be approved by CPM to become a candidate; (3) for final assessment, which must take place before any candidate can circulate a PIF (Personal Information Form) or have any official conversations with any PNC (Pastor Nominating Committees) about seeking a call.

CPM will pay 1/3 of your travel expenses to these interviews on the following basis: (1) If you drive, we will pay you at the current presbytery rate. (2) If you are coming from a distance of more than 250 miles away, you may arrange a flight. A voucher with attached receipts must be completed on the day of your interview. The CPM encourages candidates and inquirers to also seek travel assistance from your church's session.

#### *3.6.6.3. Expenses for travel to your annual consultation in June*

CPM will pay 1/3 of your travel expenses (plane ticket and lodging). For reimbursement for travel expenses, a voucher with attached receipts must be completed on the day of the meeting.

#### *3.6.6.4. Expenses for travel to a presbytery meeting to become a candidate*

If you are approved by CPM to become a candidate, you will then be required to appear before presbytery at one of the three regular stated meetings. CPM will pay 1/3 of your travel expenses to the site of that meeting by car or plane, based on the criteria mentioned above. A voucher with attached receipts must be completed on the day of the meeting.

#### *3.6.6.5. Study trips during your time in seminary (especially trips outside the US)*

CPM does have access to monies from the Jesse Lee Thomas Fund to help you with special study trips as part of your seminary education. We approve financial help with such trips on a case-by-case basis. If you would like to be considered for financial aid for a specific trip, please contact the CPM treasurer. The CPM treasurer will then send you an application on which you can explain the nature and amount of the expenses. During your time in seminary CPM will help pay for at least part of the expenses of an approved trip. Special exceptions will be made only at the discretion of CPM.

#### 3.6.6.6. Expenses for CPE

As stated in section 3.2.2, you are required to complete one basic unit of CPE as part of your preparation for ministry. CPM will help you with CPE tuition expenses up to a total of \$1000.

### 3.7. Annual Consultations

#### 3.7.1.Purpose

“The presbytery shall require the inquirer or candidate to submit an annual written report on progress in studies and service to the church. The seminary or institution of theological education shall make an annual report on the progress of the inquirer or candidate toward preparation for ministry. The presbytery shall conduct an annual consultation for the evaluation and nurture of the inquirer or candidate. In no case shall an inquirer or candidate be excused from these annual consultations.” (G-14.0421)

The purpose of the annual consultation of New Hope Presbytery’s CPM shall be the annual consultation interview, education (in plenary sessions), interaction with other inquirers and candidates, and interaction with CPM members. The annual consultation ordinarily is held on the first Saturday of June at a local church within New Hope Presbytery.

The schedule of the annual consultation shall include morning meetings and interviews with lunch following. Plenary sessions may include various topics such as pastoral etiquette, session liaison training, Board of Pensions and financial planning, and ordination exams and the call process. At no time will an annual consultation take the place of an interview for inquiry, candidacy, or final assessment, or vice versa.

An inquirer or candidate cannot proceed in the preparation process until an annual consultation has been completed and the CPM has voted to continue the period of inquiry or candidacy. The annual consultation shall not be used to consider applicants for inquiry, candidacy, or final assessment.

#### 3.7.2.Attendance

All persons enrolled (including certified candidates who have not yet received a call) are required to attend. If the inquirer or candidate has an exceptional reason for not attending a scheduled annual consultation, he or she must request an excused absence and, if approved, must reschedule an annual consultation with CPM members before the date of the annual consultation. As a last option, a phone or e-mail consultation will be held with the inquirer or candidate. This exception must be approved by a majority vote of the CPM.

#### 3.7.3.Expenses

Presbytery, together with the session and the inquirer or candidate, shall bear the necessary expenses of the annual consultation. See section 3.6.6.3 for further information.

#### 3.7.4.Requirements and goals

The requirements and goals for annual consultations vary according to where you are in your preparation for ministry process and in your education. These requirements and goals are outlined in the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*.

## **3.8. Ordination Exams**

### **3.8.1. Bible content exam**

Inquirers ordinarily take the Bible content exam during the first year of seminary. This exam is offered in February of each year. Permission from the CPM is not required to take this exam. You can obtain an application to take this exam from [www.pcusa.org/oga/conserv.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/oga/conserv.htm).

If you would like to practice this exam before taking it, you can find sample exams at [www.whitneyhq.com/biblecontent/](http://www.whitneyhq.com/biblecontent/).

### **3.8.2. Polity, Worship and Sacraments, Theology, and Exegesis exams**

The remaining ordination exams are normally taken August or January of your senior year in seminary and are ordinarily taken together. You need to obtain permission of the CPM to take these exams. If you need to take these exams early or want to take some of them separately, write to the moderator of the CPM at the presbytery's Rocky Mount address.

### **3.8.3. Reading lists for ordination exams**

For candidates and prospective transfers who feel the need to review in one or more areas prior to their examination, the following is offered as a list of resources that members of the committee have found helpful. This list is presented for use on an "as needed" basis. It is not a required reading list, with the exception of section 3.8.3.1.

#### *3.8.3.1. Basic documents*

Familiarity with these will be assumed:

- *The Bible*
- *The Book of Order* (most recent)
- *The Book of Confessions* (1994 or later)

#### *3.8.3.2. General works on the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition*

- *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, Donald McKim, ed.
- *Faith Seeking Understanding*, Daniel Migliori
- *The History and Character of Calvinism*, John T. McNeill
- *Introduction to the Reformed Tradition*, John H. Leith
- *Major Themes in the Reformed Tradition*, Donald McKim, ed.
- *Presbyterian Creeds: A Guide to the Book of Confessions*, Jack Rogers

#### *3.8.3.3. Reformed understandings of Worship and the Sacraments*

- *Participation in Worship: History, Theology and Practice*, Craig D. Erikson
- *PC(USA) Book of Common Worship*, 1993 edition
- *Table and Tradition*, Alasdair IC Heron

- *Worship*, Hughes Old

3.8.3.4. *Theology--foundational works and recent Reformed summaries*

- *Institutions of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin
- *Basic Christian Doctrine*, John H. Leith
- *Christian Doctrine*, Shirley Guthrie, (revised edition)
- *The Faith We Confess*, Jan Milic Lochman

3.8.3.5. *Biblical Theology*

- *The Kingdom of God*, John Bright
- *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, Brevard Childs
- *The Mighty Acts of God*, AB Rhodes

3.8.3.6. *Polity*

- *Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers*, Joan Gray and Joyce Tucker
- *Companion to the Constitution*, Frank Beattie

## 4. Appendices

### 4.1. *Interviewing applicants, inquirers and candidates*<sup>7</sup>

The following suggestions are offered particularly to those who may be new to the process of interviewing.

