

**Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of New Covenant**

Manual of Operation and Policies

Part 1

Inquirers and Candidates

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Introduction

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

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here I am; send me!'"

Isaiah 6:8

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

As part of the wider community of faith, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of New Covenant stands ready to explore God's call with you, as you feel ready to do so as part of the formal process of preparation for ministry.

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

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/advisory-handbook-preparing-ministry/>

or

www.pcusa.org & search for advisory handbook on preparing for ministry

This process outlines the principles, procedures, and practices of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of New Covenant. The basis of the content of the process is the *Book of Order* and the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. It is to be a guide for inquirers, candidates, sessions, and the p resbytery as together we seek to discern God's call to individuals in our midst.

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

Purposes of the Process

The purposes of the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (USA) are to:

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

Theological Background

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

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

Presbyterians believe in the priesthood of all believers, that is, that all church members, regardless of their occupational choice, are engaged in ministry. That is their Christian vocation (G-1.0304). The Holy Spirit might call some among them, through the church, to the ministry of teaching elder. Thus, the ministry of teaching elder is one among many occupations through which men and women express their God-given interests and abilities in life and daily work. The approach in responding to this calling, as to every other, is through a careful process of exploration and testing carried on within the community of faith, during which the community evaluates gifts and motivations in light of the needs of the church and the world.

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

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

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

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

Key Concepts

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

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

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

The basis of consultations with the inquirer or candidate is specific goals in five areas of growth development and on specific expected outcomes for both the inquiry and candidacy phases. (See *Preparation for Ministry Process -A General Overview* below.) The purpose of consultations is to help the CPM work with the individual at her or his current level of achievement and, through guided conversations and the mutual negotiation of new learning contracts, to stimulate further growth in specific areas.

Both the candidate's presbytery and the presbytery of call share the process of examination and ordination. Having guided and evaluated the candidate's progress through the cumulative series of consultations, the candidate's presbytery meets with the candidate in a final consultation to assess the candidate's readiness to receive a call. When a church in another presbytery extends a call, the presbytery of call ordinarily has the responsibility of examining candidates for ordination and the presbytery of care ordinarily ordains the candidate. Shared mutual accountability characterizes the preparation for ministry process. The inquirer or candidate shares responsibility for her or his movement through the process and for planning and evaluating her or his growth.

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

The presbytery, through the CPM, provides pastoral care, guidance, support, and evaluation of inquirers and candidates.

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

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

Preparation for Ministry Process - A General Overview

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

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

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

During both the inquiry phase and the candidacy phase, specific expected outcomes formulated in light of these five growth areas measure the individual's progress. It is important to understand the expected outcomes as essential goals rather than simply as minimum requirements to meet or papers to write. These expected outcomes serve as the focus of ongoing consultations among the inquirer or candidate, the session, and the presbytery's CPM.

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

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 a CPM
LIAISON	A CPM member assigned to be an inquirer's or candidate's contact with the CPM
PNC	Presbytery of New Covenant
SEIC	PC(USA) Study to Enrich Inquirers and Candidates, and its resource book, <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

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

**MANUAL FOR MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)
PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This manual is for use by members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of the Presbytery of New Covenant to:

- Provide continuity in the inquiry and candidacy process; and
- Give guidance when the Committee must make decisions about exceptional cases.

The CPM represents the presbytery as it guides the preparation of those preparing to become teaching elders. Section G-2.0601 of the *Book of Order* defines the purpose of the CPM:

It is important that those who are to be ordained as teaching elders receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become teaching elders and with their sessions and congregations.

This relationship shall be in two phases: inquiry and candidacy.

In directing inquirers and candidates through the process of preparing for the ministry, the CPM has the following goals and responsibilities:

- Supporting and guiding inquirers and candidates with understanding and sympathetic interest;
- Providing regular, open, candid, and sensitive communication and evaluation of inquirers' and candidates' progress in preparation for ministry as teaching elder, and expecting the same from inquirers and candidates;
- Providing specific written descriptions of requirements and a timeline for meeting inquirers' and candidates' responsibilities to this particular presbytery;
- 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.
- Receiving from inquirers and candidates regular reports concerning progress in studies and service to the church;
- 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;
- Conducting annual consultations and preparing jointly with inquirers and candidates a written report of each consultation with copies for the committee and the inquirers and candidates. (Though the New Form of Government does not require an annual consultation, the Presbytery of New Covenant continues its policy of having annual consultations for inquirers and candidates.)
- Maintaining an accurate and appropriately comprehensive file of inquirers' and candidates' records and

information regarding progress in preparation for ministry;

- Promptly processing requests for exceptions, transfers, and transfers of credentials as agreed to by the committee and the inquirer or candidate;
- Providing training to and partnering with sessions to provide guidance, nurture, structure, and care of applicants, candidates, and inquirers; and
- Administering financial aid available to the CPM.

ADOPTING AND AMENDING THIS MANUAL

Only a majority vote of the CPM shall adopt and amend policies and procedures of this manual.

STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee shall consist of three classes of ruling and teaching elders elected to serve three-year terms. Ruling and teaching elders shall have equal representation on the committee.

The CPM has been empowered by the presbytery to enroll an applicant as an inquirer on the day of the inquiry interview. Presbytery approves candidates as a whole upon recommendation by the CPM at the next Presbytery meeting following the candidacy interview.

MEETING DATES AND PLACES

The regular meeting date of the CPM is typically the fourth Saturday of each month. The CPM ordinarily meets at the Presbytery Center 4803 San Felipe Street, Houston, TX 77056 or virtually. Check the Presbytery website for dates, times, and locations of regular stated meetings of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

RECORD-KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Conversations between or among applicants, enrollees, inquirers, candidates, and the CPM are confidential. Information shared with a liaison is information to share with the entire CPM.

Psychological assessments/evaluations are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM treat these reports with extreme care.

In general, CPM members should retain only the files that pertain to candidates and inquirers for whom they serve as liaison. CPM members must dispose of files, or return them to the presbytery office when any of the following take place:

1. The CPM member rotates off the committee.
2. The candidate or inquirer to whom the files pertain is no longer under care.
3. The CPM member is not the liaison of the candidate or inquirer to whom the files pertain.

CARING FOR INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES

The CPM takes under its care persons who apply to become inquirers and candidates for the office of teaching elder. In caring for inquirers and candidates, the CPM engages in three major activities:

- Interviewing persons who apply for enrollment as inquirers and candidates;
- Conducting annual consultations with all inquirers and candidates under care of the CPM; and
- Assigning to each applicant, inquirer, and candidate under care of the CPM liaisons who provide individual nurture and guidance.

INTERVIEWS

Individuals under care of the CPM will normally have three interviews with the committee, not including annual consultations, to be:

- Enrolled as an inquirer;
- Enrolled as a candidate; and
- Certified ready to receive a call (ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call).

Persons seeking an interview with the CPM will be required to complete the necessary forms (listed in Appendix I-9) and supply the CPM with their responses at least one month before their scheduled appointments to meet with CPM. Type all original documentation in 10- to 12-point font.

At each interview with the CPM, the committee needs to assess inquirers and candidates as to their progress in preparation for the office of teaching elder. Appendices C-1, C-2, and C-3 provide tools to use to make such assessments.

Inquiry

The *Book of Order* defines the inquiry phase of the preparation for ministry process as follows (G2.0603):

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.

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 God might be calling him or her to serve the church as a teaching elder. 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.

Candidacy

The *Book of Order* defines the candidacy phase of this process as follows (G-2.0604):

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as teaching elders. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination.

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, including the psychological evaluation;
- Consider more closely the implications for the inquirer's life of continuing to prepare for the office of teaching elder; and
- Begin final preparations for serving the church as a teaching elder.

Final assessment

Becoming certified ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call, is the final phase in the process of preparing for ministry of teaching elder. The *Book of Order* defines this phase in G2.0607:

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a teaching elder without approval of the presbytery. The

presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:

- a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honestrepute, and sound judgment;
- b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;
- c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
- d. satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

In addition to the requirements outlined in the *Book of Order*, the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, 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:

- Pre-interview report (Form 3) for senior year identifying covenant agreements and responses;
- Previous annual consultation reports;
- Inquiry, candidacy, and final assessment application documentation;
- Field education reports;
- Clinical Pastoral Education reports;
- Seminary transcripts;
- Psychological assessment/evaluation report; and
- Ordination exams.

ANNUAL CONSULTATION

In the past, the *Book of Order* mandated an annual consultation for inquirers and candidates. The current Form of Government does not order this, but the Presbytery of New Covenant believes this is a wise practice to continue.

Schedule, location, and attendance

Annual consultations consist of an inquirer or candidate meeting with his/her liaison each year. The consultation may be on an individual basis at a time and place agreeable to both the inquirer or candidate and their liaison. Email Form 3 (Pre-consultation Report on Development Areas) to the inquirer/candidate to complete. Check references via email or phone. Meet with inquirer/candidate in person or via phone. Complete Form 4 (Report-on-Consultation) together and get appropriate signatures. The liaison makes a report at the next CPM meeting and gives the completed Form 4 to the CPM staff person to file.

LIAISON'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon first contact with an applicant for inquiry, the CPM appoints one member to be the applicant's liaison. A liaison'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. Liaisons have the following responsibilities:

1. Make a quarterly contact (at least) with the inquirer or candidate.
2. Make contact with the candidate one month before ordination exams, if the candidate is taking ordination exams.
3. Arrange and complete the annual consultation.
4. Make a report to the inquirer's or candidate's session liaison after the inquirer or candidate has met with the CPM.
5. Develop a line of communication with the session liaison on behalf of the inquirer or candidate.

CARING FOR STUDENTS IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Students Pursuing a Degree in Christian Education

In recognition of the important ministry of Christian Education, the CPM enters into a covenant with a student who is pursuing a master's degree in Christian education. However, the CPM does not consider that student an inquirer, but calls such a student an "enrollee." If the student determines that God is calling him or her to seek ordination to the ministry, 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, and the committee keeps their names separate from the listing of inquirers and candidates. See the Seminary Debt section below, and Appendix I-6.

Second-Career Students

The CPM is interviewing an increasing number of persons who are investigating a second career in ministry as a teaching elder. 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 are the same for first-career and second-career students, there are certain issues that might be of more concern to second-career students (e.g., realities about the job market, income expectations, validity of the call...).

The CPM concentrates on identifying, at the earliest possible moment, people who are considering ministry as a teaching elder, so the CPM can help them understand the realities and implications of the call to ministry.

Limits to the Care Process

See Appendix I-4.

SEMINARY DEBT

The Presbytery of New Covenant candidate indebtedness policy is available in Appendix I-6

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:

- Meeting with sessions and session liaisons at the request of session or when the CPM receives an inquirer or candidate; and
- Providing written guidelines for session liaisons outlining what the CPM expects of inquirers and candidates. These guidelines are available in the *Handbook for Sessions* section of this manual.

HANDBOOK FOR SESSIONS

SESSION'S ROLE IN THE PREPARATION 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 as a teaching elder. 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.

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS

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 in the candidacy phase.

Beginning the process

- A member of your church who begins to sense that he or she is called to ministry as a teaching elder approaches his or her pastor for discussion, clarity, and guidance.
- If your church has not had an orientation to the preparation for ministry process within one year, the CPM can meet with the session for an overview of the preparation for ministry process.

