



National Capital
PRESBYTERY
MISSIONAL · PASTORAL · PROPHETIC

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) Manual of the National Capital Presbytery (NCP)

Approved July 15, 2021
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*“Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. So, my friends, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; but all things should be done **decently and in order.**” (I Corinthians 14:37-40 NRSV)*

**National Capital Presbytery
Commission on Preparation for Ministry
Manual
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Chapter One Foundations and Organization

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M-1.0100 Foundational Matters

M-1.0101 Summary

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of the National Capital Presbytery (NCP) establishes this Manual as an internal guide to its ministry to the Church.

M-1.0102 Mission Statement

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry serves Christ and the Church by aiding members of a congregation within NCP considering a call to become a Teaching Elder in their faithful discernment of a call to serve God. In particular, CPM provides pastoral support, objective guidance and even critical evaluation for members considering a call in the PCUSA, especially when the call process is challenging or complex. CPM must sometimes assist individuals in discerning ministry opportunities outside of ordained office.

M-1.0103 Foundations

In obedience to Christ, the Head of the Church, all matters herein are subject to the authorities recognized as foundational to the CPM’s work are:

1. Holy Scripture
2. Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) including Book of Order (Current editions as amended) (<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/constitutional-services/constitution/>) G-2.06 particularly addresses CPM.
3. NCP Manual
4. Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\) - Resources - Advisory Handbook for Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church \(U.S.A.\) \(pcusa.org\)](https://www.pcusa.org/resources/advisory-handbook-for-preparation-for-ministry-in-the-presbyterian-church-u-s-a/)
5. *Handbook on Standard Ordination Examinations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* https://www.pcusa.org/site/media/media/uploads/prep4min/pdfs/exam_handbook_2019_rel_3-0.pdf.
6. *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12 Edition

M-1.0104 Definitions

In this manual, standard terms used shall be defined as follows:

- **Appendix/Appendices:** Appendices and their contents are provided for information and convenience. These are NOT attended with Manual authority and may become out of date by action of the General Assembly (GA) or authorities related to it.
- **Applicant:** Presbyterians who are inquiring about or have expressed interest in moving toward ordered ministry, but are not yet enrolled as Inquirers;
- **Candidate (upper case):** Those who by action of CPM are moved to that status as defined in G-2.0604;
- **Candidate (lower case):** The collective group of Applicants, Inquirers, Candidates and Certified persons in the care process;
- **Care:** The CPM process of ecclesiastical nurture, encouragement, gatekeeping and assessing of those perceiving and exploring a call to ordered ministry;
- **Certified/Certified Ready to Receive a Call:** Status of a Candidate who has successfully completed Final Assessment as defined in G-2.0607 until ordination.
- **Convener:** Chair of a Liaison Group [see M-1.0405]
- **Inquirer:** All who by action of CPM are enrolled in the care process, but are not yet advanced to the level of Candidate as defined in G-2.0602-03;
- **Liaison Group:** A sub-committee of the CPM;
- **Session Advocate:** A Ruling Elder appointed by Session to advise and support the candidate under care on Session's behalf. Previously called "Session Liaison."

M-1.0105 Abbreviations

Throughout this manual, the following abbreviations used are:

- CCRRC Candidate Certified Ready to Receive a Call
- CRRC Certified Ready to Receive a Call
- CPM Commission on Preparation for Ministry
- EC Executive Committee
- FA Final Assessment
- FAC Final Assessment Commission
- FAM Final Assessment Moderator
- LG Liaison Group
- NCP National Capital Presbytery
- PCUSA Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- PIF Personal Information Form (resume)
- SBT Session Briefing Team

M-1.0200 Organization

M-1.0201 Membership by Nomination and Election

The Nominations Committee of NCP is charged with recruiting Ruling Elders¹ and Teaching Elders/Ministers of Word and Sacrament in as nearly equal numbers as possible, and with care to observe the principles of inclusive representation, to serve on CPM. NCP elects members for up

¹ Including Certified Christian Educators

to a 3-year term. Members are eligible for renomination up to a maximum of 6 years on CPM. Upon election by the NCP (unless a specified term is stated otherwise) the presbyter shall receive all rights and privileges of membership on the CPM. Full participation in the work of the CPM includes mentoring at least one candidate. While the Presbytery Manual sets the number of members, if that number becomes insufficient to provide care to each candidate, the Leadership Council should be requested to expand the membership.

M-1.0202 Ceasing of Membership

Members who cease to be a member of NCP or of a Congregation of NCP shall ordinarily cease to be members of CPM. Any member may communicate their desire to resign from CPM by formally notifying the Nominations Committee, with a cc to the Chair of CPM. Members who fail to request excused absence or participate in the work of CPM for a period of 6 months shall be noted in the minutes and their position may, in consultation with Nominations, be declared vacant after 3 additional months or the end of the fiscal year.

M-1.0203 Participation and Excused Absences

Members are expected to participate in the work of CPM on a regular basis through attendance and participation in the work of their LG, the whole CPM, as a Liaison to a Candidate, and for Special Committees and services. When unable to be present, excused absences may be requested by communicating this to the Convener, Chair and Clerk as early as practicably possible.

M-1.0204 Conflict of Interest

Members should also avoid the appearance of any conflict of interest as much as possible. If a direct benefit to self or family, or a close personal or professional relationship is involved, as persons of integrity, Presbyters should limit, abstain or absent themselves from deliberation and/or voting. The Chair and Conveners are available for consultation on such ethical considerations.

M-1.0205 Discretion and Confidentiality

Due to the nature of the CPM's work and the potential of doing serious damage to the lives and reputations of others, CPM and LG discussions and materials must be handled with holy confidentiality and care. Members and Officers should only share private or negative data beyond the LG where a legitimate need to know exists. Since any majority vote is the action of the whole, a matter should not be litigated further than the CPM. The right of a significant minority of the LG to present a minority report should not be employed lightly. The Convener, out of respect, should consider informing the CPM when a motion is far from unanimous while speaking favorably of the majority position. The CPM, thus advised, may act with care, but should not dishonor the LG's work and acquaintance with a candidate.

M-1.0206 Mutual Forbearance and Decorum

Members are expected to work with integrity, wisdom, civility, discretion, love and mutual forbearance. The nature of CPM's work can degenerate into adversarial sin which does not reflect the relationship of the Persons of the Holy Trinity who always reflect glory to Others. Therefore, all discussion must be phrased in decorous language, and reflect the Historic Principles (F-3.01), realizing that "...Truth is in order to goodness. . ." and there are "...truths and forms with regard to which [persons] of good characters and principles may differ. . ." Nevertheless, the force of our work will receive "the approbation of an impartial public and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church Universal."

1.0300 Meetings

1.0301 Overview

CPM meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month from September to August, except on national or ecclesiastical holidays. All meetings open and close with prayer, invoking Divine guidance. In irregular circumstances, electronic meetings may be held in accordance with standards of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, current edition. July and August meetings are traditionally only called when pertinent business is pending.

So that Members can make informed decisions, access to information should be provided with ample time for review. All paperwork for LG meetings with an Applicant, Inquirer or Candidate should be circulated at least 3 days before a meeting, and members are expected to have read over all materials before an LG meeting.