- 1) Provide a comfortable and inviting setting for the interview, and begin with a pastoral prayer for the applicant/inquirer/candidate.
- 2) Have well in mind the goals of the particular interview. Mentally set a time limit and try to avoid interruptions.
- 3) Every participant in the interview should have studied and become familiar with the material submitted by the applicant/inquirer/candidate in advance. This is of utmost importance to the effectiveness of the interview, and will avoid wasting time gathering details during the interview.
- 4) One person (not necessarily the moderator) should conduct the initial phase of the discussion so that the applicant/inquirer/candidate need only relate to that single person. This allows the one conducting the discussion to be responsive and create a conversation with a natural flow. Several members raising questions at first tends to produce a question-and-answer situation that makes it difficult to get a feel for the person being interviewed.
  - a. The applicant/inquirer/candidate should be put at ease as much as possible. Experience has shown that apprehension impedes the flow of useful information. A few minutes devoted to the introductions and friendly small talk are a good investment.
  - b. In ways that are most comfortable and natural to them, group members will want to convey their interest in the individual as a person as well as giving their attention to the issues to be covered.
  - c. As the interview begins, capture the applicant/inquirer/candidate's attention and participation by asking a global, nonthreatening question, e.g. "What is it like to be a student in a theological seminary?"
  - d. Use factual information provided in the previously submitted materials as a basis to phrase questions so that they do not indicate desired responses.
  - e. Let the person tell his/her story. Help him/her to supplement. The applicant/inquirer/candidate should do most of the talking.
  - f. Learn about the spiritual life of the applicant/inquirer/candidate by listening to his/her answers to open-ended questions such as "Have you found it easy or difficult to attend to your spiritual life?"
  - g. Interview with an open mind. Let the applicant/inquirer/candidate lead within the perimeters of the interview.

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<sup>7</sup> From "Observations and Suggestions for the Interview Process"  
([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/observations\\_suggestions.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/observations_suggestions.pdf)), Preparation for Ministry Office, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), January, 2002.

- h. Appropriate informality and light touches of humor usually help everyone in discussions like this. Don't hesitate to use them.
- i. When the discussion leader has talked with the applicant for a significant period of time, opportunity should be given to other members of the committee to pursue briefly areas or questions of special interest to them, which have not yet been covered.
- j. Turnabout is fair play. It is very helpful to ask if the person has any questions he or she would like to ask the members of the committee. A final general question, e.g. "Is there anything else that you would like to talk about?" may permit expression of the deepest concern, or issue current in his/her life. This concluding, relaxed, confidence is often the catalyst for the most significant sharing.
- k. The last issue of the interview should be a soothing concern that will afford the person some ease from anxiety that the interview may have provoked.
- l. A genuine interest in the person and attention to matters raised in these suggestions will tend to help avoid a "third degree" atmosphere and produce a valuable and enjoyable discussion.
- m. The group might find it helpful to role-play the situation before actually meeting with the person. One member of the group would play the part of the applicant/inquirer/candidate and another would play the part of the discussion leader. The other members would assume their own roles. The previously submitted material might be used as the guiding resource by the person playing that role or a form could be prepared for that purpose. The group would then discuss the role-play, identifying what was helpful and not so helpful and ways of improving the discussion process.

#### 4.1.1. Questions appropriate for the inquiry phase

- Tell us about your family and your church and ministry experience.
- Tell us about your Christian faith journey.
- Why do you want to become a Minister of the Word and Sacrament?
- How can we help you explore those aspects of ministry you haven't tried yet?
- What are your plans for seminary?
- What's one thing your references will tell us about you?

Other questions the session or CPM might consider asking inquirers include the following:<sup>8</sup>

##### Relationship to God

1. How do you identify God's presence in your life? In the world?
2. How do you express your commitment to God?

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<sup>8</sup> From "Questions for Clarification" ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/questions\\_clarification.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/questions_clarification.pdf)), Preparation for Ministry Office, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), January 2000, adapted from "The Christian As Minister," Board of Higher Education and Ministry, The United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN, 1977.

3. What have you been taught about God? How does this relate to your experience of God in your life?

4. How do you use your work to express God's love in today's world?

#### Relationship with Others

1. What kind of persons do you most enjoy? Most dislike? Why?

2. How do others see you? Do you like or agree with their perceptions?

3. How do you deal with persons who have authority over you, such as employers, group leaders, teachers, or governing authorities?

4. What happens when other persons disappoint you? How do you react?

5. Do you prefer being with people, or being alone? When?

6. Do you feel that certain relatives or friends expect you to enter a particular career or do certain things? Is this encouraging or oppressive to you? If you could take three persons on a trip to Mars, who would they be? Why?

#### Motivations

1. What gives you joy, encouragement, hope and confidence?

2. When you must choose between two desirable tasks, which do you choose? Why?

3. What rewards or results do you most want from your career?

4. If you could shape a career to fit you, what would it be?

5. How do you define success in a career? In life?

6. What makes your life worthwhile? What keeps you going?

7. What would you like to be doing five or ten years from now?

#### Interests

1. What school subjects have you enjoyed most? Disliked most?

2. When you have free time, what do you do?

3. What is your pattern of interests? Do you balance active and quieter activities, or are you always active or always quiet?

4. Do you enjoy being with a large group, with a few close friends, or being alone? When? How often do you enjoy each?

5. What subjects do you read? Which parts of the newspaper or magazines do you read? Which do you ignore? What special topics do you try to learn about?

6. What fields do you know most about? Which would you like to study?

7. What kinds of people do you prefer if you have a choice?

8. Do you like to be the leader, the follower, or a member of the team?

9. What hobbies, sports, fine arts, etc., do you enjoy most? Which of these do you like least? Why?

#### Abilities

1. What do you feel good about doing, in the sense of knowing you can do it well? What strengths and resources do you have?

2. Are you able to lead groups to complete a task? Can you keep harmony in a group while you accomplish the task?

3. What awards have you earned? When? What are your talents?

4. What have others told you about your abilities? Were they correct in their judgment?

5. In which school subjects have you done your best work? Which subjects were unusually difficult. Why?

6. What abilities could you develop if you decide to work at it?

7. What are your limitations or deficiencies? How do you feel about them? Which ones do you need to overcome? Why?

#### Work Habits and Work Style

1. What work schedule do you prefer? How and when do you do your best work?

2. Can you work independently, or do you need to have a supervisor to keep you working?

3. Must you see immediate results of your work? Are you able to continue doing good work although results may be slow, delayed, or partial?

4. Are you able to adjust to unexpected changes in your work plans? How?

5. How do you resolve conflicts between important assignments or between competing authorities (managers, teachers, etc.)?