Session endorsement

1. The applicant completes Form 1A, *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer*; Form 1B, *Questions for Reflection*; and Form 1C, *Financial Planning for Theological Education*. The applicant then obtains three letters of recommendation based on Form 1E *Reference Guide, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Presbytery of New Covenant*, and signs the *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates under Care of Presbytery of New Covenant*. (See Appendix I-8 for the *Agreement* and Appendix I-9 for a description of the forms used in the preparation for ministry process.) Finally, the applicant submits the documents to the session, which then meets with the applicant to help him or her discern a call to ministry.
2. Session either recommends the applicant for inquiry or redirects him or her to another vocation and ministry.
3. If session recommends the applicant's inquiry, it assigns one person to be a liaison between the applicant and the session. See *Appointing a Session Liaison* below.
4. The session completes Form 1D, *Session Evaluation and Recommendation*, and the applicant and the moderator of session sign Presbytery of New Covenant Form 2B, *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*.

Enrolling as an inquirer

- The applicant submits Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, and 2B, as well as three letters of recommendation based on Form 1E *Reference Guide, Committee on Preparation for Ministry Presbytery of New Covenant*, and the signed *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates under Care of Presbytery of New Covenant* (See Appendix I-8), to the CPM. He or she also arranges for official post-secondary transcripts (not copies) to go to the CPM, and meets with the CPM, which then decides whether to enroll the member as an inquirer.
- If approved, the inquirer and the CPM complete Form 2A, *Report of Consultation Regarding Application*.
- During the inquiry phase, the inquirer begins his or her seminary education, and attends annual consultation(s) with the CPM. During this phase, the inquirer also participates in a psychological
- assessment to explore further his or her sense of call and gifts for ministry. The CPM covers one-third of the full cost of the assessment, session covers another third, and the inquirer covers the balance (although sessions often cover this as well).
- The inquirer will remain in the inquiry phase for a minimum of one year.

Enrolling as a candidate

1. After discerning that he or she is ready to become a candidate for teaching elder, the inquirer completes Form SA, *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate*, and prepares the *Required Candidacy Application Documents*. See Appendix C-4.
2. The inquirer 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 as a teaching elder.
3. The inquirer submits Form SA and the *Required Candidacy Application Documents* to the CPM (See Appendix C-4).
4. The inquirer arranges to have the most recent official transcript sent to the CPM from the theological institution.
5. The inquirer meets with the CPM to review the results of inquiry.
6. If recommended by the CPM, the inquirer presents to Presbytery his or her statement of Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry.
7. Presbytery votes to receive the inquirer as a candidate.
8. During the candidacy phase, the candidate completes his or her seminary education, completes ordination exams and a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experience, typically has a field experience in another (different) congregation, and attends annual consultation(s) with the CPM.

Final assessment

Near the end of the candidacy year, and when the candidate has completed or is close to completing seminary education, he or she may apply to the CPM for certification as ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. If certified, the candidate may begin circulating a Personal Information Form (PIF). The presbytery may examine the candidate for ordination upon receiving a call.

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. Quite often, potential inquirers are longstanding members of a particular Presbyterian church that nurtured them in the faith, and where their sense of call grows 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 a significant responsibility and can be full of 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.

SPIRITUAL SUPPORT OF INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES

There are many ways that a session can support inquirers and candidates. Some suggestions follow:

1. Pray for them. List inquirers and candidates in your newsletter and worship bulletins and encourage your congregation to pray for them daily.
2. Keep them in touch with their 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.
3. Recognize each milestone in the preparation process by offering a special prayer or liturgy of celebration in worship.
4. 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.
5. Support their families. If an inquirer or candidate has a spouse or children, remember them with cards and letters.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES

Support your inquirers and candidates financially as much as possible. Most seminarians have incurred significant debt

by the time they graduate. In many cases, seminary debt is disproportionate to the income teaching elders 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 the psychological assessment that 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; or
- Contributing to the Theological Education Fund for Presbyterian seminaries.

ELIGIBILITY FOR INQUIRY

A person who requests the session's recommendation for inquiry must have been a member of your church for at least six months (G-2.0602). If this is the person's first affiliation with a Presbyterian church, we recommend membership in a Presbyterian congregation of least two years before applying for inquiry.

SESSION ORIENTATION

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

INTERVIEWING AN APPLICANT FOR INQUIRY

The session has the significant responsibility of deciding whether to commend to Presbytery members of their congregation who seek to be ordained to the ministry as a teaching elder. 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:

- Does the person's faith enlighten life or obscure it? (Does faith build bridges or walls?)
- 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?
- Does the person have the talents to be a teaching elder, 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?
- 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.

Session must answer the following questions to submit to the CPM on Form 1D, *Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as Inquirer*:

- What personal qualities are evidence of a healthy and vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?
- How is the individual currently expressing that faith through their participation in the worship, life, and mission of this congregation?
- What motivations, whether positive or negative, impel the sense of call: service to God and the world? Compassion for God's children? Guilt? A need for power and status?
- What real and potential talents for ministry are evident in this individual (e.g., the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, leadership or administrative abilities)?
- What is the level and adequacy of the individual's academic interest, leadership skills, cross-cultural competencies, emotional intelligence, and motivations?
- What is the evidence of his or her physical health and stamina?
- What is this evidence of his or her emotional well-being?

- What is the evidence of his or her self-discipline?
- Does the individual have a reasonable plan to finance his or her theological education?

These questions are to assist the session both to talk 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 "deja vu" mindset. Avoid this attitude and approach at all costs! 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 teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA). The session must decide whether to endorse an applicant for enrollment as an inquirer. Ruling elders serving on session must keep in mind the serious implications of their assessments and recommendations regarding enrollment, as they are ultimately determining future PC(USA) 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.

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:

- A ruling elder in service on the session;
- A person who knows the inquirer or candidate;
- Someone who can, ideally, see the inquirer through the entire process; and
- Someone who will take his or her role seriously.

The session liaison is generally responsible for the following:

Knowing the steps in the process of preparation for ministry in the PC(USA). (See the *Book of Order*, G-2.06.);

- Supporting the inquirer or candidate and ensuring continual care;
- Being proactive in their communications and relationships with inquirers and candidates, and maintaining communication with the inquirer or candidate on a monthly basis while that individual is in seminary, including providing information about financial support;
- Functioning as a contact person for the inquirer or candidate with the session;
- Motivating the supporting congregation by highlighting significant academic and life achievements of the inquirer or candidate in the newsletter and bulletin;
- Seeing that any special gifts for the inquirer or candidate and family are received;
- Communicating concerns about the inquirer or candidate to the CPM; and
- Advocating for the inquirer or candidate but deferring to the CPM when there is a difference of opinion.

Additional responsibilities of the appointed session liaison are in Appendix S-1.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CANDIDACY

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 the Presbytery of New Covenant requires that inquirers complete at least one field education experience [either Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or supervised placement] before applying for candidacy.

INTERVIEWING AN APPLICANT FOR CANDIDACY

An inquirer applies for candidacy by completing form 5A, *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate*, and prepares the *Required Candidacy Application Documents*. See Appendix C-4. Session should review the statements in these documents

carefully with the inquirer. Some questions you might consider asking are in Appendix C-1.

Session is to complete Form 5B, *Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate*, and attach a letter explaining the rationale for the session's action in light of the inquirer's "suitability for ministry" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0603). The applicant, the moderator of session, and witnesses sign Presbytery of New Covenant Form 5D, *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*.

HANDBOOK FOR INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES

OVERVIEW AND TIMING

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS

The *Book of Order* and the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church(U.S.A.)* define the process of preparation for ministry (<http://oga.pcusa.org>):

- Inquiry phase (G-2.0603);
- Candidacy phase (G-2.0604); and
- Final assessment (G-2.0607)

You need to read and understand these requirements as early as possible in your ordination process.

YOUR APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

Because the candidacy phase of the preparation for ministry process is required to be one year, you need to plan carefully 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 Covenant meets three times a year. For the presbytery to receive you as a candidate at one of these meetings, you need to have met with the CPM by the month preceding the presbytery meeting, and you need to have your paperwork to the CPM at least one month before this meeting.

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

EXPECTATIONS OF THE CPM

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, remember to present yourself professionally. The CPM is committed to treating all inquirers and candidates with professionalism and respect and expects the same from those under its care.

Confidentiality

Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers, candidates and the CPM are confidential. Information shared with a liaison is information shared with the entire CPM.

Psychological assessments/evaluations are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately, at the termination or completion of the process.

Deadlines

An applicant, inquirer, or candidate who desires to schedule an appointment or interview with CPM must confer with the Moderator of CPM about availability of appointment times and then must submit all paperwork (forms, testing, information, recommendations...) one month before the confirmed appointment. Type all original documentation in 10 to 12-point font. The CPM generally meets on the fourth Saturday of each month. Please contact the moderator of the CPM if you have any questions about when your paperwork is due.

PLANNING YOUR SEMINARY EDUCATION

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

- The PC(USA) *Book of Order*, section G-2.0607c;
- The PC(USA), as defined in the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA)*, available at www.pcusa.org;
- Your theological institution; and
- The CPM of Presbytery of New Covenant.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE PC(USA)

The *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* describes the education requirements for preparation for the office of teaching elder. These include courses in:

- Greek;
- Hebrew;
- Old Testament exegesis; and
- New Testament exegesis.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

All inquirers and candidates will typically 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. The inquirer must satisfactorily complete one of these before they will be eligible to apply for candidacy. The CPM will grant waivers at its discretion.

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

- Presbyterian polity;
- Reformed theology; and
- Preaching/homiletics.

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. See Appendix I-2.

CPE AND SACRAMENTS

An issue that nearly all candidates and inquirers face during their unit of CPE is how to handle requests from patients asking 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 chaplains who have not been ordained as teaching elders to administer the sacraments, so you need to discuss with your CPE supervisor strategies for arranging for the services of a teaching elder. The CPM does not have the authority, on behalf of presbytery, to authorize you to do so. Any suggestion in the *Book of Order* that a ruling elder might be authorized to preside at the Lord's Supper is intended for use in a parish setting under supervision of a teaching elder.

Sometimes emergencies occur 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 in an emergency when others call on you 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

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

- Reformed creeds and confessions; and
- Ordination exam preparation in the form of a class, study group, or tutorial courses in these subjects might 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, the presbytery expects that inquirers and candidates will use extreme discretion in this matter and use no more than three in total. The presbytery also expects that inquirers and candidates use such choices for core courses (languages, theology, or Biblical exegesis) only in consultation with the CPM.

NON-PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARIES

See Appendix I-1.

INQUIRY PROCESS

The Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church {U.S.A.} outlines the process for applying for inquiry and the requirements of the inquiry stage of the preparation for ministry process. 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.

APPLYING FOR INQUIRY

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 six months before applying for inquiry status.

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 the *Session Orientation* section of this manual for more information.

Meeting with session

Before meeting with session, you need to complete Form 1A, *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer*; Form 1B, *Questions for Reflection*; and Form 1C, *Financial Planning for Theological Education*. Obtain three letters of reference based on Form 1E *Reference Guide, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Presbytery of New Covenant*, including someone from your church, a former employer, and a peer or former professor or school administrator. Read and sign the *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates under Care of Presbytery of New Covenant* (Appendix A-8). Make a copy of the forms and letters for your records and submit the forms to your church's clerk of session. The session completes Form 1D, *Session Evaluation and Recommendation*. You, the moderator of session, and witnesses sign Presbytery of New Covenant Form 2B, *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*. All materials should be in 10 to 12-point font.