M-1.0302 Stated Meetings

Stated meetings are held in September, November, January, March, May, June, July and August² at 7:30 PM. The quorum shall be one half of the CPM. Because LGs frequently schedule time both before and after the Stated meeting, a Docket should be planned to accomplish all work within 1 to 1¼ hours. If extra time is needed in plenary meeting, the Conveners should be made aware of this as soon as practical for good planning and stewardship of candidates' time. The Minutes and a Docket should be sent electronically at least 48 hours ahead of Stated meetings. If May or June minutes cannot be approved, a Minute Approval Committee should be appointed to report in September.

M-1.0303 Work Meetings

October, December, February and April meetings are set aside for LG work sessions with more ample time at the call of their Convener. Preparation sessions for Final Assessment may be best handled at these times.

M-1.0304 Work Night Special Meeting Provision

²The EC may move to dispense with a June meeting at the May meeting if no Final Assessments are held after the May meeting and the EC is unaware of any pending business. July and August Stated meetings are only called if the EC finds them necessary.

If concise, non-controversial and pressing business exists, at the call of the Chair, an official Special Meeting can be held at 8:00 PM with a quorum of 7, and should be limited to no more than 15 minutes. Business pending should be circulated within 48 hours of the meeting and no other business is in order.

M-1.0305 Final Assessment

The Calendar shall annually provide for Final Assessment (FA) Meetings in accord with M-4.0000. Special Final Assessment Meetings may be authorized by CPM for cause. Since it is ordinarily not practical to handle more than 2 FA on any day or at one time, the EC should plan ahead. If necessary, the EC may approve FA in the afternoon or on an alternate day. This shall be an official Stated Meeting if approved by CPM at a Stated meeting. Such provisions may be applied also if travel, availability or other pressing issues arise. If necessary, FA may be done electronically, but the advantage of a FA occurring in one space is always preferable.

M-1.0400 Officers

M-1.0401 Overview and Executive Committee

Officers of the CPM shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, and a Clerk. A Convener of each Liaison Group (LG) shall be nominated by the Chair and elected by CPM. NCP Staff for CPM shall be enrolled *ex officio* with voice but not vote. As needs arise, CPM may designate other officers by majority vote. These elected officers shall form the Executive Committee (EC) to coordinate the work of CPM. The EC may only act on behalf of CPM in extraordinary matters and must report all actions for ratification at the next stated meeting of CPM. Officers shall be guided by F-3.0107's principle "That all Church Power . . . is only ministerial and declarative."

M-1.0402 Chair

A Chair shall be elected by the NCP Leadership Counsel upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. The Chair shall preside over CPM meetings and have those administrative authorities necessary to fulfill the functions of the office. Other duties include:

- A. Be the point of contact with the General Assembly (GA);
- B. Represent the CPM to the Leadership Council and before NCP;
- C. Assign members of Liaison Groups pending ratification by CPM;
- D. Assign new Inquirers to a Liaison Group pending ratification by CPM;
- E. Serve as *ex officio* member of all LGs and Special Committees;
- F. Appoint all Special Committees;
- G. Propose an annual calendar for CPM;

M-1.0403 Vice Chair

The Vice Chair may be elected by NCP Leadership Council, or shall be elected by the CPM for a one-year term. If NCP does not elect a Vice Chair, the incumbent shall be given preference for

reelection or the Executive Committee may nominate a member for election. Duties of the Vice Chair shall be:

- A. Preside in the absence or incapacity of the Chair, and fill an uncompleted term of a Chair;
- B. Coordinate the filing of official paperwork on Inquirers or Candidates, verifying its completeness and accuracy;
- C. Serve in other leadership responsibilities as needed;

M-1.0404 Clerk

A Clerk shall be elected for a one-year (renewable) term to formally record the transactions of the CPM. In addition to actions of the CPM, the Minutes shall report attendance, and all items for information relating to any Inquirer or Candidate. Following approval, the Clerk's signed minutes shall be held by the Office of the Stated Clerk of NCP. If a Clerk must be recruited who is not a member of CPM, they shall be an Elder or Minister of NCP who may be enrolled *ex officio* with voice but not vote.

M-1.0405 Conveners

A Convener for each LG shall be appointed by the Chair and elected to a one-year (renewable) term. A Convener may also serve as Vice Chair. The Convener is a fore-person, coordinator or shepherd of the LG and shall nurture a shared ministry. The duties of a Convener include:

- A. Schedule meeting times and locations for the LG with appropriate time for pending work;
- B. Moderate LG meetings, assuring work is done prayerfully with decency and order;
- C. Appoint a Liaison for each candidate; monitoring their care and nurture;
- D. Move all items for action (based upon majority vote of the LG members present);
- E. Present to CPM all items for information appropriately belonging in the Minutes or giving advance notice of actions;
- F. Consult with the Chair regarding any concerns or growing issues in the work of the LG;
- G. Assure each candidate meets at least annually with the LG (or every 3 years after being Certified Ready to receive a Call);
- H. Coordinate passing on of Liaison relations as any member rotates off CPM;
- I. Assure that all LG members are notified of any meeting and provided with all materials necessary to make informed decisions;
- J. Maintain an accessible file for each candidate available when LG meets with candidate.

M-1.0406 Staff (*ex officio*)

When a member of the Presbytery Staff is designated to serve in either an Administrative or Support capacity with the CPM, that person(s) shall be enrolled as a member of the CPM *ex officio* with voice but not vote. Duties include:

- A. Preserve and maintain official CPM files in a locked or restricted space;
- B. Receive and assemble Applicant paperwork, forwarding it to the LG Convener designated by the Chair when complete;
- C. Assure all required actions are reported to NCP in a timely manner;
- D. Advise the Stated Clerk if Docket time is required at a presbytery meeting;
- E. Enter approved information into the GA database as needed;

- F. Maintain rolls with current status and contact information of members and candidates;
- G. Circulate the Call of Stated Meetings needed materials;
- H. Coordinate mailings to candidates and members when needed or requested including:
 - a. Each October, a letter to each candidate with contact information for Liaison, Convener and Chair;
 - b. When a change of status action occurs;
 - c. Scholarship availability (to any candidate qualifying);
- I. Respond to routine inquiries and requests related to CPM as needed, referring matters to the proper officer and advising the Chair as necessary;
- J. Maintain standard form letter templates as needed, verifying updates with the Chair.

M-1.0407 Right of the Floor

The Chair shall by unanimous consent grant the Right of the Floor (without vote) to Presbytery officials who visit a CPM meeting. This shall include the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Chair of Leadership Council, General Presbyter, Nominating Committee Chair (or designee), or Committee on Ministry Chair (or designee). Other special guests may be accorded such rights with the consent of the CPM. This shall not preclude the CPM moving to enter Executive Session.

M-1.0500 Liaison Groups

M-1.0501 Formation

When first elected to CPM, each member shall be appointed by the Chair to a LG, a standing committee of the CPM tasked with Care for assigned candidates. Traditionally there are 4 LGs. Care shall be taken that both Ruling and Teaching Elders, multiple ethnicities, congregations and theological positions are represented as fairly as possible in each LG. Due to rotation, this may change from year to year, but the continuity of relations with the candidates necessitates not reassigning members to another LG. All LG members share responsibility and authority delegated to the LG.

M-1.0502 Quorum

The quorum of an LG is the majority of its members. When necessary, a minimum of three including the Convener may act and seek ratification at the next meeting when a quorum is present. When a motion goes to CPM without a quorum of the LG present, the Convener should advise CPM of the lack of a quorum and offer details in support of the motion as needed.