6. How are work and recreation related for you?

#### Goals and Values

1. What are the three things you would most like to accomplish in the next year? In your lifetime?

2. How does your commitment to Christ relate to other goals you intend? What secondary goals do you have?

3. What values and considerations are important to you as you set goals for yourself?

4. Can you set your own goals, or do others set goals for you? How do you relate these two sets of goals?

5. How do you choose between competing claims on your time and resources?

6. If you had only one week (or one year) to live, what would you do in that time?

**Reactions and Feelings**

1. How do you react and respond to the feelings that others express?
2. Can you easily and appropriately express both positive and negative feelings, such as joy, sadness, appreciation, anger?
3. What are the relationships between your feelings and your physical functioning? For example, does anxiety produce headaches, nausea, or other physical reactions?
4. What are your feelings about [*some specific event in the inquirer's past*]? Are you fully aware of all your reactions, both verbal and non-verbal? .
5. How do you cope with emotions relating to hunger, power, loneliness, frustration, or leadership? .:
6. Are you afraid of any of your feelings? Of the feelings of others?

**4.1.2. Questions appropriate for the candidacy phase**

Questions that are appropriate to ask at a candidacy interview include all of the questions previously listed for the inquiry phase and the following:

1. How have you grown in your faith and in your sense of call as a result of your time in seminary? As a result of your field education experience?
2. What have you found to be disappointing?
3. What type of ministry activities have you enjoyed most? Least?
4. What is happening in your relationship with Jesus Christ?
5. In what areas do you feel you still need to grow? How do you plan to pursue growth in those areas?
6. How can the committee help you prepare for your ministry?
7. What is distinctly Reformed or Presbyterian about your beliefs and practices?

**4.1.3. Assessing Inquirers and Candidates<sup>9</sup>**

The question before us is “Is this person fit to serve the church as a Minister of Word and Sacrament?” Use this sheet to help assess intangible qualities needed for ministry.

	0	25	50	75	85	100	
Sense of Entitlement							A Servant's Heart
Painful issues still alive							Painful issues substantially resolved
Authoritarian: "I'm the boss"							Collegial: "Work together"
Self Absorbed							Aware of others

<sup>9</sup> “Assessing Inquirers and Candidates” (<http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/assessing.pdf>).

Lacks boundaries							Appropriate boundaries
Seeking a career							Enthusiasm for Ministry
Ineffective Communication Skills							Effective Communicative Skills
Biblically illiterate							Biblically literate
Theologically illiterate							Theologically literate
Amplifies bad/problematic situations							Mediates & modulates bad/problematic situations
Emotionally unstable							Emotionally stable
Ambiguous Faith							Articulates Faith
Manipulative							Vulnerable
Lacks a sense of Call							Articulates clear sense of Call
Closed to new information & insights							Open to new information & insights
No understanding of Reformed Tradition							Clear understanding of Reformed Tradition
Suspicious of PC(USA)							Appreciates PC(USA)

#### 4.1.4.If I Were a Gate Keeper . . .<sup>10</sup>

If I were called upon to stand at the gate to the professional ministry, I would like to seek answers to the following questions regarding a potential candidate:

1. Will the applicant be able to stand the heat in the kitchen? (Evidence: Current red flags of defensiveness; how the candidate handles conflict now.)
2. Will the applicant learn from failure? (Evidence: Conversation about a conflict experience; the candidate's attitude toward it.)
3. Will the applicant be immobilized by indecision? (Evidence of crippling passivity and/ or hostility.)
4. Will the applicant be able to cut the academic mustard? (Evidence: High school and college marks; IQ estimate by clinical psychologist.)
5. Will the applicant appreciate and be accepting of the broad range of the pastoral role? (Evidence: Results of role-clarification tests.)
6. Will the applicant have the capacity for self-discipline? (Evidence: How time is scheduled now: e.g., is there a balance between work and leisure time activities?)
7. Will the applicant work well with groups? (Evidence: Current group involvement, both as a member and as a leader.)

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<sup>10</sup> "If I Were a Gate Keeper" (<http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/gatekeeper.pdf>), Don Falkenberg, March 1973. Updated by the Office of Preparation for Ministry, Presbyterian Church (USA) April, 1996.

8. Will the applicant work well with people of other cultures and gender different from his/her own? (Evidence: Current interactions with others are friendly; or, total lack of interactions.)
9. Does this person demonstrate understanding of appropriate professional and personal boundaries? (Evidence: Avoiding sexual innuendos. Is he/she sensitive to the behavior of misuse of power over a congregant?)
10. Will the applicant be likely to consult with his/her peers? (Evidence: Did he or she take the initiative in seeking out his/her pastor for discussion regarding the "call"?)
11. Will the applicant have appreciation for laypersons and their work? (Evidence: The range of occupations the candidate has considered for him/herself; one's "comprehension of the world of work.")
12. Will the applicant be an "organization person"-in the better sense of that term? (Evidence: Does he/she now ask questions regarding the institution of the church, the presbytery, how candidate selection is made, etc.?)
13. Will the applicant be able to prepare and deliver helpful sermons? (Evidence: Do current thought processes effectively demonstrate creativity, logic, sequence, movement?)
14. Will the applicant be able to experience feelings of accomplishment from his/her work? (Evidence of current consideration of short-range objectives as well as long- term goals.)
15. Will the applicant be able to enjoy his/her successes? (Evidence: Can he/she now talk about successes without embarrassment?)
16. Will the applicant be able to live with the realities of a pastor's income? (Evidence: Current understanding of what constitutes a pastor's income, as well as present budgeting practices.)
17. Will the applicant's spouse and family be happy and satisfied? (Evidence: Is the spouse mentioned (included) in his/her conversation with you? Further evidence: interview with spouse and family or future spouse.) -
18. Will the applicant be able to tolerate the tension between the "church" and the "world"? (Evidence: Quality of one's conversation regarding the world and the church.)
19. Will the applicant be able to tolerate the ambiguity inherent in the pastoral role: e.g., to some, a saint; to others, a parasite? (Evidence: one's sensitivity to this reality.)
20. Will the applicant be able to function as a "change-agent" in an institution regarded by many as a basically conserving-institution? (Evidence: One's concept of a change- agent and attitude toward the "institution" of the church.)
21. Will the applicant serve as an adequate pastoral counselor? (Evidence: Does he/she listen to you? ...answer your questions straightforwardly, without hedging...use unadorned language...try to impress you?)
22. Will the applicant grow; that is, take seriously his/her need for continuing education? (Evidence: What is his/her attitude toward theological education? ...is it something \ " merely to "get through"?)