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 know their obligations to you while you are under care of the Presbytery of New Covenant. 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.

MEETING WITH THE CPM

Requirements

You need to provide the CPM the following one month before your interview:

- Forms IA, IB, IC, and ID, and *Presbytery of New Covenant* Form 2B and 2C;
- A signed *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates under Care of Presbytery of New Covenant* (Appendix I-8);
- Three letters of reference based on the *Reference Guide, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Presbytery of New Covenant* (Form 1E), including someone from your church, a former employer, and a peer or former professor or school administrator;
- Official transcripts of all academic work completed beyond high school from the educational institution(s) (not copies); and
- A completed Background Check Authorization Form

You must send these documents to the CPM by either email or by US Postal Service. (Do not send multiple copies.) Email should go to the staff person for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry in the presbytery office. Call the presbytery office at 713-526-2585 for the appropriate email address. The mailing address is:

Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of New Covenant
4803 San Felipe Street
Houston, TX 77056

When you meet with the CPM for your inquiry interview, the committee's main goal will be to get to know you better and to help you discern and better understand your sense of call. Before 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 C-1, *Interview Questions for Inquirers*.

Your CPM liaison

Soon after you contact the CPM to apply for inquiry, the CPM will assign you a liaison, 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. Do not hesitate to contact your liaison whenever you have questions or need any particular guidance about the preparation for ministry process.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

After meeting with the CPM for your inquiry interview, you need to participate in a psychological assessment. To arrange for this assessment, contact the staff person for the CPM at the presbytery office.

There is a fee for this service, and you are responsible for one-third of it. The testing service usually bills one-third of the cost directly to the CPM. The CPM recommends that your church help with paying for the other third.

The CPM will not accept this assessment/evaluation if it is more than two years old at the time of your interview.

Background Check

A background check will be completed following approval as an inquirer

CANDIDACY PROCESS

APPLYING FOR CANDIDACY

Requirements

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.

Meeting with session

As with applying for inquiry, before you can apply to the CPM for candidacy, you need to meet you're your church's session and obtain their recommendation. Complete Form 5A, *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate*, and prepare the *Required Candidacy Application Documents*. See Appendix C-4.

The session completes Form 5B, *Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate*, and submits it to the CPM. You, the moderator of session, and witnesses sign the Presbytery of New Covenant Form 5D, *Covenant*

Agreement and Candidate Release.

Submitting candidacy papers

Send the following to the CPM at the presbytery Office in Houston at least one month before your scheduled interview:

- Form 5A Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate;
- Form 5B Session Evaluation and Recommendation;
- Presbytery of New Covenant Form 5D Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release;
- Your written *Required Candidacy Application Documents*; and
- Arrange to have your theological institution send your current official transcript to the CPM (not a copy).
- A copy of your field education evaluation.

When you meet with the CPM for your candidacy interview, the committee 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. Before your interview, members of the CPM will have read your paperwork. Many of the questions will be follow-ups to the paperwork you submit to the CPM.

In addition to answering the questions about the statements that you submit with your application for candidacy, you should also be prepared to answer questions like those listed in *Examining Inquirers for Candidacy* (Appendix C-1).

EXAMINATION BEFORE PRESBYTERY

If the CPM recommends you for candidacy, you will need to appear on the floor of presbytery for examination on 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 above topics.

This statement must be limited to three minutes or less, so it is imperative that you write it down and practice saying it aloud. The fact that we are limiting you to three 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. You may invite your pastor to deliver the charge to candidates, but the CPM moderator usually does it. You will receive complete instructions for this meeting from the CPM moderator after the CPM has approved your application for candidacy.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

Becoming certified ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call, is the final phase in the process of preparing for ministry of teaching elder. The *Book of Order* defines this phase in G-2.0607:

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a teaching elder without approval of the presbytery. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:

- a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;*
- a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the*

presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and

- c. *satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.*

APPLYING FOR FINAL ASSESSMENT

Requirements

- Before applying for final assessment, you must have met the following requirements:
- Typically, been a candidate for at least one year;
- Completed both CPE and one supervised internship in a PC(USA) congregation and submitted evaluations to the CPM;
- Passed all ordination exams (Bible Content, Exegesis, Theology, Polity, and Worship and Sacraments; and
- Graduated from seminary or be nearing graduation, including having completed courses in Presbyterian polity, Reformed theology, preaching/homiletics, and worship and sacraments.

See Appendix I-5 for alternative examination procedures if you have failed on three attempts to receive a satisfactory grade on an ordination exam.

Submitting final assessment papers

Before meeting with the CPM, you need to submit the following paperwork (typed, 10 to 12-point font) at least one month before your appointment for final assessment. See Appendix I-3:

- Any required field education report that has not previously been submitted;
- Supervisor reports from any additional internship/ministry opportunities beyond those required, if applicable;
- 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 theological paper;
- A complete draft of your PIF;
- An official final transcript (not a copy) from your seminary (or your most recent transcript if you are in your last semester); and
- A one-page explanation describing how the courses that you have taken during seminary have satisfied the required classes in Presbyterian polity, Reformed theology, preaching/homiletics, worship and sacraments, Hebrew, Greek, and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek.

MEETING WITH THE CPM

When you meet with the CPM for final assessment, the committee may ask you to preach the sermon you submitted in writing. You should prepare a brief service of worship including liturgy, prayer, and possibly a hymn for the CPM meeting. In the course of the interview, the committee will review your sermon and the paperwork you submitted.

FINANCIAL AID

Policy

The CPM will provide financial aid only to persons enrolled in the Presbytery of New Covenant 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.

1. Enrollment status should be as a full-time student, although the CPM will consider part-time students.
2. The committee will consider students attending a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) summer program.
3. The committee will consider students in special circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

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 knows the nature of this partnership, and the CPM hopes that it results in financial as well as spiritual support.

OTHER SOURCES OF AID

Other sources of financial aid are available from the following:

- PC(USA) at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/financialaid/>
- Synod of the Sun at <https://www.synodsun.org/scholarship-application>
- Presbytery of New Covenant - limited grants from the Judith A. Snyder Memorial Fund
- The financial aid office at your seminary

EXPENSES

Travel to your regular interviews

Ordinarily an applicant will have three regular interviews with CPM:

- To become an inquirer;
- To be approved by CPM to become a candidate; and
- For final assessment. This must take place before any candidate can circulate a Personal Information Form (PIF) or have any official conversations with any PNC (Pastor Nominating Committees) about seeking a call.

CPM will pay half of your travel expenses to these interviews on the following basis. If you:

- Drive, we will pay you at the current presbytery rate.
- Are coming from more than 250 miles away, you may arrange a flight. You must complete avoucher with attached receipts on the day of your interview.

The CPM encourages candidates and inquirers also to seek travel assistance from their church's session.

Travel to a presbytery meeting to become a candidate

If CPM approves you to become a candidate, you will then be required to appear before presbytery at one of the three regular stated meetings. CPM will pay half of your travel expenses to the site of that meeting by car or plane, based on the criteria stated above. You must complete a voucher with attached receipts on the day of the meeting.

CPE

As stated in the *Applying for Initial Assessment* section of this manual, you must 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 \$1,000.

Ordination Exams

Upon application by a candidate, CPM will pay for the first round of ordination exams for candidates under care.

ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS

Purpose

The *Book of Order* previously mandated an annual consultation for inquirers and candidates. While the current Form of Government does not require this, the Presbytery of New Covenant believes it is a wise practice to continue.

The purpose of the annual consultation of the Presbytery of New Covenant's CPM is to assess progress toward preparation for ordered ministry, to nurture and support the inquirer/candidate, and to set goals and discuss resources for moving forward in their education and the process towards ordination. Each year the inquirer/candidate will meet with his/her liaison in person or via phone or video chat.

Participation

All persons enrolled (including certified candidates who have not yet received a call) are required to complete an annual consultation. An inquirer or candidate may not proceed in the preparation process until the completion of an annual consultation and the CPM votes to continue the period of inquiry or candidacy. If an annual consultation is not completed, the timing of the preparation process stops on January 1 and will not begin again until the completion of an annual consultation and the CPM vote to continue the period of inquiry or candidacy. The annual consultation shall not take the place of interviews for inquiry, candidacy, or final assessment.

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. *The Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* outlines these requirements and goals.

BIBLE CONTENT EXAM

Inquirers ordinarily take the Bible Content exam during the first year of seminary. This exam is available to take several times each year. Permission from the CPM is not required to take this exam. You can find more information and register for the exam at www.pcusa.org/prep4min.

POLITY, WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS, THEOLOGY, AND EXEGESIS EXAMS

You will normally take the remaining ordination exams in your senior year in seminary. They are available to take four times a year: January, April, July, and October. You need to obtain permission of the CPM to take these exams. When you register for the exams, a notification will go to the CPM chair, who will approve the exam online.

READING LIST FOR ORDINATION EXAMS

For candidates and prospective transfers who feel the need to review in one or more areas before their examination, following is a list of resources that members of the committee have found helpful. This list is for use on an "as needed" basis. It is not a required reading list, with the exception of those listed below under *Reformed understandings of worship and the sacraments*.

Basic documents

The committee assumes familiarity with the following:

- Bible;
- *Book of Confessions* (most recent); and
- *Book of Order* (most recent).

General works on the Reformed/Presbyterian tradition

- *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith*, Donald McKim, editor
- *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, editor
- *Presbyterian Creeds: A Guide to the Book of Confessions*, Jack Rogers

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

Theology: Foundational works and recent Reformed summaries

- *Institutes 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

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

Polity

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

FORMS AND APPENDICES

Date: _____

Form 1A

Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer

Name of applicant: _____
(family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ Alt phone: _____
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

Permanent address: _____
(if same, write 'same') (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Gender: _____ Date of birth: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____

Current church membership: _____
(name of church)

Address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Date received as a member: _____ Number of members: _____

Have you ever applied to a presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer or candidate? _____

If yes, was enrolled as: _____ in _____ presbytery

From _____ to _____

In what church occupation are you interested in at this time? _____
(e.g. pastor, youth minister, mission worker, educator)

Present or most recent school attended: _____

Location: _____ Date of graduation: _____

Applicant's Statement

I hereby apply to be enrolled by _____ Presbytery as an inquirer.
(presbytery name)

_____ I certify no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me.

_____ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer instead on the attachment a description of the complaint and/or outcome of the situation with explanatory comments.

I certify that the above statement and other information in this application are true and correct. I promise to participate diligently and wholeheartedly with the session and the presbytery in exploring my vocation.

Applicant's signature: _____
(date)

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1A

Family Situation

Current marital status: _____ Ages of any children in the home: _____

Are you and your household members open to the possibility of relocation in conjunction with theological studies and/or accepting a ministry position? _____

If you are limited in your ability to relocate, please describe on the following lines:

Church Background

Year of baptism: _____ Year of your confirmation/profession of faith: _____

Most recent church affiliations (include up to three):

Dates of participation:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Have you been ordained as a ruling elder in the PC(U.S.A.)? _____

Date: _____

Have you been ordained as a deacon in the PC(U.S.A.)? _____

Date: _____

Have you been ordained in another denomination? _____

Date: _____

If so, name of denomination: _____

Office: _____

List up to five areas of involvement in the life and mission of the church, either as a participant or leader, that are most significant in your sense of call to the role of teaching elder. Mark current involvements with an asterisk.