M-1.0503 Assignment to Care of LG

All Applicants shall be assigned to a LG by the Chair with CPM approval. Ordinarily the same LG will continue Care of an Inquirer or Candidate to the point of Ordination or withdrawal from the Care process. Should any irregularity arise necessitating a change of LG, the Chair in consultation (if necessary) with the Staff, Stated Clerk or General Presbyter shall propose the needed motion, providing the minimum sufficient information allowed or required.

M-1.0504 Liaison

A Liaison shall be appointed by the Convener to serve as a mentor and primary contact with an Inquirer/Candidate throughout the process. Each Liaison should provide periodic updates to the LG on the Inquirer/Candidate's progress and status, consulting with the Convener to arrange personal visits with the LG so that no undue delays prevent reaching Final Assessment around the time of completing seminary or at the 2-year point unless the LG sees cause to move more deliberately.

The Liaison should advise the Convener as soon as possible if they will (or may) be leaving CPM for any reason. Arrangements can be made for appointment of a new Liaison. When such changes are effective or announced, a candidate should be advised in writing who their new Liaison will be and how to contact them. Orderly changes of Care must be handled as training for healthy changes of Call throughout a ministerial career.

M-1.0506 Transition Planning

In March or April, each Convener shall review which terms of the members of their LG are expiring in August. The Convener should confidentially inquire of each one eligible to return for another term, whether they are inclined to return for another term if asked.³ Each member rotating off should prepare a narrative confidential memo about the candidate which, along with a copy of any files they have assembled should be handed off to the Convener by the May or June meeting for the benefit of the Convener in identifying a new Liaison and of that new Liaison. This document should go to the Convener, Chair and Staff for the file. It may be shared with the new Liaison.

A Convener who is completing service to CPM should likewise prepare a confidential memo on the LG noting the members and their work; any observations about the ethos and functionality of the LG, the status and concerns about Candidates; and any information appropriate to efficient continuation of the LG's work. This should be given to the Chair (or designated Chair nominee) in June. Recommendations regarding potential Conveners should be discussed. This document should go to the Chair, Vice-Chair and a Chair-elect.

M-1.0600 Special Committees

M-1.0601 Scholarship

A Scholarship Committee of 3 – 5 representative members shall be elected annually at the January Stated Meeting, or an Adjournment of that meeting. The Chair may designate one of the volunteers/nominees to chair the committee when stating the motion for election by CPM. The special committee shall rise at the completion of its work.

M-1.0602 Action

The Scholarship committee's report shall be a Special Order at the May Stated meeting of CPM and shall be communicated to the Stated Clerk and Treasurer of NCP in sufficient time to meet

³ The names of those willing should be communicated by email to the Nominations Committee liaison.

the Budget Committee process. Action is not finalized until approved by NCP. Staff shall advise each recipient of the presbytery's decision.

M-1.0602 Ordination Exam Readers

The standard Ordination Exams are administered by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates (PCCC). The Bible Content Exam is offered on the first Friday in February and the Friday before Labor Day. These are graded on-line.

The Senior Ordination Exams (Ords) are offered in the winter, spring and fall. The dates are posted on the OGA Website. NCP annually elects Ruling and Teaching Elders to grade these exams when administered. The OGA sets a week for reading these exams soon after their administration. At the November meeting, the CPM shall nominate from its members (or if needed, recent members or gifted presbyters) the number of readers needed for the year; NCP will confirm these readers. A reader needs to be able to devote as much of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the reading week as possible until the task is completed.

M-1.0603 Final Assessment Commission

The Special Committee of those elected to a Final Assessment panel are commissioned to act on behalf of the CPM and the NCP. [See M-4.0104] The Report of the FAC shall be entered in the minutes of the next Stated Meeting.

M-1.0604 Session Briefing Team (SBT)

A special committee shall be formed of CPM members with a minimum of one year of service on CPM to meet with and brief the Session of a congregation with a member interested in coming under care of NCP/CPM. The Conveners should nominate a minimum of three members from their LG whose gifts and understanding of the process can be articulated in a positive way. As this team is invited to regular session meetings throughout the presbytery, care should be taken to find members from throughout the presbytery and with flexible schedules.

The Staff and Chair shall coordinate with the Moderator of Session for the SBT to meet with the Session at the meeting where they will be acting on recommending a candidate. If an SBT has met with any Session within three years, this visit may be optional if the Moderator believes it is not useful and there has been no issue with other candidates from that congregation.

The EC shall train all members and provide them with an approved outline and a packet of materials to share with the Session in about 15 – 20 minutes plus any question time needed. The packet and presentation shall address:

- A. Reformed and Presbyterian understanding of Call;
- B. Educational Requirements and Ecclesiastical preparation;
- C. Session's role in confirming the presence of pastoral gifts;
- D. Session's responsibility for prayer and care;
- E. Role of Session Advocate (M-2.0102).

M-1.0605 Proactive Ministry Development Committee

[This important Committee's work is left for later CPM's to develop.]

M-1.0606 Manual Review Committee

Every five years⁴ in January a Manual Review Special Committee (MRC) of 3-7 members shall be appointed by the Chair to review this Manual. One of the Conveners shall chair the committee, and a minimum of 2 committee members with 5 or 6 years of service on CPM shall be appointed. They shall propose any amendments necessitated by changes to the *Book of Order* or other authority; and other needed updates. The MRC shall report to CPM not later than the May meeting with all amendments circulated one week ahead of the meeting.

The MRC report shall include a section that addresses Manual provisions it finds have been neglected and proposals for restoring them. These should be included in the report, read at a Stated meeting and recorded in the Minutes.

M-1.0700 Other considerations

M-1.0701 Due Notice

The Minutes and Docket for all stated meetings shall be circulated no later than 48 hours ahead of the regular meeting. Documents for action shall be included. The Point of Order of any one member regarding any document not circulated with the call shall provide up to 5 minutes reading time before action is taken.

M-1.0702 Conflicts of Interest

Care shall be taken at all steps in the Candidacy process to avoid or mitigate all unfair bias or conflicts of interest.

A candidate and his/her pastor or any family member shall not ordinarily work within the same LG. Other CPM members who sense an inability to be objective, are aware of any personal benefit to themselves, or believe a perception of impropriety may exist, should at all times abstain from voting, or request to absent themselves from deliberation. An LG member with a minor potential conflict of interest should not serve as a Liaison to any Inquirer, though they may assume that role for a Candidate whose Liaison concludes membership on CPM by appointment of the Convener.

At Final Assessment, to achieve a representative panel, if it is necessary to appoint CPM members with minor potential conflicts of interest, they shall be a minority of the panel, and may debate but should abstain from any split votes.

M-1.0703 Document Security

All candidate's forms, reports and submissions including particularly the psychological exam results, are the property of the CPM. Whether circulated electronically or in hard copy, all

⁴ Years ending in 5 or 0.

members are honor bound to exercise care in handling these. No material shall be circulated, shown or given to anyone outside the LG and EC⁵ without a legitimate need to know. While current files should be maintained securely through the care process, it is encouraged to shred documents which will no longer be needed.

All members are subject to censure for mishandling CPM materials up to removal from office if derogatory information—both written or oral--is shared or lost.

M-1.0800 Manual

M-1.0801 Authority

This Manual is the property of the CPM, established by vote and subject to review by the Leadership Council of NCP. The Manual consists of six chapters. Appendices, the Library of Forms and other resources are attached and printed with it, but these do not carry Manual authority.

M-1.0802 Amendment

Once established, the Manual may be amended at any time needed by the CPM with previous notice and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the CPM. Amendments are proposed either by the Manual Review Committee [M-1.0606] or by motion of any member(s) of CPM, or at the direction of Leadership Council. The written text of all proposed amendments must be reviewed by the EC for comment and circulated with the call of the meeting.