23. Will the applicant work well with session and session committees? (Evidence: Attitude toward "authority" and authority figures stemming from childhood, adolescent and current relationships with parents and other authority figures.)
24. Will the applicant function by "fits and starts"? That is, be "episodic" (bursts of energy followed with passivity), or "programmatically" (sustained drive toward objectives)? (Evidence: How he/she now functions in school: e.g., scheduling of work, writing of term papers, etc.)
25. Will the applicant take initiative, or simply be reactive? (Evidence: Does he/she ask questions of you, or simply respond to yours?)
26. Is the applicant in touch with his/her feelings? (Evidence: Range of feeling! expression demonstrated in the interview: capacity for deep commitment? ...for expression of appropriate anger, etc.?)
27. Will the applicant be using the church to:
  - (A) work out his/her own dependency needs (escape to Mother Church's bosom when the going gets tough)? (Evidence: Ask the clinical psychologist.)
  - (B) expiate guilt: (Evidence: Does he/she have a "compulsion" to preach?...is he/she free "not to preach"?)
  - (C) provide corporate sanction for expression of unrecognized hostility? (Evidence: Ask a clinical psychologist)
  - (D) give expression to Messianic aspirations? (Evidence: Does he/she impress as a human being?)
28. Will the applicant "weather well"? (Evidence: Are his/her basic and occupational interests similar to who are engaged on a long-term basis in people-related jobs?)

#### 4.1.5. Primary Qualities for Professional Ministry<sup>11</sup>

This resource could be used at several points: as you meet with those seeking to be enrolled as Inquirers, as you orient sessions to their responsibilities, as you decide on a person's readiness for candidacy, as you hold annual consultations and evaluate progress, and as you equip and train your CPM members. This resource may help identify the ways persons are already demonstrating each of the primary qualities. Lack of expression in any one quality may raise an area for dialogue and planning for the future. However, do not use this as a checklist of expectations.

Quality	Various Ways of Expressing this Quality
Lives in relationship with God - has a vital, searching personal faith in God revealed in Jesus Christ - continually open to the direction of the Holy Spirit through the church - affirms the role of Biblical faith relating to current social issues - possesses a sense of divine presence and	+ uses personal devotional practices (prayer, meditation, Bible reading) + reads books which deepen understanding of God's will and way + has a positive attitude toward the church as the people of God + expresses a confident, visionary commitment to the church's ministry + identifies and participates with a community of believers + is actively involved in some form of ministry + asks theological questions about meaning of faith and life

<sup>11</sup> "Primary Qualities for Professional Ministry" ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/primary\\_qualities.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/primary_qualities.pdf)), Richard M. Webster, SEIC Resource #96-102, Presbyterian Church (USA).

<p>calling to professional ministry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ engages in opportunities for Christian fellowship</li> <li>+ participates in Bible study / prayer / support groups</li> <li>+ willing to articulate own faith...to pray aloud in a group</li> <li>+ makes connections between Biblical faith, personal action &amp; events</li> <li>+ after a crisis, able to engage in rebuilding life</li> <li>+ lives life with a sense of grace</li> <li>+ perceived as being a theologian in life and thought</li> <li>+ views personal life as a spiritual journey</li> </ul>
<p>Lives in relationship with self</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes realistic self-appraisal leading toward solid sense of identity</li> <li>- respectful of self, acknowledging personal issues, strengths, and limits</li> <li>- wholeness in mind / body / spirit enables capacity to care, help, and give</li> <li>- has talent for self-direction and disciplined use of time / energies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ willingness to be self-critical and to self-disclose</li> <li>+ exhibits self-confidence, while admitting limits and vulnerabilities</li> <li>+ acknowledges mistakes; seeks forgiveness</li> <li>+ record of trustworthiness, honesty, fairness</li> <li>+ exhibits a congruence of words and behavior</li> <li>+ possesses a combination of adaptability and moral integrity</li> <li>+ able to live with risk and vulnerability</li> <li>+ patient and flexible; tolerance for ambiguity</li> <li>+ exhibits a sense of self-worth: attitude of joy, hope, optimism, playfulness</li> <li>+ displays a sense of humor and lively personal interests</li> <li>+ has good physical and emotional health</li> <li>+ rebounds from defeat – ability to bounce back</li> <li>+ committed to causes greater than self (justice, peace)</li> <li>+ does not pursue personal advantage; not self-serving</li> <li>+ lifestyle reflects high moral and spiritual commitments</li> </ul>
<p>Lives in relationship with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- possesses sensitivity and compassion towards all persons</li> <li>- understands the need for healthy interdependence between persons</li> <li>- seeks relationships which mutually empower and call forth gifts</li> <li>- forms and sustains positive relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ respectful towards the uniqueness and diversity of persons</li> <li>+ desires to nurture / equip / support others in their unique ministry</li> <li>+ open and receptive to persons regardless of culture or background</li> <li>+ treats members of the opposite sex with respect and dignity</li> <li>+ relates well with a diverse group of people</li> <li>= engaging and winsome = has a sense of humor</li> <li>= shows love for people = comfortable with oneself</li> <li>= includes new people = not defensive or exploiting</li> <li>+ encourages peers in games, projects and social activities</li> <li>+ depends on others and is dependable; mutuality in relationships</li> <li>+ shows empathy and caring for persons under stress</li> <li>= listens actively = trustworthy in confidences</li> <li>= flexible; responsive = compassionate</li> <li>+ teachable; has a willingness to be moved by others</li> <li>+ able to ask for help and share leadership roles</li> <li>+ intentional about connection to communities of faith</li> <li>+ gives own time and money</li> </ul>
<p>Has communication &amp; leadership potential/skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ability to exhibit overt leadership rather than passive response</li> <li>- can express thoughts and feelings in spoken and written form</li> <li>- can inform, enlighten, motivate, challenge and persuade</li> <li>- encourages group spirit, delegates responsibilities, listens actively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ ability to deal with facts <u>and</u> ideas; to analyze, synthesize, summarize</li> <li>+ ability to speak publicly to be informative, enlightening, and motivating</li> <li>+ written material is well organized and clear</li> <li>+ is an attentive, active listener</li> <li>+ opinions and problem-solving skills are respected and sought out</li> <li>+ selected for leadership roles by peers and superiors</li> <li>+ able to delegate and share leadership role</li> <li>+ exhibits initiative, good judgment, discernment, respect for others</li> <li>+ works well with a variety of people</li> <li>+ exhibits gifts for leadership</li> <li>= initiates; self-disciplined = ability to teach &amp; move others</li> <li>= flexible; open to change = able to manage conflict</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>= courageous; resilient = uses and confronts power wisely</li> <li>+ has the potential for envisioning and developing action plans</li> <li>+ tolerant of long hours, misunderstandings, irrational love and hostility</li> </ul>
<p>Has an inquiring creative orientation toward life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sees life as a gift and approaches it with respect, curiosity, joy</li> <li>- has an intellectual alertness which is open, adaptable, energetic</li> <li>- approaches new experiences with a spirit of adventure</li> <li>- is imaginative and creative in envisioning possibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ able to transcend self and situation; to think clearly and critically</li> <li>+ more intrigued by possibilities than givens; sees beyond the obvious</li> <li>+ able to connect ideas and realities</li> <li>+ exhibits self-confidence in an environment of ambiguity</li> <li>+ able to live with risk and vulnerability; to face the tragic / absurd</li> <li>+ perceptive and energetic; will not stay discouraged</li> <li>+ displays enthusiasm, openness and flexibility; is playful</li> <li>+ has a genuine curiosity about life and a love of learning</li> <li>+ shows a wide range of interests (i.e. reading, extra-curricular)</li> <li>+ has breadth and depth in conversation</li> <li>+ enjoys interaction with persons of different ages and cultures</li> <li>+ eats foods from different cultures</li> <li>+ has a hopeful vision of the church</li> <li>+ displays effective study habits and positive peer relationships</li> <li>+ mastery of academic requirements (theological disciplines)</li> </ul>
<p>Can make commitments &amp; carry out responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expresses a commitment to the authority of Jesus Christ</li> <li>- committed to empowering and preparing all the people of God</li> <li>- willing to work within the structures of the denomination</li> <li>- willing to engage, with compassion, in struggle for justice and peace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ makes public profession of faith; is an active church member</li> <li>+ shows loyalty to congregational life and to larger body of Christ</li> <li>+ invites / brings others to Christ and Christ's church</li> <li>+ has a sense of ministry as a lay person</li> <li>+ courageous in living with the risk of conflict and failure</li> <li>+ thinks about the consequences of own actions</li> <li>+ follows through on accepted responsibilities; acts out convictions and values</li> <li>+ dependable work record</li> <li>+ evidence of making commitments to causes, organizations, structures</li> <li>+ commitment to causes greater than self (justice, peace)</li> <li>+ commitment to work in partnership and common ministry</li> <li>+ commitment to work against racism / classism / sexism / ageism</li> <li>+ understands to nature of the institutional connectional church</li> <li>= active member of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)</li> <li>= acquaintance with and commitment to Reformed tradition</li> <li>= enthusiastic about Presbyterian heritage / polity / program</li> </ul>