Area of involvement:

Role:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1A

Academic Information

List the academic institutions you have attended, beginning with college, and supply the information requested in each column. If you are currently pursuing an educational program, indicate your academic classification in the final column.

Institution	Dates attended	Program/major	GPA	Diploma/degree
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Briefly describe your academic interests/gifts by completing the following table:

	Subjects in which you did your best academic work:	Subjects in which you did less well:
College:	_____	_____
Graduate school:	_____	_____
Professional school:	_____	_____
Other training:	_____	_____

Have you ever had an individualized educational program (IEP)? _____

If so, what accommodations did the IEP include?

On the space provided, list your academic honors, awards, special recognitions, sports, organizations and extracurricular activities that have been most meaningful:

Occupational History

Beginning with your current or most recent position, list all full time or part time jobs in which you have been employed. Include the five most, recent up to the past 20 years. Place a PT beside the title of part time jobs.

Job title	Dates	What did you enjoy most?	What did you enjoy least?
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1A

References

References should include at least two of the following: someone from your church; a former employer; a peer; or a former professor or school administrator.

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Date: _____

Form 1B

Questions for Reflection

Name: _____
(family) *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Reflect on the following questions and then write responses in the space provided (limited to about 275 words).

1. Describe yourself as a person.

2. Describe briefly your understanding of what it means to you to be an inquirer. Please include the most important events, experiences and persons that have prompted you to apply to become an inquirer.

3. Write a brief statement of your personal faith describing what you believe about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and your relationship to them.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1B

4. What does it mean to you to be Presbyterian?

5. Describe your current spiritual practices and disciplines.

6. Who/what is your ideal/role model for ministry? What do you expect in your ministry? What aspect of ministry do you find least interesting?

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1B

7. What are you doing to maintain your physical and emotional health?

8. Comment on what have been/are some of your more meaningful interests and hobbies.

9. After completing and reviewing Form 1C of this application to be received as an inquirer, briefly discuss how you plan to finance your theological education.

Signature: _____

(date)

FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Name: _____

Date: _____

On the following pages, enter descriptions in underlined fields and whole dollar amounts in shaded fields as needed. Other fields will automatically tabulate.

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

	Monthly Total	Annual Total	Overall Totals	Projected Need
Income				
Student earnings				
Spouse earnings				
Guaranteed income (Social Security, VA, etc.)				
Child Support payments received				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Income:	\$0	\$0		
Other Assistance				
Home Church/Congregational support				
Family/Friends support				
Presbytery support				
PCUSA scholarships/loans				
Foundations or Corporations grants				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Other Assistance:		\$0		
Current Assets				
Cash and savings				
Investments (CDs, stocks, etc.)				
Retirement savings (IRAs, 401Ks, etc.)				
Real Estate				
Automobiles (value over any amount owed)				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Current Assets:			\$0	
Total Estimated Financial Resources:			\$0	

Name: _____

ESTIMATED EXPENSES

	Monthly Total	Annual Total	Overall Totals	Projected Need
Educational Expenses				
Annual tuition				
Special academic programs (CPE, intern, etc.)				
Fees				
Books				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Educational Expenses:				
			\$0	
Living Expenses				
Rent/mortgage payment				
Utilities			\$0	
Food & household supplies			\$0	
Automobile (payments, insurance, fuel, etc.)			\$0	
Telecommunications (phone, cell, online, etc.)			\$0	
Clothing			\$0	
Incidentals			\$0	
Health insurance (only "out of pocket" expense)			\$0	
Other medical/dental			\$0	
Transportation:			\$0	
Dependent allowance			\$0	
Child Care			\$0	
Child Support payments			\$0	
Life insurance premiums			\$0	
Charitable donations			\$0	
Other (specify): _____			\$0	
Other (specify): _____			\$0	
Total Living Expenses:				
	\$0			
Total Estimated Expenses:			\$0	
Total Income less Expenses:				\$0

Name: _____

OTHER INFORMATION

Indebtedness Applicant's (and spouse's or prospective spouse's) current indebtedness. Report principal amounts and related monthly payments.

Student Loans:	<i>Combine Undergrad/Grad</i>	Applicant		(Prospective) Spouse		Total Family Debt
		Balance of Principal	Monthly Payment	Balance of Principal	Monthly Payment	
	Fed. Subsidized Stafford					\$0
	Fed. Unsubsidized Stafford					\$0
	Federal Perkins Loans					\$0
	PC(USA) Loans					\$0
	Loans from parents/family					\$0
	Other educational loans					\$0
	Estimated future loans					\$0
	Totals:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-educational: <i>List mortgage, credit cards, etc</i>						
	_____					\$0
	_____					\$0
	_____					\$0
	_____					\$0
	_____					\$0
	_____					\$0
	Totals:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Combined indebtedness totals:		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Assets Non-seminary scholarships (grants) for which you have applied (mark with '*') or have received.

<i>Source of Assistance</i>	Amount Fall Term	Amount Spring Term

Totals:	\$0	\$0

I certify that the information contained on all sheets of this form is a true and accurate statement of my financial circumstances and is made in good faith.

Signature _____

Date _____

Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as an Inquirer

The session of _____
(name of church) (city) (state)
 met with _____ on _____ and submits its
(name of applicant) (date)
 report on the following pages.

The session endorses ____ / does not endorse ____ this applicant's request to be enrolled as an inquirer.

Liaison

The session has appointed the following ruling elder to act as a liaison with this individual and with the presbytery's committee, and to participate with the individual and the presbytery as they explore and evaluate his/her progress.

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ (h/o/m) Alt phone: _____ (h/o/m)

Email: _____

This report was prepared for the session by:

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Main phone: _____ (h/o/m) Alt phone: _____ (h/o/m)

Email: _____

Report on Session's Consultation with Applicant

To assist the presbytery in reaching its decision regarding whether to enroll the applicant as an inquirer, please provide brief responses to the following issues for consideration when consulting with a prospective inquirer (see *Advisory Handbook*, pp. 68). Since this is the beginning of the process, primary attention should be given at this time to evaluating natural gifts, quality of commitment, strength of motivation, and potential for growth. Each of these issues should be pursued at greater depth during the period of inquiry.

1. What personal qualities are evidence of a healthy and vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 1D

6. What is the evidence of his or her physical health and stamina?

7. What is this evidence of his or her emotional well-being?

8. What is the evidence of his or her self-discipline?

9. Does the individual have a reasonable plan to finance his or her theological education?

*Reference Guide for Letter of Recommendation
for Person Applying as Inquirer
Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of New Covenant*

Form 1E

Recommendation for (applicant's name): _____ Date submitted: _____

Name of person giving this reference is: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____ E-Mail: _____

What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Are you a Minister of Word and Sacrament? Yes _____ No _____
Are you a member in good standing of the Presbytery of New Covenant? Yes _____ No _____
Are you the applicant's Pastor? Yes _____ No _____

If you are a Minister of the Word and Sacrament and a member of the Presbytery of New Covenant, would you be willing to serve as the applicant's mentor/liaison, if asked? Yes _____ No _____

Are you an ordained Ruling Elder? Yes _____ No _____
Are you a member of the applicant's congregation? Yes _____ No _____

Please confirm that you are Not a member of the applicant's family. I am not _____

The person named above is seeking to become an Inquirer in the Presbytery of New Covenant. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry would appreciate your candid response to the following questions:

1. To what extent does the applicant adhere to Christ's teachings?

2. What is your experience of the applicant's commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

3. What strengths, special gifts, talents, and skills does the applicant exhibit for service as a Minister of Word and Sacrament?

4. What is the most recent example of the applicant's service to their congregation?

5. If the applicant were your Minister of Word and Sacrament, what specific areas would you wish him or her to improve?

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Send your responses directly to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the following address:
Presbytery of New Covenant Attn: Coordinator for Committee on Preparation for Ministry at
4803 San Felipe Street, Houston, TX 77056.

Report of Consultation Regarding Application to become an Inquirer

The committee/commission of _____ met with _____
(name of presbytery)
_____ on _____ and _____
(name of applicant) *(date)*
submits the following report.

The committee/commission recommends ____ /does not recommend ____ the applicant to be enrolled by the presbytery as an inquirer.

Liaison

The presbytery’s committee has appointed the following person to act as a liaison with the inquirer and with the committee and participate with the inquirer and the committee as they explore and evaluate his or her progress.

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Main phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

Agreement on Further Growth Areas

We have reviewed and jointly agree to the growth objectives for the next review period, as reported below.

Signature of inquirer: _____
(date)

Signature of committee liaison: _____
(date)

Signature of committee moderator: _____
(date)

Indicate the stage of theological education for which this report applies: _____

Growth Objectives

A. In the area of education for ministry

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 2A

B. In the area of spiritual development

C. In the area of interpersonal relations

D. In the area of personal growth

E. In the area of professional development

Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release

I, _____ have read and discussed the goals and responsibilities of both inquirers and the presbytery with it's committee/commission. I do hereby wish to be enrolled in the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter "Church") with the understanding that I subject myself to the guidance, counsel and disciplines of the Church as represented by the presbytery and its committee/commission overseeing preparation for ministry. I fully agree and understand that the decision of the presbytery's committee/commission regarding my suitability for ministry may involve questions and/or inquiries that are both personal and private, and I hereby release the Church and its committees, agents and representatives from any claims, causes, or actions, which may arise from said inquiries and answers received to such inquiries or any uses made of such answers. Further I grant permission to the presbytery's committee/commission to contact any person listed by me as a reference or any other person not so listed to discuss my "suitability for ordered ministry" (G-2.0603).

I covenant with God, the session, and the presbytery to rely upon the grace of God; to maintain a Christian character and conduct; and to be diligent and faithful in pursuing my call and in preparing for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. By my signature, I hereby certify that this covenant agreement and release is fully understood by me, and I sign it understanding that I will be bound by its terms.

Signature of inquirer: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

The session covenants to be a faithful partner with you in this relationship and to support, to care and to nurture you with love as you discern your call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of session: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

The presbytery covenants to be a faithful and just partner with you in this relationship and to support, to guide, to nurture and to evaluate you with an understanding and sympathetic interest as you discern your call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of the presbytery's committee/commission: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

Moderator of the presbytery's committee/commission will mail copies of this page to all parties signing document and the stated clerk of the presbytery.