Amendment of Appendices requires previous notice, but only a simple majority vote.

Additions or amendments to the Library of Forms, indices and other supporting pieces attached to the Manual require only approval of the EC and a simple majority vote.

M-1.0803 Accessibility

A current hard copy of this manual shall be given to all new members of CPM when they are elected. An electronic copy should also be circulated with the Call of the September meeting to all members. The Manual and forms shall also be accessible on the NCP website.

⁵ A trusted professional Administrative Assistant may be instructed to file these securely.

Chapter Two Inquirer

“...Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who wanted to be priests he consecrated... This matter became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.” (I Kings 13:33-34; NRSV)

M-2.0100 Beginning the Process

M-2.0101 Session Consultation

Members of a Congregation in NCP sensing a Call to ministry in the PCUSA are encouraged to begin a dialogue with their Pastor and Session. They usually must have been an Active Member (G-1.0402) for not less than six months. The Moderator or Clerk of Session will initiate conversation with CPM. Resources are available on the NCP website (www.thepresbytery.org). A CPM Session Briefing Team (SBT) member can be invited to meet with the Session to describe the process and deliver a packet of information.

Session, knowing the member of their congregation better than others in this process, shall review

1. the Applicant’s sense of call and understanding of the Presbyterian Church;
2. the Applicant’s involvement in the ministry and mission of the congregation for a minimum of 6 months; and
3. the Applicant’s gifts for ministry.

Sessions are obligated to take their endorsement of a call seriously and may assign a small discernment committee to explore an Applicant’s sense of call. Following review of application Form 1A-C and discussion with the Applicant, the Session shall vote on recommending the Applicant to be referred to the CPM. If a majority vote is received, the Clerk of Session shall transmit Forms 1A-C (www.pcusa.org/prep4min/cpmform.htm), to the Staff of CPM at the NCP Office. The Session shall commit itself to regular prayer for and support of their member. Session will complete Form 1D and submit it to the Presbytery office.

The Session should budget for the Applicant’s psychological exam expense. [See M-2.0106]

M-2.0102 Session Advocate (SA)

The Session should appoint an Elder (does not need to currently be on Session) who knows the Applicant as Session Advocate to walk with the candidate through the process. The SA is encouraged to attend all meetings of the LG when the candidate appears, should be invited to speak, and particularly should attend Final Assessment. This Elder should be gifted to:

- A. encourage and support the candidate;
- B. understand and respect committee processes;
- C. objectively reflect on encounters with the LG, clarifying with the Candidate perceived misunderstandings;

- D. Assist the LG in seeing any potential misapprehensions;
- E. Advocate for the Candidate when necessary;
- F. Report periodically to Session
- G. Maintain close contact with the Candidate and should be able to contact the Liaison and Convener.

M-2.0103 Requirements

M-2.0104 Presbytery Preliminary Process

The Clerk of Session shall forward Forms 1A through 1D to the Staff person at the NCP office. Staff shall send letters to listed references.

M-2.0105 Psychological Exam

Staff shall facilitate setting up the psychological exam with Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia (CPC), McLean, VA. (or the current contracted organization) using Form 1A. Special requests for evaluation by other organizations can be considered for reason, provided comparable coverage can be assured from credentialed organizations. The CPC evaluation consists of three segments:

- A. An initial appointment of approximately 3-5 hours. This includes an interview and several written assessments;
- B. A follow-up interview lasting about one hour. CPC will compile a report and schedule
- C. A final appointment lasting approximately ½ to 1 hour to discuss the confidential written report that CPC will send to CPM.
- D. The battery of instruments used shall include at a minimum the following (or recognized equivalents) and other exams deemed necessary and/or useful by the CPC.:
 - a) The MMPI-2 (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (or a recognized equivalent).
 - b) Substance Abuse Subtle Symptom Inventory (SASSI)
 - c) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO B)

The evaluation's total cost is currently \$1500. This cost may change. This cost is traditionally shared. If this expense is problematic for the Applicant or the Session, that issue should be communicated to CPM's Chair who will take any additional costs to NCP to the CPM for major vote approval.

- 40% is paid for by the presbytery,
- 30% is billed to the Session of the church of membership;
- 30% is the Applicant's responsibility.

Issues identified in or by the psychological exam are neither to be dismissed nor invested with unquestioning authority. These can identify areas of grave warning that suggest ministry is not an appropriate calling; and they can identify significant but not disqualifying personal issues that can be addressed in the Inquirer and Candidate phases. Because of the nature of the content of the psychological exams, these are handled with the highest level of confidentiality. Their contents shall not be shared outside the LG and the Executive Committee of CPM due to the

damage even excerpts of their content can do to the reputation of a sibling in Christ. Violation of this confidentiality may expose the member to censure within the CPM.

M-2.0106 Inquirer Package

Staff shall review paperwork received for completeness of all required forms and take steps to advise the Applicant and Session of any deficiencies. Staff shall also send letters as needed regarding the scheduling of or payment for psychological exams. A hard file shall be established and maintained. Staff shall advise the applicant by email on a periodic basis of any expected materials which are outstanding. Applications to become an Inquirer must include:

- A. Forms 1A-D;
- B. Transcripts from all colleges and graduate schools attended;¹
- C. Responses from all listed references;
- D. Psychological exam results.

M-2.0107 Assignment

When all paperwork is received, Staff shall advise the Chair of the applicant's readiness to be assigned. The Chair will assign the applicant to a LG, taking care to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, to balance the work of all LGs but also address any known special concerns.

All paperwork shall be electronically forwarded to the Convener, who shall share these with the LG members and schedule the initial meeting. Potential Liaisons may be considered and consulted at this time.

M-2.0200 Liaison Group Initial Meeting

M-2.0201 Schedule and Purpose

The LG convener schedules the initial interview allowing at least an hour when as many LG members can be present as possible. LG members are expected to review the applicant's paperwork and should bring a preliminary copy of Forms 2A and 2B to the interview.

Opening with prayer, the Convener can remind all gathered that:

"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 the call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the Applicant's suitability for ordered ministry." (G-2.0603)

M-2.0202 Introductions

Before continuing, all LG members should introduce themselves, noting their order of ministry, congregation, and other information to build personal connections. It is appropriate to indicate how long each LG member has been on CPM or when they will rotate off. After the Session

¹ Reports from Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Institution Contact persons are welcomed and encouraged

Advocate has been introduced, the Applicant should be invited to introduce themselves and share their sense of call.

M-2.0203 Prepared Materials Review

Discussion of the Inquirer Package shall consider the Form 1B Questions for Discussion. At this point in the process, particularly for applicants who have not begun or completed a theological education, questions about the statement of faith should be limited to general rather than technically theological points. The Convener should rule out of order questions beyond the applicant's current preparation. The LG should seek to hear the applicant's understanding of and commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Stewardship of resources, family and debt revealed on Form 1C should be discussed as theological concerns. If the situation of the applicant does not make this applicable, the LG can move on.

The choice of Seminary should be discussed. A preference toward Presbyterian Seminaries [Austin, Columbia, Dubuque, Johnson C. Smith, Louisville, McCormick, Pittsburgh, Princeton, San Francisco, Union (Richmond) Union (Charlotte), as well as Auburn and Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico] may provide more direct preparation for the PCUSA ordination exams. Other institutions meeting the standard of G-2.0607c may be appropriate. On-line programs accredited by ATS serve the needs of many students. On-campus programs provide useful developmental opportunities that may give a more fully rounded preparation for ministry.