## **4.2. Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under the Care of New Hope Presbytery**

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of New Hope emphasizes the following critical aspects of the preparation process:

1. The total preparation for ministry process will have a duration of at least two years, at least one year of which must be at the candidacy phase.

2. The start of the two-year preparation period begins when the CPM enrolls the person as inquirer, while the required one-year of candidacy begins when the person is received and enrolled at a presbytery meeting.

3. **No guarantee is implied that enrollment into the inquiry phase will be followed automatically by admission to the candidacy phase. Admission to the inquiry phase can be considered to be a “wide gate.” Admission to the candidacy phase then, is considered to be a “narrow gate” wherein progress will be examined critically and the questioning will be of a more specific, theological nature.**

4. Inquirers should ordinarily successfully complete one field education unit before the CPM will approve them for Candidacy. By the end of Candidacy each person under care will complete the minimum field education requirements of (a) one quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and (b) a supervised internship in a PC(USA) church or institution. Waivers will be granted only at the discretion of the CPM.

5. The CPM exists to advise, support, and nurture those under care, but it is the inquirer’s/ candidate’s responsibility ultimately to be knowledgeable of and to adhere to the process outlined in the manual, including any special requirements of New Hope Presbytery or its CPM, and to meet all deadlines in a timely manner.

6. The inquirer/candidate is expected to be available for all subsequent meetings with the CPM or its designees, especially the annual consultation required each year while under care.

7. Inquirer/candidates are advised that the provisions of the *Book of Order*, G-6.0106b, among other applicable requirements of the *Book of Order*, will govern their eventual ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

8. **The CPM reserves the right and responsibility to place additional requirements as it sees it is necessary during periodic evaluations of the inquirer’s/candidate’s progress.**

9. Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers and candidates and the CPM are understood to be confidential. It is also understood that information shared with a Shepherd will be considered information to be shared with the entire CPM. Psychological profiles are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members on the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately when the process is terminated or completed.

10. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate will be expected to adhere to New Hope Presbytery's policy against sexual misconduct.<sup>12</sup>

11. While in the preparation for ministry process, substantial debt may be incurred, only a portion of which will be defrayed by support from New Hope Presbytery. Limited financial support is available from New Hope Presbytery.

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<sup>12</sup> You can obtain a copy of this policy at <http://www.nhpresbytery.org/pdf/SexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

12. Inquirers and candidates should pay special attention to CPM's guidelines for expenses incurred by inquirers and candidates and comply with all guidelines for travel expense reimbursement.

13. Beyond the requirements stated in the *Book of Order* and *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook*, only those requirements placed by New Hope Presbytery and its CPM are in effect. The requirements of other presbyteries are neither pertinent nor applicable.

I acknowledge by my signature that I have read and accept the aspects of the preparation for ministry process noted above.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***4.3. Description of Forms Used in the Preparation for Ministry Process***

#### **Form 1 (Rev.09-94): Application for Enrollment as an Inquirer: Background Information for Session and CPM**

The potential Inquirer's first written communication to the Session and the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, along with Session's evaluation and recommendation. This form provides basic information regarding the applicant's background, identity, and interests. Included in the form are questions for reflection by both applicant and Session.

#### **Form 2A (Rev.03-93): Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer**

To be completed by the applicant seeking to be enrolled. The CPM action regarding the application as well as that of the Presbytery are recorded on this form. Upon completion, Stated Clerk of presbytery sends the forms to the office of Resourcing Committees on Preparation for Ministry, 100 Witherspoon St., Room M005, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

#### **Form 2B (Rev.03-93): Covenant Agreement Between Inquirer, Session and CPM; and Inquirer Release**

A signed acknowledgment of the new covenant relationship entered into by the Inquirer, the Session and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The Inquirer Release sets in motion an understanding that permits the CPM to secure information necessary to make responsible decisions and recommendations.

#### **Form 3 (Rev.03-93): Pre-Interview Annual Consultation Report**

This report, completed by the Inquirer/Candidate before each Annual Consultation, evaluates progress in the accomplishing previously agreed-upon goals and objectives. This form requests a listing of completed courses, and includes specific questions to be addressed in each of the five growth areas.