APPENDIX I-8
AGREEMENT FOR THOSE UNDER CARE OF PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

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

1. The total preparation for ministry process will last at least two years, at least one year of which must be in the candidacy phase.
2. The start of the two-year preparation period begins when the CPM enrolls the person as an inquirer, while the required one year of candidacy begins when Presbytery receives and enrolls the person as a candidate at a meeting of the Committee.
3. No guarantee is implied that enrollment in the inquiry phase will be followed automatically by admission to the candidacy phase. Consider admission to the inquiry phase a "wide gate." Then consider admission to the candidacy phase a "narrow gate" wherein progress will be examined critically and the questioning will be of a more specific, theological nature.
4. Ordinarily, inquirers should 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. The CPM will grant waivers only at its discretion.
5. The purpose of the CPM is to advise, support, and nurture those under care, but it is the inquirer's/candidate's responsibility ultimately to be knowledgeable of and adhere to the process outlined in the CPM manual, including any special requirements of the Presbytery of New Covenant or its CPM, and to meet all deadlines in a timely manner.
6. The inquirer/candidate should be available for all subsequent meetings with the CPM or its designees, especially the annual consultation required each year while under care.
7. The provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-2.06), among other applicable requirements of the *Book of Order*, will govern the inquirer's/candidate's eventual ordination to the ministry as a teaching elder.
8. The CPM reserves the right and responsibility to place additional requirements as it sees necessary during periodic evaluations of the inquirer's/candidate's progress.
9. Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers and candidates and the CPM are confidential. Information shared with a liaison is information shared with the entire CPM. Psychological

assessments/evaluations are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately on termination or completion of the process. The original report will remain in the inquirer's/candidate's permanent file.

10. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate must adhere to the Presbytery of New Covenant's policy against sexual misconduct. A copy of this policy is available through the Presbytery office.
11. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate might incur substantial debt, only a portion of which support from the Presbytery of New Covenant will defray. Limited financial support is available from the Presbytery of New Covenant.
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 Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), only those requirements placed by the Presbytery of New Covenant and its CPM are in effect. The requirements of other presbyteries are neither pertinent nor applicable.
14. The inquirer/candidate will arrange for and sign appropriate releases of information with his/her seminary to allow CPM and seminary staff to communicate about the inquirer's/candidate's course work, performance, and adjustment. (Presbytery of New Covenant Form 2B, *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*; and Presbytery of New Covenant Form SD, *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*, which are required by the CPM, may be sufficient.)

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: _____

Date: _____

Form 3

Pre-consultation Report on Development Areas

Name: _____
(family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

Please return this form by _____ to _____ for your consultation
(date) (moderator of the presbytery's committee)

at _____ on _____
(time) (date)

Current References for Progress in this Reporting Period

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Ordination Exams Update

If you have satisfied the requirement in the following examination areas, mark them with an "S"; otherwise, indicate when you intend to take the exam(s).

Bible content	_____	Bible Exegesis	_____	Polity	_____
Theology	_____	Worship & Sacraments	_____		

Reflections

If you have been enrolled in seminary during the reporting period, have your theological institution send to your committee/commission moderator a transcript of your grades and any reports on field education or internships.

In the sections below, please reflect on and respond briefly to the areas of growth objectives agreed upon at your last committee/commission consultation. In addition to the specific responses requested in each section, list the agreed upon growth objective(s) from the previous consultation (from either Form 2A or Form 4), indicate what particular things you have done to achieve each objective, and evaluate your progress in each area.

A. Education for Ministry:

Fill in the courses you have completed during the reporting period or are currently taking in the following areas:

Bible	_____	_____	_____
History	_____	_____	_____
Theology	_____	_____	_____
Practical	_____	_____	_____
Language/other	_____	_____	_____

B. Spiritual Development: Briefly describe your spiritual disciplines, including your participation in the worship and mission of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) congregation.

C. Interpersonal relations: Describe your relationship with your peers, authority figures, family, and others who are significant to you. What are the implications of those relationships for your ministry?

D. Personal Growth: Describe recent experiences of emotional impact, if any, and how you dealt with them. Comment on areas in which you believe you are growing and identify areas in which you feel the need for progress.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 3

E. Professional development: Describe your participation in field education or other experiences which have contributed to your professional development.

Looking Ahead

Please provide any information requested below which relates to your continuing progress in the preparation for ministry process.

A. List other issues which you wish to discuss with the committee including financial needs, family concerns, etc.

B. Indicate any exceptions and waivers (e.g. educational requirements, ordination exams, time requirements, additional presbytery requirements; G-2.0610) you would ask the presbytery and/or its committee/commission to consider, explaining your reasons for the request.

C. If this consultation covers the period of the second year of theological education, write a preliminary statement of faith.

Date: _____

Form 4

Report on Consultation

Name: _____
(family) *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Continuation of Preparation Phase

After reviewing this consultation report, the committee/commission of _____
(presbytery name)

declares that _____ is to be continued ___ /not to be continued ___ in the _____ phase.
(first name)

Signature of inquirer/candidate: _____
(date)

Signature of committee moderator: _____
(date)

Agreement on Future Work Areas

We have jointly reviewed the areas of growth since the last consultation and have agreed to the growth objectives for the future, as reported below.

Signature of inquirer/candidate: _____
(date)

Signature of committee liaison: _____
(date)

Signature of committee moderator: _____
(date)

Indicate the stage of theological education for which this report applies: _____

The committee moderator will copy and send all pages of this form to the inquirer/candidate, the moderator/clerk of the sponsoring session, and the theological institution (if enrolled).

1. Review of growth since the last consultation

A. In the area of education for ministry

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 4

B. In the area of spiritual development

C. In the area of interpersonal relations

D. In the area of personal growth

E. In the area of professional development

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 4

2. Growth objectives agreed for the future

A. In the area of education for ministry

B. In the area of spiritual development

C. In the area of interpersonal relations

D. In the area of personal growth

E. In the area of professional development

Date: _____

Form 5A

Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate

Name of applicant: _____
(family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Home*
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

Permanent address: _____
(if same, write 'same') (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Current church membership: _____
(name of church)

Church address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Date enrolled as an inquirer: _____

In what church occupation are you interested in at this time? _____
(e.g. pastor, youth minister, mission worker, educator)

Present or most recent school attended: _____

Location: _____ Date of graduation: _____

Inquirer's Statement

I certify no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me.

I am unable to make the above certification. I offer instead on the attachment a description of the complaint and/or outcome of the situation with explanatory comments.

I certify that the above statement and other information in this application are true and correct. If recommended to be a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, I promise in reliance upon the grace of God to participate diligently and wholeheartedly with the session and presbytery's committee/commission in matters which concern my preparation.

I hereby apply to be enrolled by _____ as a candidate.
(presbytery name)

Inquirer's signature: _____
(date)

Date: _____ Name: _____

References for Outcomes of Inquiry

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Home*
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Home*
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Home*
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Review and prepare any specific materials your presbytery may require as “outcomes of inquiry,” and submit them along with this application.

If the presbytery requires a formal endorsement from the session for advancement to candidacy, have the clerk submit a Form 5B.

*Session Evaluation and Recommendation
Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate*

The session of _____
(name of church) *(city)* *(state)*

met with _____ on _____.
(name of applicant) *(date)*

The session endorses / does not endorse this applicant's request to be enrolled as a candidate.

*Attach a letter explaining rationale for the session's action in light of the inquirer's
"suitability for ordered ministry" (G-2.0603).*

Liaison

The session has appointed the following ruler elder to act as a liaison with this individual and with the presbytery's committee, and to participate with the individual and the presbytery as they explore and evaluate his or her progress.

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Mobile*
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

This report was prepared for the session by:

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Main phone: _____ *Home* Alt phone: _____ *Home*
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

Report of Consultation Regarding Application to become a Candidate

The committee/commission of _____ met with _____
(presbytery)
 _____ on _____ and _____
(name of applicant) (date)
 submits the following report.

The committee/commission recommends ____ /does not recommend ____ the applicant to be enrolled by the presbytery as a candidate.

Liaison

The presbytery’s committee has appointed the following person to act as a liaison with the candidate and with the committee and participate with the inquirer and the committee as they explore and evaluate his or her progress.

Name: _____
(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)
 Current address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)
 Main phone: _____ Alt phone: _____
(h/o/m) (h/o/m)
 Email: _____

Agreement on Further Growth Areas

We have reviewed and jointly agree to the growth objectives for the next year, as reported below.

Signature of inquirer: _____
(date)
 Signature of committee liaison: _____
(date)
 Signature of committee moderator: _____
(date)

Indicate the appropriate stage of theological education for which this report applies: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 5C

Growth Objectives

A. In the area of education for ministry

B. In the area of spiritual development

C. In the area of interpersonal relations

D. In the area of personal growth

E. In the area of professional development

Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release

I, _____ have read and discussed the goals and responsibilities of both candidates and the presbytery’s committee/commission on preparation for ministry. I do hereby wish to be enrolled in the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter “Church”) as a candidate with the understanding that I subject myself to the guidance, counsel and disciplines of the Church as represented by the presbytery and it’s committee/commission overseeing preparation for ministry. I fully agree and understand that the decision of the presbytery’s committee/commission regarding my fitness and readiness for ministry may involve questions and/or inquiries that are both personal and private and hereby release the Church and its committees, agents and representatives from any claims, causes, or actions, which may arise from said inquiries and answers received to such inquiries or any uses made of such answers. Further, I grant permission to the presbytery’s committee/commission to contact any person listed by me as a reference or any other person not listed to discuss my “fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination” (G-2.0604).

I covenant with God, the session, and the presbytery to rely upon the grace of God; to maintain a Christian character and conduct; and to be diligent and faithful in pursuing my call and in preparing for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. By my signature, I hereby certify that this covenant agreement and release is fully understood by me and I sign it understanding that I will be bound by its terms.

Signature of candidate: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

The session covenants to be a faithful partner with you in this relationship, and to support, to care and to nurture you with love as you continue your preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of the session: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

The presbytery covenants to be a faithful and just partner with you in this relationship, and to support, to guide, to nurture and to evaluate you with an understanding and sympathetic interest as you continue your preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of the presbytery’s committee/commission: _____ (date)

Signature of witness: _____ (date)

Moderator of the presbytery’s committee/commission will copy and mail copies of this page to all parties signing document and the Stated Clerk of the presbytery.

Question to be Answered Before Moving to Candidacy
Attach to Form 5
Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)
Approved by CPM June 2012

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

*Summary Report of Final Assessment of Candidate's
Readiness to be Examined for Ordination*

Name of candidate: _____
(family name) (first) (middle/natal)

Presbytery of care: _____

Committee/commission moderator: _____

Committee/commission liaison: _____

Certification of Readiness

A final assessment of the above named candidate's readiness to receive a call, as outlined in the Advisory Handbook's "Deciding about fitness and readiness" (pp. 44-45) and/or this presbytery's established policies, was conducted by the committee/commission on preparation for ministry. The committee has determined that the candidate has satisfactorily completed all of the requirements of the preparation for ministry process, as set forth in G-2.0607 of the *Book of Order*, and is now certified as ready, pending a call, to be examined for ordination.

Signature of moderator of committee/
 commission overseeing preparation for ministry: _____ (date)

Enclosures and Additional Information

When requested by the calling presbytery, send this summary report along with the following materials:

1. Summary of the issues and recommendations of each previous consultation.
2. Transcripts of satisfactory grades at any regionally accredited college and theological institution.
3. Official transcript showing evaluations in the five examination areas covered by the General Assembly along with copies of examination papers and evaluations.
4. Exceptions and/or waivers (if any) approved by presbytery for the candidate (G-2.0610).
5. Reports regarding the candidate's psychological tests and career counseling observations.