Because psychological health is important to the exercise of ministry, CPM requires a preliminary psychological assessment by accredited career counsellors engaged by NCP. This assessment informs discussion for the applicant's educational and vocational enhancement purposes and can be predictive of future success or obstacles in ministry. Review of the psychological exam report should include opportunity for the Applicant to respond to the report and any discoveries.

Throughout the interview, LG members should seek areas where the applicant expresses concerns for growth or discussion identifies areas needing to be addressed. Concerns highlighted by the psychological report which were raised in the interview may be included as concerns to be discussed as potential goals.

M-2.0204 Executive Session

When sufficient discussion is completed, the Convener should suggest the applicant and SA be excused, (but stay available) so that the committee may discuss next steps. They should be assured they will be invited back shortly. If the Convener believes it necessary or useful, the SA may be invited to share any thoughts or information the LG may not have learned before they leave the room.

The Convener will entertain a motion that the Applicant be enrolled as an Inquirer. Ordinarily, this will be the motion of the LG. If there are areas of concern, an LG may postpone action to

another meeting (which will be clearly discussed with the Applicant. As a rule, apart from significant cause, CPM does not refuse to enroll as an Inquirer those who seek to pursue ordained ministry. If a motion is seconded, discussion is allowed, and a vote will be taken.

The Convener at this point should appoint a Liaison to work with the Inquirer, whether by seeking a volunteer, or based upon prior consultation. This member should ideally be able to serve 2-4 years on CPM—through to Final Assessment if the process moves smoothly. This appointment may be approved by unanimous consent.

Suggested goals (based upon the work in the last paragraph in M-2.0203) should be discussed as a LG. Concerns identified do not all need to be listed on Form 2A, but the Liaison should maintain a list of all issues not added to the goals of Inquiry and work informally with the Inquirer to address these if they become concerns later in the process.

M-2.0205 Reconvening

The Applicant and SA shall be invited back to the meeting space and advised of the LG's decision-- pending approval by the CPM. If invited to become an Inquirer, the Applicant and LG shall discuss potential growth objectives identified for the period of Inquiry. If not invited to become an Inquirer, the Applicant shall continue working with LG recommendations and return after a specified period. The Convener shall formally announce appointment of the Liaison.

The LG and the Inquirer shall agree upon growth objectives to list on Form 2A. The form shall be signed by the Inquirer and Liaison.

M-2.0300 Official Action of CPM

M-2.0301 LG Motion -- CPM Action

The Convener shall move on behalf of the LG that the Applicant be enrolled as an Inquirer. In speaking to the motion, the Convener should mention the congregation of membership, indicate the college and/or seminary and any other pertinent detail so that the CPM can make an informed decision. A majority vote of those present is required.

M-2.0302 Provisional Motions

To facilitate efficiency, CPM will entertain provisional ("If the way be clear...") motions when the LG will be meeting after the Stated meeting or-before the next stated meeting when no reasonable suggestion is found that the motion would not be favorable. When this practice is used, a subsequent oral report at the next meeting must confirm actions taken. Likewise, the Convener may give notice of an anticipated motion when the LG will meet later and want the CPM effective date to be the date of the LG's meeting.

M-2.0303 Forms

Following CPM action, the Chair shall sign any required forms and these shall be given to the Staff (if present) or to the Vice Chair who should review the form for completeness, then assure that the forms are delivered to the NCP offices for inclusion in the official file.

Staff should assure that an electronic PDF copy of the fully signed forms are sent to the Inquirer, Liaison, Convener and Chair for their files. The Liaison and Convener should strive to maintain a complete hard file of all signed forms should the LG have any questions, or either rotates off CPM—at which time that file can be passed on to their successor. Other LG members are prudent to save a separate file of all circulated papers and their notes for each candidate which can be carried to future meetings with a candidate.

M-2.0304 Liaison-Inquirer relationship

The Liaison is the primary contact between the Inquirer and the LG. Liaisons should pursue periodic communication as is appropriate considering distance and scheduling. Facetime meetings, regular email, skype or phone conversations should be priorities for developing a mentoring relationship. As questions arise that the Liaison is unclear about, the Convener should be consulted. Based upon such contacts, each Liaison should share with the LG appropriate updates. The Liaison should also remind the Convener about the need for annual consultations or advancement meetings with the LG. The Liaison should also encourage the Inquirer throughout the process to take ordination exams and prepare appropriate paperwork to reach Final Assessment without undue delay.

M-2.0305 Required meetings

Inquirers are expected to meet with their LG a minimum of once every 12 months. Legitimate travel expenses are reimbursable based upon approval by the Convener and submission of documentation. [See M-6.0100] The Annual Consultation or Advancement to Candidacy are the regular modes for these meetings.

M-2.0400 Expedited Process Variation

M-2.0401 Irregular / Non-traditional process

As provided for in G-2.0601 (Accommodations to Particular Circumstances) if good or sufficient reasons make it appear that the regular 2-year minimum process is not mandatory, the LG shall advise the CPM when moving to enroll the Inquirer of its intent to invoke this accommodation. A simple majority of the CPM at this point is required to proceed. When all requirements for Final Assessment are satisfied, a two-thirds affirmative vote of CPM is required to request approval by NCP (a three-fourths affirmative vote is required) to waive the time limitations of G-20602.

While the process may be expedited, the substantive requirements for ordination as defined by the *Constitution* and this Manual may not be compromised. The study of both Greek and Hebrew languages and exegesis are expected of all PCUSA candidates. Alternate means of meeting the

language requirements may be considered and approved by the CPM if satisfactory and should be noted in the Minutes.

M-2.0402 Situations for Expedited Process

Ordinarily, Expedited Processing shall be limited to the following situations or ones analogous to them:

- A. Presbyterians who have completed an M.Div. or equivalent theological education with other qualifications for ministry, and whose current ministry and sense of call are appropriate to ordination;
- B. Presbyterians who have pursued ministry in another Reformed denomination or branch of Presbyterianism before scruple or distinctive limitation became an obstacle; (Full and honest documentation is required). Separation from a sister church in a schismatic or disciplinary matter is automatically disqualifying from Expedited Processing.

M-2.0403 LG Requirements

Should the LG discover issues in the applicant's psychological exams, Bible Content exam, references, paperwork or interview process, the LG should not proceed before resolution.

After the CPM enrolls the individual as an Inquirer, the LG may schedule a meeting to advance the Inquirer to Candidacy [M-3.0300]. This may be moved as soon as the next stated meeting of CPM. A passing grade on the Bible Content exam is not required, but registration for the next offered Bible Content exam should be documented. Passing all standard ordination exams cannot and will not be waived. The LG shall document all steps carefully in preparation to request NCP action.

M-2.0500 Immigrant Congregants

Within the congregations of immigrant communities affiliating with NCP, those who have studied for ministry with sister denominations around the world that are in correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may be referred to CPM by the Committee on Ministry (COM) or Church Development Committee with or without guidance. Some will reflect traditional Applicants, but are not part of a formal NCP congregation. CPM is responsible to balance its mission to uphold the standards of the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition with the special mission needs of congregations welcoming non-English oriented believers. If accommodations are needed for such Inquirers, the Executive Committee shall review and concur on a plan of action that adapts the principles of this Manual for the situation and present this to CPM for concurrence. Such plans are not contracts, allowing room for the Holy Spirit to reveal needed refinements.