#### **Form 4 (Rev.03-93): Report of Annual Consultation**

A summary report of the annual Consultation, completed by the CPM and the Inquirer/Candidate, that indicates development at progress in the five key areas along with growth objectives agreed to for the next year. Designed for use by enrollees before, during and after theological education. Completed report is sent to enrollee, theological institution, and sponsoring Session.

#### **Form 5A (Rev.03-93): Application to be Received by a Presbytery as a Candidate**

Upon completion, this form is sent by the Stated Clerk of Presbytery to the Office of Resourcing Committee on Preparation for Ministry, 100 Witherspoon Street, Room M005, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

#### **Form 5B (Rev.03-93): Covenant Agreement Between Candidates, Session, CPM; and Candidate Release**

A signed acknowledgment of the new covenant relationship entered into by the Candidate, the session, and the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

#### **Form 6 (Rev.03-93): Summary Report of Final Assessment of Candidate's Readiness to be Examined for Ordination**

This form, completed by the CPM, acknowledges that the CPM of the Candidate's presbytery has conducted a final assessment of the candidate's preparation and readiness to begin ministry; and that he or she has successfully completed all of the denomination's and the Committee's requirements and is ready for ordination. Also included on the form is a description of the information to be sent to a calling Presbytery, when requested.

#### **Form 7A (Rev.07-94): Certificate of Approval of Transfer**

Form used in the transfer of an enrollee from one presbytery to another; when completed and signed by the Stated Clerk of the transferring presbytery, and the Stated Clerk of the receiving presbytery, who copies and mails to the Office of Resourcing Committee on Preparation for Ministry, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

**Form 7B (Rev.09-94): Report of Withdrawal or Removal of Inquirer or Candidate, or Ordination of a Candidate**

Form used to report to the Office of Resourcing Committees on Preparation for Ministry particular action of the Presbytery Committee to the withdrawal, removal, or ordination of enrolled persons.

#### 4.4. *Resources for Training Sessions and Session Liaisons*

Resources available to the CPM for the purpose of training sessions and session liaisons include the following:

- **Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook**, <http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/p4madvhb.pdf>.
- **A Session Guide for the Ministry of All Believers** ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/sessionguide\\_believers.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/sessionguide_believers.pdf)) Prepared by the Task Force for a Joint Candidacy Process, to test the features of the Inquiry Phase of the Preparation for Ministry Process.
- **Guidelines for Session Interview with Applicant** ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/session\\_interview.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/session_interview.pdf)) Guidelines used by the session to determine whether or not the candidate has the potential to fulfill the occupational pursuit in the ministry.
- **Some Major Events in the Preparation for Ministry Process** ([http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/major\\_events.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/major_events.pdf)) Outline of the major stages in the Preparation for Ministry Process.
- **Preparation for Ministry Video** Primary resource for a session in PC(USA) and for a presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry. It is designed for showing to a session under the guidance of a representative of a CPM. An applicant for inquiry or candidacy may find the video instructive as well, but it does not replace an applicant's personal meeting with CPM. It is available for \$9.95 + \$3.00 shipping/handling from the following sources:
  - **website:** [www.lakesandprairies.org](http://www.lakesandprairies.org)
  - **email:** [jpalmer@lakesandprairies.org](mailto:jpalmer@lakesandprairies.org)
  - **phone:** (612) 854-0144
- **Recommended Duties of a Session Liaison** (<http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/liaison.pdf>) Provides for the appointment of an Elder (or a group of persons including at least one Elder) to act as liaison with the Inquirer/Candidate & with the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and to participate with the Inquirer/Candidate and presbytery's committee as they explore and evaluate his or her progress in the preparation for ministry.
- **Training for Sessions with an Inquirer or Candidate A** graphical/schematic presentation that steps through the preparation for ministry process from the point of view of inquirers and candidates, sessions, and Committees on Preparation for Ministry.

#### **4.5. *New Hope Presbytery Candidate Indebtedness Policy***

Persons under care who are serving a first call and applying for financial assistance under the Seminary Debt Assistance Program shall meet the following requirements;

##### **4.5.1. When Presbytery is the Presbytery of Care (revised by CPM 10/11/04)**

1. Require an inquirer to meet with the Board of Pensions regional representative or the Presbyterian Foundation representative during the Inquiry year, in order to assess net worth and to make a plan for financing the cost of Seminary; or
2. Require the Inquirer, during the Inquiry year, to participate in a “Fiscal Fitness” workshop being sponsored by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) or offered at annual consultation. If an Inquirer attends a Fiscal Fitness workshop at annual consultation, travel expenses will be paid in accordance with the CPM’s current policies.
3. The Presbytery will encourage each potential Inquirer to seek assistance in sharing the cost of their Career and Personal Counseling Service with their home congregation. Need-based grants will be available from the Presbytery based upon the CPM’s judgment.
4. On behalf of the Presbytery, the CPM will inform all Inquirers of the prospective salary that can be expected based on the current median income for the denomination reported by the Board of Pensions, and based on the minimum effective salary established by the Presbytery and will caution all Inquirers to minimize their level of indebtedness accordingly.
5. The CPM will encourage each Inquirer and Candidate towards using his or her available assets to pay for the cost of seminary tuition and room and board rather than incurring indebtedness.
6. The CPM will make available on an annual basis to each Candidate or Inquirer a list of options for pursuing grants and interest-free loans and funding that may be available through the Financial Aid for Studies Office of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and PC(USA) seminaries.

The CPM will be an advocate with the congregation, of which the Candidate or Inquirer is a member, and with other congregations of the presbytery as appropriate, in order to generate financial support for the Candidate or Inquirer in the form of grants.

##### **4.5.2. When Presbytery is the Presbytery of Call**

1. Any minister 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, or other Financial planning workshop. If the minister has not attended such a workshop, he/she shall be required to do so within twelve months of start-up, the cost of registration fee, accommodation and travel for such a workshop to be considered legitimate reimbursable expense from study leave allowance.

2. The Committee on Ministry shall encourage calling congregations to utilize further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.

### 4.5.3. Seminary Debt Assistance Program

#### 4.5.3.1. Guidelines and Responsibilities

##### 4.5.3.1.1. Guidelines:<sup>13</sup>

- The Seminary Debt Assistance Program is a program of the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The funds for the program are available through the generosity of church member gifts, bequests, as well as investment earnings. The Seminary Debt Assistance Program is being coordinated with other entities of the Church and was initiated in May 2001.
- The grants will be made to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament to assist them to repay educational debt incurred while they were seeking a Master of Divinity degree.
- A limited number of grants will be awarded each year. Grants will be in the sole discretion of the Board of Pensions. The Board will consider the means available to the applicant, the nature and amount of debt and any other factors the Board deems appropriate.
- Applicants may apply for up to \$2,500 each year for a total of four (4) years. (The maximum amount given to one individual over four (4) years not to exceed \$10,000.)
- The grants will be awarded to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are serving churches with fewer than 150 members and a budget of less than \$250,000. The minister should be in his or her first seven years of ministry and serving a full time called position.
- All Presbyteries that participate in the program are encouraged to have a policy regarding student/clergy indebtedness.
- All applicants must attend a financial planning seminar offered by the Board of Pensions prior to application for a Seminary Debt Assistance grant.
- All Presbyteries in which a minister has received a grant are encouraged to develop a plan for continued support and guidance of the pastor and the congregation participating in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program.