Both sending and receiving presbyteries should respect the sensitive nature of this information and treat it with the confidentiality it requires, sharing it only those persons who have a need to know in order to fulfill their responsibilities within the process.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I-1
REQUIREMENTS FOR THOSE SEEKING APPROVAL TO ATTEND A NON-PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY
Revised 02/09/2002

Inquirers and candidates desiring to pursue their ministerial training at a seminary not affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) or Fuller Seminary must present to CPM a paper (not to exceed ten pages) one month in advance of its scheduled meeting specifying the seminary training desired and presenting evidence and rationale for that selection. After a review of the case, the CPM will allow or deny such study. In the case of denial, the inquirer or candidate will have the right of appeal to the Presbytery.

The CPM's evaluation will include (but not be limited to) consideration of the following factors:

- The inquirer or candidate's personal background: faith journey, previous preparation, past Church affiliation, personal strengths and weaknesses, and experience of call;
- The validity of the reasons and rationale presented;
- Membership of the seminary in the Association of Theological Schools;
- Whether the theological position and orientation of the seminary is within the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions;
- How the seminary offers adequate education in Presbyterian polity and program;
- How the seminary encourages the student's loyalty to and support of the PC(USA); and
- The extent to which the seminary provides for the building of relationships and experiences that promote the student's identity within the denomination.

In the case of inquirers or candidates who are not in seminary, the inquirer or candidate must secure approval of an exception from the CPM *before* matriculation in a non-Presbyterian seminary.

Inquirers and candidates currently enrolled in non-Presbyterian seminaries at the time they come under care of the Presbytery of New Covenant and who desire to complete their ministerial training in such locations must make application for approval immediately after acceptance as an inquirer or candidate by the Presbytery. Any inquirers or candidates enrolled in non-Presbyterian seminaries at the time of adoption of this policy must make application for approval as soon as possible after notification of the specific requirements.

All inquirers or candidates in non-Presbyterian seminaries must submit to the CPM before the beginning of the second seminary year a written statement interpreting their experiences in the seminary and field assignments and discussing how these experiences equip them for ministry within the denominational framework of the PC(USA).

Any applicant who has already finished work in a non-Presbyterian seminary before the CPM receives them as an inquirer or candidate must submit to the CPM both of the papers described above. These papers will be the basis of dialogue between the applicant and the CPM in evaluating the adequacy of the education, training, and fieldwork undertaken and in taking subsequent action on the application.

APPENDIX I-2
REQUIRED AREAS OF STUDY IN SEMINARY
Revised 02/9/2002

Inquirers and candidates should refer to Sections G-2.0607 of the Book of Order for other specified requirements.

In addition to the requirements listed in the Book of Order, the Presbytery of New Covenant requires demonstrated study in the following areas:

- **General biblical overview**, such as introductory courses to the Old and New Testaments;
- **General study in theology**;
- **Reformed theology**, including but not limited to John Calvin's thoughts and the Book of Confessions of the PC(USA);
- **General study of Christian ethics**, such as an introductory course;
- **General study in church history** that includes the Early, Medieval, Reformation, and Modern periods;
- **Study in the area of practical theology**, including worship in the Reformed tradition, homiletics, Christian education, and pastoral care;
- **A course in Presbyterian polity** before ordination, successfully completed, at an approved seminary;
- **A study of the issues of personal sexual ethics, sexual boundaries, and sexual misconduct and harassment.** Approved candidates for ordination under the care of Presbytery shall provide written certification to the CPM that they have successfully completed such study before the CPM will assess them as ready for examination for ordination; and
- **At least one unit of supervised practice in ministry.** Students shall obtain approval from the CPM before internship placement to ensure that all CPM internship requirements are also complete.

Documents that will provide satisfactory information about study in these required areas include transcripts, catalog descriptions, class syllabi, and/or other documentation requested by the CPM.

APPENDIX I-3
INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING PERSONAL STATEMENT OF FAITH, THEOLOGICAL PAPER, EXEGESIS,
AND SERMON
Revised 10/13/2001

INTRODUCTION

To be assessed as ready for examination for ordination, which is the last step before the Presbytery that calls you examines you, you must submit to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry a packet of materials. Included among these materials must be the following documents:

- One-page personal statement of faith;
- Theological paper;
- Exegesis of a scripture passage; and
- Sermon based on the exegesis.

The purpose of these requirements is as follows:

1. The Committee will read these materials as part of the information they will use to assess your readiness to accept a call from a church or a call to another ordained position.

2. They represent a final opportunity for you to receive feedback and coaching from the Committee to help you better prepare for examination by the Presbytery.

It is not the Committee's intention to supplant the responsibilities of the Committee on Examinations or to subject you to unnecessary work. However, to perform our role as assigned by the Book of Order properly and to be of greatest assistance to you we need to be able to assess your personal, spiritual, and academic development and readiness. The materials you submit are central to this purpose.

We recognize that the candidacy process is long, involved, and demanding. To facilitate the process for you and to ensure consistency and clarity regarding the requirements, we have prepared these guidelines. These guidelines should not constrain your creative instincts or be onerous. Remember that a major component of our role is to work with you, providing guidance and assistance throughout the process. When you prepare to submit your materials, if you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact your Committee Liaison.

In preparing your papers, keep in mind that we want to see your most recent thinking. Thus, while a paper or exegesis may have started as a class assignment (which is certainly acceptable), it might require editing or extension to reflect your current understandings and thinking. It is also the case that your first submission might require further work and revision before the Committee formally assesses you as ready to receive a call. We ask that you submit your papers at least one month before meeting with the Committee for your final assessment. If we receive the papers early enough, we will be glad to give you feedback before you come to meet with us. (An especially good idea is to send a draft of your papers to your liaison before you must submit them to the Committee. He or she will be glad to offer comments so you can make revisions if necessary before the Final Assessment.)

BASICS

The following points will make reproducing, circulating, and reviewing your papers easier for the Committee:

1. All of your papers should be typewritten, double-spaced, single-sided, and have numbered pages.
2. You should follow the conventions of an accepted academic style manual regarding matters of format and style. Your seminary may have an approved style manual; if not, the University of Chicago Manual of Style and the American Psychological Association Style Manual are both widely accepted.
3. It is difficult to assess the content of a paper when technical or grammatical errors distract from the flow of thought. You should write, rewrite, and proofread until the paper reflects the quality of your scholarship.
4. For both the exegesis and theological papers, you should include citations in the text and a complete reference list.
5. Inclusive language is *essential*. You should follow appropriate modern conventions to avoid the use of masculine pronouns for the generic case.
6. Plan to submit all of your papers at least one month before you will meet with the Committee for your final assessment.

Personal Statement of Faith

This statement should be a short statement (no more than a page) of your personal faith. This statement may take many forms; for example, a free-verse poem, a confessional statement, an integrated paragraph, or a series of linked paragraphs. It is important that you place in words your personal faith and beliefs; thus, it should not be filled with quotations or attempt to restate your understanding of church doctrine.

Exegesis

According to the manual prepared by the Committee on Examinations of the Presbytery of New Covenant, "The exegesis shall show the candidate's ability to understand and apply a given portion of Scripture so that it may be preached." It goes on to say that you must "...establish the text; deal with the literary form; display knowledge of the historical circumstances; use word, syntactical, and grammatical studies; show acquaintance with the history of interpretation of the passage; and deal with the historical and theological implications of [your] conclusions." These, then, represent the objectives you should strive for in this paper in practice for this subsequent requirement.

While there is no format in which to write all exegesis papers, certain elements are generally customary or essential. The following points describe the major components that we believe to be important in your exegesis. They are not a complete outline or required headings in your paper.

Text. A general practice is to begin by quoting the text from which you are working. You should include the original language of the passage and your original translation of it. Please be sure that the presentation of the original language (whether typed or handwritten) is clear, both here and throughout your paper. In particular, if you handwrite the language, recognize that photocopies might be lighter and might distort the symbols if they are not sufficiently dark and clear.

Introduction. Many writers use an introductory section to "set the stage" for the discussion. In this section you might, for example, frame the issues that are crucial for understanding the text, and identify special problems (e.g., textual or structural questions). The introduction is also an appropriate place to discuss and reference the exegetical approach(es) that you have adopted.

Exposition. Your commentary on the passage may proceed in various ways; for example, verse-by-verse, or thought-by-thought. You should incorporate word studies to explicate the words in context and place the passage in its proper linguistic, literary, historical, social, and theological context.

Conclusion. This section generally represents a synthesis of the knowledge you have gained about the text. Usually the conclusion addresses the twin questions of "What did the text mean when it was written?" and "What does the text mean now?" The latter question should represent your lead-in to the sermon based on the text.

Sermon

Base the sermon you submit on the accompanying exegesis. The sermon may be one you have already preached, or one that you would like to preach. Remember, however, that it is to be a sermon and, as such, should require no more than 15-20 minutes for delivery. Occasionally we may ask candidates to deliver their sermons orally to the Committee, but if so, we will ask you in advance to be prepared to do so.

Theological Paper

The Presbytery of New Covenant requires that candidates in preparation for ministry or for ordination present a theological paper at least 15 pages long. Reflecting an acceptable academic style, the paper should include adequate acknowledgement of ideas and quotations with footnotes or endnotes. A bibliography citing all sources consulted is required.

The Chair of the CPM is to approve the topic, in consultation with the candidate. Note suggestion below.

The candidate meets this requirement through scholarly research that demonstrates knowledge of the Reformed Confessions [Part I of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)]. The paper shall state and defend a thesis. The contents of the paper shall include the historical context of the topic, various ways in which the topic has been understood by other theologians in other times, an analysis of the topic with respect to its nature and issues involved, and the student's own conclusions and positions on the topic.

The candidate might most easily accomplish production of this academic paper during a theology course taken as part of the seminary curriculum or by directed study.

Appendix I-4
LIMITS TO THE CARE PROCESS
PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
08/1995

Each situation for each person under care warrants dialogue and careful evaluation. The annual consultation offers both the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and persons under care the opportunity to discern spiritual growth and possibilities for new directions under the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following guidelines indicate when conversation regarding continuance in the process should take place.

1. The CPM may grant an inquirer or candidate of the Presbytery of New Covenant who notifies the CPM in writing that he/she has withdrawn from seminary before graduation up to two years leave of absence. During the leave of absence, this person will meet annually with members of the CPM and plans for completing the seminary degree will be included in the annual consultation. After two years, the person may request the CPM to extend the leave of absence for one year. Without such a request, or if an extended leave is not granted, the CPM will recommend to the Presbytery of New Covenant that the person's name be removed from the roll of inquirer and candidates of the Presbytery.

2. A seminary graduate who assessed as ready to undergo examination for ordination and remains under care will have up to two years to search for and receive a call as Teaching Elder. During these two years this person will meet annually with members of the CPM and review of the Personal Information Form (PIF) will be included as part of the annual consultation. After two years, the person may request in writing to remain under care, requesting these extensions in writing each year. Without a request for extension, or if the extension is not granted, the CPM will recommend to the Presbytery of New Covenant that the person's name be removed from the roll of inquirers and candidates of the Presbytery.