M-2.0600 Special Provisions

M-2.0601 Bible Content Exam

An Inquirer is encouraged to register for the Bible Content Exam by the end of the first year of seminary. Except for those under M-2.0500 and/or M-2.0600, the Bible Content Exam must be passed before moving to Candidacy. Inquirers do not need written permission to take this exam, however the Chair should be made aware when registering. Appendix 2-1 provides guidance for a Liaison and Inquirer's discussion and preparation.

M-2.0602 Supervised Ministry

- A. Most seminaries require and coordinate supervised ministry or field work opportunities. CPM will require a minimum of one (1) year service in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation with an installed Presbyterian minister in good standing with the local presbytery. This supervised ministry should include attendance as a minimum of one stated meeting of that Presbytery. Supervised service in any congregation where the Inquirer or Candidate is or has been a member or has close relatives in leadership is ordinarily not acceptable. Such service should begin in the second year of seminary.
- B. Inquirers and Candidates studying in a seminary that can or does not facilitate and oversee such field placements should advise their Liaison and LG so that CPM can reach out to the local presbytery.
- C. Reasonable expectations of time and fair remuneration are expected of all field work situations. As a principle of stewardship, work expectations which hinder adequate study, or exceed the level of preparation for ministry are a form of abuse. The LG shall counsel any Inquirer or Candidate regarding the setting and observing of boundaries in ministry. Persistent abusive behavior may require intervention by the CPM; CPM may list a church or pastor unacceptable to NCP for field work moving forward.

M-2.0603 Clinical Pastoral Education

A minimum of one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)² has traditionally been required or recommended in NCP. This requirement or recommendation should be discussed with the candidate clearly at this time. An LG may urge more than a single unit. In cases where the equivalent of this experience has been attained or achieved, or the circumstances of the Candidate are deemed not to require it, the LG on its own may, by majority vote of all members, excuse the requirement. This vote shall be reported to the CPM.

Seminaries and ACPE can help to identify accredited programs.

M-2.0700 Notification

M-2.0701 Inquirer Letter

² Clinical pastoral education is education to teach pastoral care to clergy and others. CPE is the primary method of training hospital and hospice chaplains and spiritual care providers in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. CPE is both a multicultural and interfaith experience that uses real-life ministry encounters of students to improve the ministry and pastoral care provided by caregivers.

Within two weeks of CPM action, Staff shall mail a letter under the signature of the Chair and Convener advising the Inquirer of CPM's action and effective date. The letter shall name and give contact information for the Chair, Convener, and Liaison (who should be cc'd on this and all similar letters). A copy shall be placed in the file.

M-2.0702 Applicable Policies

The Inquirer letter shall enumerate all policies of NCP, CPM and GA which the Inquirer is/will be subject to as an Inquirer and/or Candidate. Each of these should be available on the NCP website, and includes:

- A. NCP Code of Ethics for Clergy and other Church Professionals;
- B. NCP Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy;
- C. NCP Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Policy.

APPENDICES

Appendix 2-1

Bible Content Exam Preparation Guidance

After Christ, the scriptures are the foundational authority to all we are and do as a Church. Knowledge of the stories and themes of scripture is fundamental to Christ-centered ministry, but too often church members are functionally illiterate in Biblical matters. When confronted by Biblical interpretations that range from ill-informed to heretical, Biblical literacy is the Church's first line of defense. For that reason, Reformed Christians take Bible studies seriously and have required a passing grade on the Bible Content Exam. Since December 2013, NCP has required that this exam be passed before an Inquirer can advance to Candidate.

Daily devotional reading is a spiritual discipline Inquirers should be encouraged to develop in a way that fits them, whether systematically on their own or using the daily lectionary online. This may be best separated from a more academic study of scripture in classes or preparation for leading Bible studies.

CPM has suggested at the minimum to read Genesis and Exodus in the Pentateuch, move through the history writings of Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel, I & II Kings and the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Malachi. In the New Testament CPM has suggested reading the gospels of Matthew and John, then Acts, Romans, I & II Corinthians, Hebrews, and Revelation. Such a survey does not equal the value of reading the Bible in its entirety ahead of taking the exam.

Each Inquirer can benefit by charting the Epistles (and other sections of scripture such as the prophets) the dates and places of writing, the purposes and themes of each letter. Awareness of such information can guide decisions of where a quotation is found.

For those with anxiety about multiple choice examinations, it is recommended:

- Read the entire question and mentally choose an answer before reading the options;
- Eliminate obviously incorrect or trick options;
- Eliminate "All of the above" or "None of the above" if any one option is obviously not so;
- Educated guesses between two probable choices after re-reading a question are often correct;
- Changed answers when a question was read accurately are statistically more often wrong.

Chapter Three Annual Consultation and Variations

“But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through grace, was pleased to reveal [the] Son to me ... I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and ... James the Lord’s brother.” (Galatians 1:15-19 NRSV)

M-3.0100 Annual Consultation

M-3.0101 Requirement Defined

The LG shall meet not less than once every program year with every Inquirer or Candidate under their care; and should try to meet more frequently. [Following Final Assessment, the LG shall meet in person with all CCRRC not less than every 3 years until they are ordained or formally remove themselves from the process.]¹ Specific purposes for certain annual consultations may require variations in form which may be an alternative form of Annual Consultation. Alternate means of meeting may be used when distance, weather and/or other factors make in-person meeting not practical. Transportation costs may be covered by NCP, [See M-6.0100].

M-3.0102 Inability to meet minimum requirement

The LG shall attempt to accommodate all reasonable issues to meeting and need not be rigidly bound by 365-day periods; but the principle of a year should be maintained. Care should be taken so that a candidate is not asked to miss classes. If a candidate is out of the country in mission work or academic study, technological options should be employed, and irregular meeting times may be necessary due to time differences. If no meeting has been scheduled successfully within a year, the LG shall inform CPM of this by the 15th month after the last meeting and each year after that at the Organizational Meeting in September and in May. The LG may clarify the situation with minimal information and invite input from knowledgeable members, but should take care not to prejudice the CPM.

If a candidate has failed to respond, the LG may direct the Liaison or Convener contact the sponsoring congregation of membership, their seminary or known references to verify current contact information and/or status. A memo documenting all such activities should be placed in the official file.

M-3.0103 Scheduling

The Liaison and Convener should consult on the anticipated actions, needs and issues, and find a target date(s) and time to invite the Candidate to meet. Once confirmed, the Liaison should

¹ This portion should be moved to a later chapter if possible

advise the Convener and the LG can be informed. The SA is welcome to attend the Annual Consultation. The Liaison should review what paperwork is needed; Form 3 is ordinarily used. Additional documents may be appropriate such as field education evaluations, course work, transcripts, or references. The Liaison may advise or suggest amendments, but it should be the work of the Inquirer that is circulated.

M-3.0104 Due Notice

The Liaison is responsible for circulating all appropriate paperwork electronically to all members of the LG with a cc copy to the Chair and Staff (for the official file). These materials should be circulated by noon 8 days prior to the scheduled meeting. Word, PDF or a format currently and generally accessible should be used. It is the responsibility of all LG members to (1) advise the Convener if they need to be excused, and (2) read all materials before the meeting. If less than a representative quorum will be attending, the Convener should consider postponement.

