

**National Capital Presbytery  
Commission on Preparation for Ministry  
Periodic Report to Leadership Council  
February 26, 2020**

How does CPM support the presbytery mission?

- G-2.06 provides the basic mission of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) in and for the presbytery. Our primary work is nurturing potential Church leaders who are pastoral and prophetic. We also support COM with ministers from other churches.
- A secondary missional task is development of our current 20 CPM members from at least 14 congregations to cultivate and nurture our congregations, enrich their missional identity and serve God's mission. CPM work enriches members' understandings of Presbyterian polity, reformed theology and the evolving mission of the Church in changing times. While there are "truths and forms with respect to which [persons] of good character" disagree<sup>1</sup>, we work with a healthy space to lovingly "reason and remonstrate" together.<sup>2</sup>

What were the significant events (positive or negative) for CPM in 2019

- Two excellent candidates were Certified Ready to Receive a Call (Certified) this year. This achievement requires a candidate demonstrate comprehensively a readiness for ministry. This "trial" for ordination is a strong affirmation by NCP to the Church; but also, of the congregation, seminary and CPM Liaison Group that nurtured them.
- We hosted an Open Space event before the November presbytery meeting with Tim Cargal of OGA. Statistics and patterns were quite interesting.
- CPM was inspired by conversations about psychological testing and counselling options and coaching as a resource.
- Jan Moody's service as staff contact is a great gift to CPM and the presbytery.
- Technology has been used for meetings when travel was an obstacle.
- Steps have been taken in tracking CPM's work comprehensively. We continue to avoid inadvertent oversights.

What issues are most pressing on CPM's docket right now?

- Our focus must always be our routine work of care and development of Inquirers and Candidates.
- Ordination examinations for English Second Language (ESL) candidates may become a significant issue at some point. The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee (PCC) is not yet sensitive to the mission opportunities presented by ESL saints.
- CPM needs to revisit the evolving blessings and liabilities of on-line seminary training.

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<sup>1</sup> F-3.0105

<sup>2</sup> Footnote to G-2.0105

What direction do you see your committee's work going over the next three-five years?

- The challenges of non-traditional students and seminary schedules will impact our processes. CPM intends to remain faithful to both tradition and missional needs.
- G-2.0610 provisions for "Accommodations to Particular Circumstances" may become more frequent and require more  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority approved actions by the presbytery.
- The tension of traditional models and evolving understandings of how we "do" Church will be challenging CPM's work, whether we acknowledge or ignore them.
- While ministry is not a 40-hour week or part-time job, candidates need institutional support with boundaries and self-stewardship to avoid burnout.
- Opportunities beyond an academic degree continue to be a problem for various reasons. When Certified candidates remain uncalled for extended periods, the Church may need to revisit historic paradigms for funding ordered ministry.

How can the Leadership Council be of help to your committee?

- Vigilantly seek out opportunities where candidates might be useful in the work of NCP.
- Recommend Elders identified with experience, wisdom and passion for our mission to Nominations. CPM needs a consistent, full complement of diverse Elders.
- Keep CPM in your prayers. CPM molds the future character of the Church and denomination through decisions large and small that we make in fulfilling this calling.

Remembering Leadership Council's past concern let me include these demographics:

- Status: 8 Inquirers (4 new in 2019); 6 Candidates (5 new in 2019); 4 Recently Certified Ready to Receive a Call; 2 Ordained in 2019.
- Gender: 7 Males; 13 Females.
- Ethnicity: 15 Caucasians; 4 Africans; 1 Asian.
- Age: 11 between 24-37; 3 between 44-46; 6 between 53-64.
  
- 13 NCP congregations have members under care: Arlington, Bethesda, Bradley Hills, Burke, Christ the King, Church of the Pilgrims, Darnestown, Ebenezer, Falls Church, Geneva, Laurel, Potomac, and Saint Mark
- Seminaries where our Candidates study: Austin, Chicago, Columbia, Dubuque, Princeton, Union/Richmond, Union/New York, and Wesley.

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