Appendix I-5
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
ALTERNATIVE EXAMINATION PROCEDURE

If a candidate of the Presbytery of New Covenant has failed on three attempts to receive a satisfactory grade on an ordination exam, they may follow the process below for alternative means of assessing competency in a specific area of difficulty:

1. A consultation between the candidate and the CPM will occur to assess the area(s) of deficiency and to determine the best course of action for each candidate with regard to the exam process, remedial work, or continuation of candidacy. This assessment will involve review of the candidate's related ordination exams and consultation with the candidate's institution of theological education.
2. If it is the judgment of the CPM that an alternative means of assessing competency would be appropriate, the CPM shall follow the alternative examination procedure and upon completion request that the Presbytery approve an exception by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.
3. The alternative procedure is as follows:
 - a. A special committee shall administer a written (paper) and/or oral examination. This committee shall be composed of five members and consist of at least two ruling elder and two teaching elder members of the Presbytery, appointed by the CPM. The paper and oral exam shall involve not only content knowledge of the subject, but shall also demonstrate satisfactory application of this knowledge to the pastoral setting. The Committee shall be responsible for identifying the topics and questions for the papers and oral exam.
 - b. The appointed committee shall report its conclusions to the CPM.
 - c. If the report endorses the candidate, the CPM shall report the outcome of the alternative means of assessment to the Presbytery at its next meeting.
 - d. This process is subject to review every three years.

Adopted by the Presbytery of New Covenant
May 16, 2006

Approved by Synod of the Sun
October 27, 2006

**APPENDIX I-6
PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
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:

When Presbytery of New Covenant is the Presbytery of Care

1. Require an inquirer to complete all financial forms included in the inquiry application and to discuss with the CPM his or her plans to minimize seminary debt.
2. Strongly encourage the inquirer, during the inquiry year, to participate in the "Getting in Shape Fiscally" workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA). If this workshop is not available at the inquirer's seminary, the inquirer is eligible to apply to the CPM for financial assistance for travel and accommodations. Because this workshop is required of all Seminary Debt Assistance Program applicants, the CPM encourages inquirers to attend it as soon as possible to avoid delays in processing any future application for seminary debt assistance that the inquirer might make.
3. On behalf of the Presbytery, the CPM will inform all Inquirers of the prospective salary they can expect 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.
4. The CPM will encourage each inquirer and candidate toward using his or her available assets to pay for the cost of seminary tuition and room and board, rather than incurring indebtedness.
5. 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 through PC(USA) seminaries.

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

When Presbytery of New Covenant is the Calling Presbytery

1. Any teaching elder 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 the "Getting in Shape Fiscally" workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions, or other financial planning workshop. If the teaching elder has not attended such a workshop, he/she shall be required to do so within 12 months of starting their first called position. Documentation of the cost of any registration fee, accommodations, and/or travel is necessary for the CPM to consider such a workshop a legitimate reimbursable expense from the study leave allowance.
2. The Committee on Ministry shall encourage calling congregations to use further educational debt

reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective teaching elder who is a recent seminary graduate.

Seminary Debt Assistance Program

Background

The Seminary Debt Assistance Program is a program of the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The funds for the program are available through the generosity of church member gifts, bequests, and investment earnings. The Seminary Debt Assistance Program coordinates with other entities of the church.

Eligibility

The grants will go to teaching elders to assist them in repaying educational debt incurred while they were seeking a Master of Divinity degree.

Guidelines

The Program will award a limited number of grants each year. Grants will be at 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 years. The maximum amount given to one individual over four years is not to exceed \$10,000.
- The grants will go to teaching elders 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 before applying for a Seminary Debt Assistance grant.
- All presbyteries in which a teaching elder has received a grant are encouraged to develop a plan for continued support and guidance of the teaching elder and the congregation participating in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program.

Guideline citations are 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//plansandprograms/assistanceprogram/pages/church-workers-financial-vocational-needs.aspx> (under Minister Educational Debt Assistance Grants).

Responsibilities

- The Presbytery approves the Seminary Debt Assistance Program application and submits it to the Board of Pensions for consideration.
- The Presbytery approves policy on student/clergy indebtedness.

APPENDIX I-7
PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
BACKGROUND CHECKS POLICY
01/22/2015

Rationale. To ensure high standards of ethical conduct, the Presbytery of New Covenant has implemented and mandates background checks of all teaching elders entering the Presbytery.

Procedure. The PNC of a church shall request a background check before requesting the Committee on Ministry (COM) Calls and Contracts subcommittee to approve "serious contact." A disclosure and release authorization shall accompany the request. The Coordinator for COM and CPM shall certify to the chairperson of the PNC that a background check is complete. In the case of those transferring to the Presbytery with a pastoral call, the Stated Clerk shall request the Coordinator of COM and CPM do a background check.

Process. The PNC and/or local church shall ask the COM to conduct a background check using information given by the candidate or received by permission from the candidate. In addition to checking personal references provided by the candidate, there shall be an individual background check for reports, records, or incidents of moral turpitude and criminal activity. The computerized search is normally complete within one business day. An agency recommended by Presbytery conducts the research, at a cost of \$14 per inquiry. The information obtained is for the sole use of the purposes described in this policy and shall be confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Funding. Funding policy is as follows:

Installed and contract relationships. The local church shall pay for checks of prospective teaching elders receiving calls to enter New Covenant.

Members-At-large and Retired Teaching Elders. These individuals, when entering Presbytery of New Covenant, shall pay the Presbytery directly to conduct a background check for them.

Record Retention. Retention of all records shall be at the Presbytery Office, for a period of four years after the teaching elder has left the Presbytery of New Covenant.

**APPENDIX I-7A
PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE AUTHORIZATION**

I understand and acknowledge that it is the express general policy of the Presbytery of New Covenant to contact personal references provided by a prospective candidate or employee. It is also the policy of the Presbytery to conduct a background check for reports, records, or incidents of moral turpitude for all new teaching elders entering the Presbytery and/or obtaining employment with the Presbytery or in a local church. I further understand that such checks are conditions that it is necessary to meet before I receive serious consideration for a call to or employment or membership in the Presbytery of New Covenant. With these understandings, I freely and voluntarily execute this Disclosure and Release Authorization and acknowledge that I understand its contents.

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of your review and consideration of my application for a position of employment in the Presbytery of New Covenant or in one of its local churches, the undersigned does hereby:

- **Authorize and agree that the Presbytery of New Covenant, the local employing church, their respective agents, committees, agencies, directors, trustees, employees, attorneys, representatives, successors, and assigns may perform, request, obtain, or conduct a background check on the undersigned and contact those personal references provided by the undersigned and consent to these check and contact. The background check and personal contacts may include an inquiry into my employment history, education, character, reputation, work experience, volunteer experience, credit, and/or reports, records, criminal records, or incidents of moral turpitude;**
- **Authorize any third parties who may be the custodians or in possession of the requested information, to disclose such information to the Presbytery of New Covenant, the local employing church, their respective agents, employees, attorneys, committees, agencies, directors, trustees, representatives, successors, and assigns;**
- **Reserve the right to receive a copy of any such report and to explain, contest, or otherwise dispute the results of any inquiry; and**
- **Release, indemnify, hold harmless, and discharge the Presbytery of New Covenant, the local employing church, and their respective agents, employees, attorneys, committees, agencies, directors, trustees, representatives, successors, and assigns, one or more of them, from any and all claims, demands, actions, remedies, causes of actions, debts, liabilities, contracts, damages, costs (including, without limitation, attorney's fees and all costs of court or other proceedings), expenses, and losses of every kind or nature, whether at this time known or unknown, anticipated or unanticipated, direct or indirect, fixed or contingent, at law, by statute, in contract or in tort, in equity whether now or hereafter fully, partially, or not disclosed, arising from or as a result of any such investigation of personal references and the conducting of any background check.**

I understand that the background check and personal contact are for the sole purpose of considering my application for employment in the Presbytery of New Covenant or in one of the Presbytery's churches, and that the information shall not be sold, or in any way transferred to a third party, except for the express purpose of conducting the background check or personal contacts.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name

Address

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

Social Security Number _____

Date of Birth _____

APPENDIX I-8
AGREEMENT FOR THOSE UNDER CARE OF PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

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

1. The total preparation for ministry process will last at least two years, at least one year of which must be in the candidacy phase.
2. The start of the two-year preparation period begins when the CPM enrolls the person as an inquirer, while the required one year of candidacy begins when Presbytery receives and enrolls the person as a candidate at a meeting of the Committee.
3. No guarantee is implied that enrollment in the inquiry phase will be followed automatically by admission to the candidacy phase. Consider admission to the inquiry phase a "wide gate." Then consider admission to the candidacy phase a "narrow gate" wherein progress will be examined critically and the questioning will be of a more specific, theological nature.
4. Ordinarily, inquirers should 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. The CPM will grant waivers only at its discretion.
5. The purpose of the CPM is to advise, support, and nurture those under care, but it is the inquirer's/candidate's responsibility ultimately to be knowledgeable of and adhere to the process outlined in the CPM manual, including any special requirements of the Presbytery of New Covenant or its CPM, and to meet all deadlines in a timely manner.
6. The inquirer/candidate should be available for all subsequent meetings with the CPM or its designees, especially the annual consultation required each year while under care.
7. The provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-2.06), among other applicable requirements of the *Book of Order*, will govern the inquirer's/candidate's eventual ordination to the ministry as a teaching elder.
8. The CPM reserves the right and responsibility to place additional requirements as it sees necessary during periodic evaluations of the inquirer's/candidate's progress.
9. Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers and candidates and the CPM are confidential. Information shared with a liaison is information shared with the entire CPM. Psychological assessments/evaluations are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members of the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately on termination or completion of the process. The original report will remain in the inquirer's/candidate's permanent file.

10. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate must adhere to the Presbytery of New Covenant's policy against sexual misconduct. A copy of this policy is available through the Presbytery office.
11. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate might incur substantial debt, only a portion of which support from the Presbytery of New Covenant will defray. Limited financial support is available from the Presbytery of New Covenant.
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 Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), only those requirements placed by the Presbytery of New Covenant and its CPM are in effect. The requirements of other presbyteries are neither pertinent nor applicable.
14. The inquirer/candidate will arrange for and sign appropriate releases of information with his/her seminary to allow CPM and seminary staff to communicate about the inquirer's/candidate's course work, performance, and adjustment. (Presbytery of New Covenant Form 2B, *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*; and Presbytery of New Covenant Form SD, *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*, which are required by the CPM, may be sufficient.)

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: _____

APPENDIX I-9
DESCRIPTION OF FORMS USED IN THE PROCESS

The Presbytery of New Covenant uses forms generated by the PC(USA) and maintained on the PC(USA) website. The forms are available as fillable PDF documents (<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-councilministries/prep4min/forms-used-preparation-ministry-process/>) and are also available in Word or Excel in non-fillable formats (<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/sample-formscustomization-cpms/>). For forms other than those particular to the Presbytery of New Covenant, the CPM urges you to use the PDF, fillable versions of the PC(USA) forms.

Initial application forms

Five separate forms make up the application for enrollment as an inquirer.

Form 1A Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer

The applicant who is seeking enrollment completes this form initially. It records both the CPM's and Presbytery's actions regarding the application, and provides basic information regarding the applicant's background, identity, and interests. This form includes a list of personal references.

Form 1B Questions for Reflection

The applicant is to complete these questions as a basis for direct discussion, first with the Session of the applicant's home church, and later with the CPM.

Form 1C Financial Planning for Theological Education

Using basic information provided by the applicant, this spreadsheet generates a projection of the applicant's financial resources and needs relative to the required seminary training.

Form 1D Session Evaluation and Recommendation

The applicant's Session completes this form and forwards it, along with the other application forms, to the Presbytery's CPM. The form includes questions that might guide the Session's discussion with the applicant and provide support for its recommendation to the CPM.