M-3.0105 Consultation Meeting

The Convener and/or Liaison may suggest a brief executive session of the LG to review Form 3 or other concerns before inviting the candidate and Session Advocate. This meeting should begin with prayer, ordinarily voiced by the Liaison. Introductions should follow of all LG members, remembering that with a rotating membership, some will be new to the candidate, as well as to the Session Advocate.

The candidate should introduce themselves and give a brief summary of their year, discuss progress toward meeting the growth objectives from the past year (Form 4). Emerging understandings of their call to ministry may be shared. The LG should interactively discuss concerns or items from the prepared paperwork, and goals identified in past years. Ordinarily the Liaison and Session representative should limit their input into this discussion to highlighting apropos affirmations of the candidate, clarifying when the LG may be confused, and assuring the LG receives complete information.

When sufficient time is invested to make informed decisions, any member or the Convener may move the previous question. If approved, the candidate and Session Advocate (SA) may be invited to withdraw from the room so the LG may consult. It should be clear that they will be invited back as soon as the LG has finished.

M-3.0106 Executive Session

The Liaison may move that the annual consultation be sustained. If there is no second, the Convener shall invite discussion of next steps. The LG should review proposed growth objectives and agree what they will (1) propose or (2) require. The Convener may assume unanimous consent or assure that members who have not spoken have input.

M-3.0107 Goal Setting

The candidate and Session Representative should be invited back into the room and advised of the LG's decisions. Requirements should be articulated clearly, and suggestions for growth objectives should be negotiated and added to the form if they are agreeable. It may be appropriate to ask the SA for any observations or edifying words. Final forms may be prepared for signature.

M-3.0108 Closing Prayer

The Convener should close the meeting with prayer or appoint a member who has refrained from any contentious aspect of the meeting if that is of concern.

M-3.0109 Reporting Requirement

The Convener reports as an Item for Information that the LG has sustained the Annual Consultation, or simply that the LG met with the candidate on the effective date. The Convener sends Forms 3 and 4 to the Staff or Vice Chair, or to the Stated Clerk's office at presbytery.

M-3.0200 Advancing from Inquirer to Candidate

M-3.0201 Movement from Inquirer to Candidate

The most common variant of Annual Consultation is the LG's consideration of advancement to Candidacy. Except when a potential "Expedited Process" [See M-3. 0300] situation exists, this variant annual consultation is ordinarily scheduled around a year after enrollment as an Inquirer. This is ordinarily the second most important formal step in the candidacy process and merits extra diligence.

M-3.0202 Bible Content Exam Requirement

An Inquirer must have passed the Bible Content Exam to become a Candidate. Final results of the Psychological exams also must be available if these were waived previously.

M-3.0203 Purpose and Focus

Enrollment as a Candidate reflects CPM's balancing of duties of (1) nurture and gatekeeping, and (2) care for those exploring a call to ministry as well as care for the welfare of the Church of Jesus Christ. A vote on this question is an evaluation of the individual's fitness for ordered ministry.

LG members should also review previous goals and requirements agreed to during previous meetings and the psychological exam reports.

M-3.0204 Scheduling and Due Notice

As prescribed in M-3. 0103-0104, the Convener, Liaison and Inquirer should agree upon a date and time and circulate all materials by noon 8 days ahead of the meeting. Materials (see M-3.0205 and Forms 5A-D and 7A) should also be made available to the SA.

M-3.0205 Outcomes of Inquiry

By the end of the Inquiry Phase, each inquirer shall demonstrate adequate promise for ministry by presenting along with Forms 5A-D, written responses to the following:

- A. A statement of his or her understanding of personal vocation in the reformed tradition and how it relates to his or her sense of call.
- B. A statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the reformed tradition.
- C. An analysis of at least one concept from the personal statement of faith regarding what it suggests about God and humanity.
- D. A statement of what it means to be a Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church.
- E. A statement of self-understanding which reflects the Inquirer's personal and cultural background as it relates to Ministry of Word and Sacrament, and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical and mental health.
- F. A statement of his or her understanding of the tasks Teaching Elders perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for this ministry along with an understanding of where growth is needed.
- G. Narrative summary on how the Inquiry phase has processed and how goals listed on Form 2A have been met or are progressing.
- H. Updates on Supervised ministry and formative learnings from this experience.
- I. Special needs or information CPM should know.

M-3.0206 LG Duties

The forms and written responses are keys to unlocking and discerning the truth needed. The LG should consider the following unspoken concerns in discussing an Inquirer's, written materials:

- A. Pattern(s) of unwillingness or inability to address identified or known sins, conditions or goals may be more important than success in overcoming those patterns.
- B. Emerging understanding of the Church in the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition; are these healthy and harmonious with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
- C. General orientation to the Essential Tenets expressed in F-2 and the Book of Confessions. As the Inquirer is ordinarily still in the process of a theological education, articulating or defending fine points of theology is not appropriate at this time.
- D. Does the individual's self-awareness suggest a pastoral maturity is developing?
- E. What relationship does the Inquirer demonstrate with authority or power (their own power or with those over them)—antagonistic, respectful, abusive or fatalistic? How are these expressed?
- F. Are moral, ethical, missional and stewardship principles demonstrated consistently?

M-3.0207 Outcomes Meeting

The LG may hold a brief executive session of the LG to review paperwork or other concerns before inviting the candidate and Session Representative to meet with the LG. When the Candidate, SA and LG are together the meeting begins with prayer, ordinarily voiced by the

Liaison. Introductions should follow of all present. The Convener may opt to read all or parts of G-2. 0601, G-2. 0603-0604 in stating the purpose of the meeting.

- A. The Inquirer should present a brief summary of their progress, discussing growth objective from the past year and progress made in meeting the objectives. The LG should interactively discuss concerns or items from the prepared paperwork, and goals identified in past years. The Liaison and Convener should both have file copies of the signed forms listing requirements and goals agreed to previously for reference if there is disagreement or need for clarification.
- B. Discussion of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experience or plans should be discussed as part of this meeting if not covered previously. CPE has traditionally been recommended in NCP, and this should be communicated clearly at this time if not already completed. In cases where the equivalent of this experience has been attained or achieved, or the circumstances of the Candidate are deemed not to require it, the LG on its own may, by majority vote of all members, excuse that as a requirement. This vote shall be reported to the CPM.

When sufficient time has been invested to make informed decisions, any member or the Convener may move the previous question. If approved, the candidate and SA may be invited to withdraw from the room so the LG may consult. It should be clear that they will be invited back as soon as the LG has finished.

M-3.0208 Executive Session

The Liaison may move that the Inquirer be advanced to Candidacy. If there is no second, the Convener shall invite discussion of next steps. The LG should review proposed growth objectives and agree what they will (1) propose or (2) require. The Convener should assure that members who have not spoken have input and should not assume unanimous consent on any matter except that an Annual Consultation has been held.

M-3.0209 Negative Decision Procedure

- A. If opting not to advance an Inquirer at the time of this meeting to Candidacy, the LG must advise the Inquirer of its valid concerns and indicate a time frame when the matter will be considered again. If there are (a) significant concerns or (b) the LG has previously not advanced the Inquirer, a formal statement of reasons, concerns, goals and expectations should be prepared. If this is not practical at the time of meeting, the Convener should indicate that there are concerns which the LG wants time to put in writing, but must in general terms communicate verbally before this meeting is completed. The LG should approve such a list at the next meeting and not later than 2 months from this Executive Session. The Chair and file should receive copies of this document.
- B. There is no limit on the times the motion to advance to Candidacy may be considered by an LG. Graduation timing is not a factor in approving this motion. The LG may set reasonable periods of time for accomplishment of such goals of less than 1 year. If after

the LG has considered this question 3 times, and it appears that the LG does not find the Inquirer Suitable for Ordered Ministry (G-2. 0603), the LG shall pastorally begin exploring alternative areas of ministry appropriate to the Inquirer. Such alternative ways of serving the Head of the Church shall not be considered a failure in any way. As such, the LG should not initiate removal from the process of any Inquirer who is invested in the struggle. Instead, the LG should work to discern God's calling of the saint.