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<sup>13</sup> Guidelines are cited here for ease of reference and are subject to change by the Board of Pensions. For current guidelines, refer to the Board of Pensions Financial Assistance Program description at <http://www.pensions.org/programs/assistance/financial.htm> (last cited 7/06/2007).

*4.5.3.1.2. Responsibilities:*

- Presbytery approves Seminary Debt Assistance Program application and submits it to the Board of Pensions for consideration.
- Presbytery approves a policy on Student/Clergy indebtedness.

## ***4.6. Letters and memos sent to candidates and inquirers during the preparation for ministry process***

The following are examples of letters and memos sent to applicants, inquirers, and candidates during the preparation for ministry process.

### **4.6.1. Letter to applicant for Inquiry**

It was nice to talk with you today about your future plans for seminary and the preparation for ministry process.

You can access the complete list of forms needed for the preparation process at:

**[www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm)**.

The specific forms you would need to complete before your CPM interview are Forms 1-2. For that interview you would also need to have 3 people complete reference letters (forms for that are attached).

As I mentioned to you, you would also need to have an evaluation done at the Career and Personal Counseling Center in Charlotte. Their phone number is 704-523-7751, and their website is **[www.careerservice.org](http://www.careerservice.org)**.

Also, if you'd like to read more about the entire preparation process, you can read the PC (USA) Advisory Handbook at: [www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/p4madvhb.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/p4madvhb.pdf).

You also might want to begin familiarizing yourself with some of the terms involved in the preparation for ministry process. You can find a helpful glossary at <http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/com/handbook/glossary.htm>.

Just to review, before you come for your CPM interview to enroll as an Inquirer, you'll need to submit the following 3 things to us:

- ◆ Career counseling evaluation
- ◆ Forms 1-2 complete with all answers
- ◆ 3 reference forms

When those are ready, please mail them to: Committee on Preparation for Ministry, The Presbytery of New Hope, 2309 Sunset Avenue, Rocky Mount NC 27804.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to call me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Grace and peace,  
CPM Moderator

Attachment: Reference Form

### **4.6.2. Procedure to become an Inquirer:**

1. Applicant must be an active member for six months in a PC(USA) church.

2. Applicant must fill out CPM Forms 1 & 2, provide three reference letters, and submit to your session and meet with them to obtain their endorsement. Forms may be accessed at [www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm).
3. Pastor contacts CPM to inform them of session's endorsement. Session appoints a liaison for the applicant.
4. Applicant schedules an appointment with the Career & Personal Counseling Center in Charlotte (phone # 704-523-7751) and informs CPM of interview date. The cost is usually shared between the applicant and applicant's home church.
5. Once CPM receives the Center's report, CPM Forms 1 & 2, and three reference letters, CPM will schedule the Inquiry interview.
6. If CPM approves an applicant as an Inquirer, the date of the interview is the beginning date of enrollment for the period of preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament. "This period shall be at least two years, at least one year of which shall be as a candidate, required in G-14.0401." (G-14.0303e)
7. "The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together in such a way that the decision regarding the inquirer's suitability for ministry of the Word and Sacrament will be based on knowledge and experience of one another." (G-14.0404)

**Requirements of New Hope Presbytery CPM in addition to the Book of Order:**

1. CPE and one field education supervised ministry in a PC(USA) church or institution.
2. Classes in Presbyterian Polity, Reformed Theology, and Reformed worship and sacraments.
3. Pass/fail option not used for core courses, i.e., languages and OT & NT exegesis classes.

### 4.6.3. After becoming an Inquirer

Congratulations again on becoming an Inquirer!

In addition to what you can read about the preparation for ministry process in the Book of Order (and I'd encourage you to read what it says about the process!), there are two other pieces of information you need to read and refer to.

The first is the "Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA) Advisory Handbook." It is available at: [www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/p4madvhb.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/pdf/p4madvhb.pdf)

The second item is specifically for our Presbytery. It is the Policies and Procedures for our CPM, and you will find it as an attachment to this message.

There is very helpful information in both of these documents, and as an Inquirer, you will need to become familiar with both of them.

Also, regarding the Bible content exam (only offered in February), to find the application for this exam go to: [www.pcusa.org/oga/conserv.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/oga/conserv.htm).

And to find sample exams from the past to help you study, go to: [www.whitneyhq.com/biblecontent/](http://www.whitneyhq.com/biblecontent/)

Also, if you have not already provided us with this information, there are two questions not asked on the forms that we need for our files:

- ◆ What is your date of birth?
- ◆ When did you first become a member of a Presbyterian church?

Along the way if you have any questions (and I'm sure you will), please feel free to ask. I'll be glad to offer my help in any way I can. .

Grace and peace,

CPM Moderator

Attachments: CPM Policies and Procedures

### 4.6.4. Letter to new Session liaisons

Thank you for serving as a Session Liaison for \_\_\_\_\_. I am writing this letter to inform you that the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of New Hope Presbytery has selected me to be the person on CPM to serve as their Shepherd.

As outlined in our Policies and Procedures, my responsibilities as a Shepherd are:

- ◆ To make a quarterly contact (at least) with the inquirer/candidate
- ◆ To make contact one month prior to ordination examinations in September and February. Advise the inquirer/candidate of your thoughts and prayers during this time and ask if there is specific help needed during preparation for the exams.
- ◆ To make contact one month prior to annual consultation in June.

I've included with this letter a copy of our CPM's Policies and Procedures. There is much helpful information in our manual that will familiarize you with the preparation for ministry process. In particular, it would be good for you to note the responsibilities of a Session liaison:

- ◆ To know the steps in the process of preparation for the ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA). (See G-14.0300).
- ◆ To support the inquirer/candidate and insure care on a continuous basis.

- ◆ To maintain communication with the inquirer/candidate on a monthly basis while that individual is in seminary, including information about financial support.
- ◆ To function as a contact person for the inquirer/candidate with the session.
- ◆ To attend the annual consultation, Presbytery meetings, and other important meetings with the inquirer/candidate. If attendance is not possible, the session liaison should send another elder.
- ◆ To motivate the supporting congregation by highlighting significant academic and life achievements of the inquirer/candidate in the newsletter, bulletin, etc.
- ◆ To provide special gifts for the inquirer/candidate and family.
- ◆ To communicate concerns about the inquirer/candidate to the CPM.
- ◆ To be an advocate for the inquirer/candidate, but also to be fair with the CPM when there is a difference of opinion.