Presbytery of New Covenant Reference Guide, Committee on Preparation for Ministry

This guide provides direction for people who provide a reference for an applicant. Applicants for inquiry are required to provide three references, including someone from the applicant's church, a former employer, and a peer or former professor or school administrator.

Forms for enrolling an inquirer

Applicants and the CPM use these forms following a decision to recommend the Presbytery enroll the applicant as an inquirer.

Form 2A Report of Consultation Regarding Application

In addition to formulating its recommendation to the Presbytery to enroll the applicant as an inquirer, the CPM should also establish goals for the first year the new inquirer will be under care. This form records the growth objectives agreed to by the new Inquirer and the CPM. The inquirer and the CPM retain copies of this report.

Presbytery of New Covenant Form 2B Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release

A signed acknowledgement of the new covenant relationship entered into by the inquirer, the Session, and the CPM, the inquirer release sets in motion an understanding that permits the CPM to secure information necessary to make responsible decisions and recommendations.

Presbytery of New Covenant Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates under Care Appendix I-8

This is an agreement specifically between the Presbytery of New Covenant and the inquirer that emphasizes the critical aspects of the preparation for ministry process in the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Forms for Consultations

These forms prepare for and report the outcomes of a consultation. The same forms are appropriate in the inquiry and candidacy phases as well as for consultations once the CPM certifies a candidate as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call.

Form 3 Pre-consultation Report on Development Areas

This report, completed by the inquirer/candidate before each consultation, evaluates progress in accomplishing previously agreed-upon goals and objectives. The form requests a listing of completed courses, and includes specific questions to address in each of the five growth areas.

Form 4 Report on Consultation

A summary report of the consultation, completed by the CPM and the inquirer/candidate, that indicates developmental progress in the five key areas, along with growth objectives agreed on for the next year, the inquirer/candidate and the CPM retain copies of this report.

Forms for advancing to candidacy

Inquirers and the CPM use these forms following a decision to apply for and recommend the Presbytery advance an inquirer to candidate status.

Form 5A Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate

The inquirer seeking to advance to candidacy completes this form initially. It records the recommendations of the Session and the CPM along with the action taken by the Presbytery.

Presbytery of New Covenant Required Candidacy Application Documents, CPM

This form defines the statements and documents that the CPM of the Presbytery of New Covenant requires the applicant for candidacy to prepare and submit before the interview for candidacy.

Form 5B Session Evaluation and Recommendation for Candidate

The inquirer's Session completes this form and forwards it to the CPM. The form includes questions that may guide the Session's discussion with the inquirer and provide support for its recommendation to the committee/commission overseeing preparation for ministry. The Session should attach a letter explaining the rationale for the Session's action in light of the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.

Form 5C Report of Consultation to become a Candidate

A signed acknowledgement of the new covenant relationship entered into by the candidate and the CPM, this form establishes growth areas for the candidate. The completed report is sent to the inquirer/candidate, theological institution, and sponsoring Session.

Presbytery of New Covenant Form 5D Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release

A signed acknowledgement of the new covenant relationship entered into by the candidate, the Session, and the CPM, the candidate release sets in motion an understanding that permits the CPM to secure information necessary to make responsible decisions and recommendations.

Church Leadership Connection Personal Information Form (PIF)

This is the format for applying for ordained positions in the PC(USA). PIF completion is online through Church Leadership Connection. The CPM requires a completed draft of the PIF when a candidate applies for certification as ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call.

Form 6 Summary Report of Final Assessment

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. It certifies that she/he has successfully completed all the requirements of the denomination and the CPM and so is ready for examination for ordination. It should include supporting documentation identified on the form. Since a presbytery might need to share this report with another calling presbytery, all presbyteries should use this form as issued.

Reporting actions to others

The Presbytery of New Covenant needs to report certain actions to others across the church. When any presbytery is considering a candidate who has been "certified ready for examination for ordination, pending a call," Form 6, along with its supporting documentation, should go to that presbytery's committee or commission responsible for its teaching elder members. General reporting about a person's status with their supervising CPM, transfer of care to another presbytery, withdrawal/removal from the process, certification of readiness to receive a call, and ordination to the role of teaching elder are reported to Mid Council Ministries of the Office of the General Assembly through the Preparation for Ministry management portal (<http://p4m.pcusa.org>).

APPENDIX S-1
RECOMMENDED DUTIES OF THE SESSION LIAISON

The *Book of Order* provides for the appointment of a ruling elder (or a group of persons including at least one ruling elder) to act as liaison with the inquirer/candidate and with Presbytery's CPM, and to participate with the inquirer/candidate and Presbytery's Committee as they explore and evaluate progress in the preparation for ministry.

Outlined below are some of the ways in which the Session liaison can be of assistance:

1. Learn the background of your inquirer/candidate if you do not already know it: parents, siblings, school, college, vocational interests and abilities, birthday, name of spouse (if married), name(s) of child(ren) (if any), (proposed) seminary, progress toward ordination, financial needs.
2. Become acquainted in ways that seem natural to you and the inquirer/candidate.
3. Take an interest in his/her academic, field education, annual consultation, and other activities related to preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
4. Share with the CPM, especially at the time of the annual consultation, any areas of particular need for inquirer/candidate, whether financial or personal.
5. Become aware of when the inquirer/candidate will be home and try to make some contact, even if only a phone call.
6. Identify ways to keep the congregation aware of the names of its inquirers/candidates (away at seminary or at home) who have entered a covenant relationship with the Presbytery and are preparing for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
7. Initiate conversation with your Session on the possibility of providing financial assistance or other tangible support to your inquirers/candidates.
8. Consider, with your Session, the possibility of assisting in the payment of necessary expenses incurred in relation to visits for Annual Consultation with the CPM.
9. Be present if possible at the service of ordination and/or installation.
10. Remember your inquirer/candidate in prayer.
11. Write your inquirer/candidate on special occasions (e.g., birthday or anniversary).
12. Become acquainted with the "Preparation for Ministry" manual so that you are aware of requirements and procedures and can provide timely support (e.g., appearances before Presbytery, Annual Consultation, final assessment).

13. Discuss with your Session the progress the inquirer/candidate is making, as reflected in the summary Report on Consultation prepared by the Presbytery CPM, and sent to the sponsoring Session.
14. The role of the spouse of the inquirer/candidate is particularly important. Try to be as supportive, sensitive, and understanding as you can of the spouse. Let the CPM know if there are ways the CPM may better assist the wives/husbands of Inquirers/Candidates in preparing for their new roles.
15. In a word, be a friend and lend to your inquirer/candidate a sense of your personal, moral, and spiritual interest in, and support of, him/her in training for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

APPENDIX C-1
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INQUIRERS

Initial Questions

1. Tell us about your family and your church and ministry experience.
2. Tell us about your Christian faith journey.
3. Why do you want to become a teaching elder?
4. How can we help you explore those aspects of ministry you haven't tried yet? What are your plans for seminary?
5. What's one thing your references will tell us about you?

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?
3. What have you been taught about God? How does this relate to your experience of God in your life? How do you use your work to express God's love in today's world?

Relationships with Others

1. What kinds of people 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 people who have authority over you, such as employers, group leaders, teachers, or governing authorities?
4. What happens when other people 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?
7. If you could take three people 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. About 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... 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? What abilities could you develop if you decide to work at it?
6. 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...)?

6. What is the relationship between work and recreation 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 your other goals? 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? How do you choose between competing claims on your time and resources?

5. 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, or 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?

APPENDIX C-2 EXAMINING INQUIRERS FOR CANDIDACY

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 because of your time in seminary? Because of your field education experience?
2. What have you found to be disappointing?
3. What types 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? How can the committee help you prepare for your ministry?
6. What is distinctly Reformed or Presbyterian about your beliefs and practices?

During the candidacy examination, the Presbytery may ask questions only regarding the Inquirer's

- Christian faith;
- Forms of Christian service undertaken; and
- Motives for seeking the ministry.

Ordination Exams and Statements of Faith

Presbytery is free to ask any questions as they relate to the topics listed in the paragraph below from the Book of Order. These sample questions might help keep ordination exams on track. In addition, Presbytery delegates are encouraged to frame their questions on these topics in the context of pastoral ministry by perhaps giving a context or example that raises the issue, and are encouraged to tailor their questions to points raised in the candidate's statement of faith.

"The presbytery shall examine each teaching elder or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church." (G-3.0306)

Christian Faith

1. What practices are most meaningful for you right now in staying connected with God?
2. Why is it important to you to be part of the Reformed tradition?
3. Please talk about what is meaningful for you personally in the Lord's Supper.
4. How do you experience the Holy Spirit?

Theology

1. Do you think it is important to have a time of confession in worship each Sunday? Why or why not?

2. With what theological question are you currently wrestling?
3. What is the mission of the Church?
4. "Jesus Christ was fully human. Jesus Christ was fully divine." Is it important that the church communicate both of these natures? Why or why not?
5. Why did Jesus have to die on the cross?
6. What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection, or what does it add?
7. How do you understand the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead, or how would you explain it to someone visiting you in your office?
8. Many people wrestle with the presence of evil and suffering in the world and wonder how a good God could allow such things. What are a couple of thoughts you might share in this regard?

The Bible

1. What does it mean to say that the Scriptures are authoritative? Can you give an example of how this looks in your own life?
2. Of the roles attributed to the Holy Spirit in scripture, which are critical?

The Sacraments

1. How would you respond to a request for re-baptism from an individual who is returning to an active faith life after a long period of "dropping out"?
2. The celebration of the Lord's Supper seems to be increasing in importance in many church communities. Why do you think this is so?
3. How do you understand Jesus as present in the elements at the Table?

Church Government and Life

1. How would you answer a potential elder who was considering declining a nomination because they felt "inadequate"?
2. How would you imagine providing leadership to a congregation in the area of social justice?

APPENDIX C-3
WORKSHEET FOR ASSESSING INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES

The question before us is *"Is this person fit to serve the church as a teaching elder?"*
 Use this sheet to help assess intangible qualities needed for ministry.

Name: _____ Date: _____

	0	20	40	60	80	
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
Lacks boundaries						Appropriate boundaries
Seeking a career						Enthusiasm for ministry
Ineffective communication skills						Effective communication skills
Biblically illiterate						Biblically literate
Theologically illiterate						Theologically literate
Amplifies bad/problematic situation						Mediates and modulates bad/problematic situations
Emotionally unstable						Emotionally stable
Ambiguous faith						Articulate faith
Manipulative						Vulnerable
Lacks a sense of call						Articulates a clear sense of call
Closed to new information and insights						Open to new information and insights
No understanding of Reformed Tradition						Clear understanding of Reformed Tradition
Suspicious of the PC(USA)						Appreciates the PC(USA)

APPENDIX C-4
REQUIRED CANDIDACY APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- Statement of your understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed Tradition and how it relates to your sense of call;
- Statement of personal faith that incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;
- Analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships;
- Statement of what it means to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church;
- Statement of self-understanding that reflects your personal and cultural background and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical, and mental health;
- Statement of your understanding of the task teaching elders perform, including an awareness of your specific gifts for ministry as a teaching elder and of areas in which growth is needed; and
- Short paragraph on each of the nine ordination questions (W-4.4003) explaining what your assent to that specific question will mean to you as you daily serve God as a teaching elder