On our CPM we take confidentiality issues very seriously. Let me assure you that if you need to talk with me at some point and choose to share with me information that needs to be shared with the CPM but kept confidential, we will be diligent to do so.

You are invited (but not required) to accompany your Inquirer/Candidate for any interviews they have with the CPM, as well as our Annual Consultation on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June. If you choose to attend any interviews, you will be introduced to the committee and be given an opportunity to give your endorsement of the Inquirer/Candidate, although you will not be invited to be part of the actual interview.

Please let me know if you have any questions for me, and thanks again for being willing to serve as a Session Liaison.

In Christ's Care,

Name

Street Address

City State Zip

Phone Number

Email Address

Includes: CPM Policies and Procedures

CC: Pastor

#### **4.6.5. Moving from an Inquirer to Candidacy**

I'm glad to hear of your interest in becoming a Candidate for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Here are the steps involved in moving from inquirer to candidate:

First, we require that you successfully complete at least one field education placement (either CPE or in a PC(USA) church or institution) before becoming a Candidate. If you have done this, then proceed with the following.

1. Make sure that you send a copy of your supervisor's evaluation of your field education experience to CPM.
2. Fill out Form 5A/5B (including the brief "statements" that are described at the top of page 2 of the form), and give to your Pastor to distribute to Session members. (You can locate Form 5 at [www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min/forms.htm).)

3. When you compose your statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition, please be sure to include what you believe about God, the Trinity (statements on each person), the concept of grace, Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and the church – all on one page!
4. Meet with your Session and obtain their recommendation (a member of our committee need not be present).
5. Send the originals of all forms to CPM at the Presbytery Office in Rocky Mount at least 4 weeks prior to your scheduled interview.
6. Meet with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and obtain our recommendation to be received as a candidate by Presbytery.
7. Appear on the floor of Presbytery to be examined with respect to your Christian faith, forms of Christian service, and motives for seeking the ministry.
8. Be formally received as a candidate at that same Presbytery meeting by responding to the candidate questions and then being charged.
9. “The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the guidance and evaluation of candidates, using learning contracts within the context of supportive relationships.” (G-14.0405)

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning the above or about the process itself. Also, let me know when you'd like to schedule an appointment to meet with CPM, and I'll be glad to put you on our calendar.

CPM Moderator

#### 4.6.6. Becoming a Candidate

You are scheduled to be received as a Candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of Presbytery to be held at \_\_\_\_\_. (You will receive a packet giving you directions to this location.)

There will be a brief service of reception for you at some point in the docket (usually scheduled for around 1:00 pm). Because the docket is subject to change, you need to be present at 9:00 am for the beginning of the meeting and stay until your service of reception.

You need to have someone (such as your pastor or session liaison) write a letter of introduction for you which will become a part of the docket materials for the meeting. This letter needs to be mailed (or emailed) to the Presbytery office by \_\_\_\_\_. Please let me know as soon as you can who will write your letter.

After you have been introduced by the CPM Moderator at the meeting, you need to be prepared to talk about the following in 3 minutes or less:

- ◆ Your Christian faith
- ◆ Your forms of Christian service undertaken
- ◆ Your motives for seeking the ministry

The only way for you to do it in 3 minutes or less is to write it down and practice saying it out loud. The fact that you are limited to 3 minutes does not mean that Presbytery is uninterested in your full faith story; it just means that Presbytery trusts the CPM to have already worked through that with you.

If your examination is approved by the vote of Presbytery, then the presbytery moderator will propose the following questions to you:

1. Do you believe yourself to be called by God to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament?
2. 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?
3. Do you accept the proper supervision of the presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?
4. 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)?

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.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Congratulations on making it to this milestone in your preparation process!

Grace and peace,

CPM Moderator

#### **4.6.7. Final assessment of a Candidate's readiness to begin ministry**

Congratulations on your interest in taking this final step toward becoming a Minister of the Word and Sacrament! Please refer to G-14.0450 in the 2007-2009 *Book of Order* for complete details concerning final assessment of a candidate's readiness to begin ministry.

"Readiness to begin ministry" is defined in part by the *Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Advisory Handbook* as follows:

1. presenting evidence of competence in the fields of theology, Bible, polity, and worship and Sacraments, ordinarily attested by completion of the requirements of G-14.0450; and evidence of ministerial skill attested in the supervised practice of ministry;
2. presenting evidence of readiness to participate in a calling presbytery's plan for transition and of plans for continued study and growth (G-11.0103n);
3. expressing theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church;
4. expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination (W-4.4003) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings;
5. revealing commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament within the discipline of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry;
6. presenting a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose. This

sermon shall be preached before the calling presbytery or a committee thereof as a part of the appearance of the candidate.

*Please remember that New Hope CPM requires you to have completed satisfactorily at least two field education units (one of Clinical Pastoral Education and one supervised internship in a PC (USA) congregation) as well as courses in Presbyterian polity, Reformed theology, and Reformed worship and sacraments.*

**When you come before CPM, you will be asked to:**

- 1. Preach a sermon before the committee, providing a written copy beforehand with supporting exegetical notes of the biblical text and a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed.**
- 2. Submit a statement of faith on one page to include what you believe about God, the Trinity (statements on each person), the concept of grace, Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and the church.**
- 3. Submit a draft of your PIF.**
- 4. Express understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination.**

You will need to submit your paperwork to the Presbytery Office in Rocky Mount one month before your interview date. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_

CPM Moderator

#### **4.6.8. After PIF attestation**

I just received notification from Louisville that your PIF was online and ready to be attested. I went to the website and entered my password, so that now your PIF is officially attested and should be available online to churches very soon.

It's been a pleasure to work with you through this process. Please let me know if I can be of help to you in any way.

Praying for God's wisdom for you as you search.

CPM Moderator

## 4.7. *Glossary*

Following are some commonly used terms and abbreviations:

CPM	Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Enrollee	A student pursuing a degree in Christian education who is in a relationship of oversight with CPM
NHP	New Hope Presbytery
SEIC	PC(USA) Study to Enrich Inquirers and Candidates with its resource, <i>Considering Ministry as a Vocation</i>
Session Liaison	A member of the inquirer's or candidate's Session who serves as that individual's contact with the Session
Shepherd	A CPM member assigned to be an inquirer's or candidate's contact with the CPM

For the meaning of additional terms used in this manual, refer to <http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/com/handbook/glossary.htm>.