- C. The Convener and Liaison should privately discuss the matter with the Chair who may take appropriate steps to meet with the Pastor of the Inquirer, seminary officials or other stakeholders whose participation in pastoral care may be needed.

M-3.0210 Goal Setting

The candidate and Session Representative should be invited back into the room and advised of the LG's decisions—pending approval by CPM. Requirements should be articulated clearly, and suggestions for growth objectives should be negotiated and added to the form if they are agreeable. It may be appropriate to ask the SA for any observations or edifying words. Final forms should be prepared and signed.

M-3.0211 Closing Prayer and follow-up

The Convener should close the meeting with prayer or appoint a member who has refrained from any contentious aspect of the meeting if that is of concern.

The Convener presents Forms 5A-D and 7A to the Staff or Vice Chair, or sends them to the Stated Clerk's office at presbytery. The Convener moves on behalf of the LG as an Item for Action that the Inquirer become a Candidate. If time is for any reason an issue, the Convener may state an effective date of the date the LG and Candidate met as a part of the motionⁱ.

M-3.0212 Liaison Continuing Responsibility

Liaison and Candidate should continue to stay in regular contact, and Liaisons should report to the LG all significant updates and interpret any concerns to the Candidate as needed. The Liaison should be aware of Ordination Exams schedules and needs.

M-3.0300 Expedited Process Advancing to Candidate

M-3.0301 Movement from Inquirer to Candidate

For Inquirers CPM has enrolled with approval for an Expedited Process, [2. 0400], the LG should meet with the Inquirer as soon as is practical, following the applicable guidance of other portions of this Tab.

M-3.0302 Goal Setting

The Liaison shall carefully prepare a list of required items, satisfied or pending including dates and remediation plans, if necessary. Topics include but are not limited to:

- A. Psychological Exam (issues/follow-up required);
- B. Bible Content Exam (dates of registration, taken, and/or passed);²
- C. Study of Greek;
- D. Study of Hebrew;
- E. Exegesis of Old and New Testaments with Hebrew and Greek;
- F. Transcript review (noting any deficiencies):
 - a. Polity (if not studied, is remediation plan needed?)
 - b. Reformed theology (is additional study of Systematics needed?)
 - c. Professional Conduct (or participation in NCP seminars)
- G. CPE Requirements (satisfied, advised, or not being required);
- H. Ordination Exams:
 - a. Polity
 - b. Theology
 - c. Worship
 - d. Exegesis
- I. Final Assessment documents needed;
- J. Concerns of the LG.

Applicable items from this list shall be discussed and attached as goals to the **Form 5C**. From the discovered needs, a reasonable tentative target for FA may be discussed, but not contracted.

M-3.0303 LG Debate and Vote

There shall be opportunity for the LG to discuss the Inquirer's readiness for expedited candidacy in executive session. The Convener shall conduct a vote. Any deficiencies related to G-2. 0607a shall be discussed with the Inquirer.

M-3.0400 Senior Ordination Exams

M-3.0401 Planning for Ordination Exams

During the Candidacy phase, the Liaison and Candidate should look toward Senior Ordination Exams. Ordination exams are offered in the winter, spring and fall. The dates are posted on the OGA Website, and Presbyterian seminaries usually support preparation³ and taking of exams. These exams must all be passed ahead of FA, or an alternative must be approved by NCP in accordance with G-2. 0610. The Exams are:

1. Worship and Sacraments;
2. Theology;
3. Polity;
4. Exegesis.

² Registration to take this exam is a minimum requirement at this point.

³ Dubuque Seminary offers online study of coaching sessions geared toward understanding these exams.

M-3.0402 Timing and Permission

Candidates are encouraged to write all exams in the same test period as early in their academic Senior year as practicable. Permission of the CPM is required for these exams. The Liaison is responsible for moving that the LG approve this. A simple majority vote of the LG members present shall be reported by the Convener to a Stated Meeting and recorded in the Minutes. An exam passed over five years prior to FA may be invalid [M-4. 0702]. The Liaison shall remind their Candidate of this policy.

M-3.0500 Candidate Notification

M-3.0501 Candidate Letter

Within two weeks of CPM action advancing one from Inquirer to Candidate, Staff shall mail a letter under the signature of the Chair and Convener advising the Candidate of CPM's action and effective date. This letter shall include guidance regarding the process for taking Ordination exams, and referring the Candidate to the applicable policies of CPM and NCP which are available on the NCP website, including Expiration of Ordination Exam Validity. [See M-2. 0701].

Chapter Four Final Assessment

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit...was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil... The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus answered him,

“It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

Then the devil...showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world... “To you I will give their glory and all this authority...If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him,

“It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”

Then the devil took him to...the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus answered him,

“It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.” (Luke 4:1-13 NRSV)

Final Assessment is a formal review by the presbytery’s committee to make a determination as to whether a candidate is “ready for examination for ordination pending a call” and so is to be approved to “negotiate for service” so that a call might be pending. It is usually scheduled when a candidate has satisfied the requirements listed in G-2.0607b-d that are easily verifiable. (Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the PCUSA, page 46)

M-4.0100 Overview

M-4.0101 Philosophy

Final Assessment is an appraisal by competent and objective presbyters of the spiritual, emotional, moral, ethical and intellectual preparation of an individual for entrance into ordered ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) As with Jesus’ experience in the desert before beginning the public ministry, this is an opportunity for each Candidate to demonstrate their call and competence for service to the Church in a court of nurturing encouragement rather than an adversarial environment. This is done with prayerful humility by all parties. (See M-1.0304 and M-1.0603)

M-4.0102 Outcomes of Candidacy for Final Assessment

By the end of the candidacy phase, each candidate shall demonstrate readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament as a Teaching Elder. The formal process of prayerful evaluation is known as Final Assessment (FA). Readiness is understood in this way:

- A. Witness to a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
- B. Presentation of a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at an accredited college or university;
- C. Presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery; evidence of a course of study which included 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.
- D. Satisfactory grades on all ordination exams established by the General Assembly.
- E. Supervised practice of ministry.
- F. Ordinarily completion of a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) will be required. In certain circumstances, a majority vote of all the members of the LG may excuse this requirement if the equivalent of CPE has been accomplished in another form or format. (M-3.0206B)

M-4.0103 Eligibility

From the date of advancement from Inquirer to Candidacy, the Liaison and LG shall work intentionally with the Candidate to prepare for FA. Care should be given to avoid unnecessary delays, but the spiritual work should not be sacrificed to graduation dates or other human constructs. FA may be requested by a 2/3 vote of the LG when the following are satisfied:

- A. The individual has been a Candidate (or, in the case of Candidates in the expedited process, have been under care) for at least 10 months;
- B. All Ordination Exams are passed¹;
- C. The Candidate is in the last term of their M.Div. (or equivalent) degree program.

M-4.0104 Ordination Exams

Candidates are encouraged to write all exams in the same test period as early in their academic senior year as practicable. Permission of the CPM is recorded in the Minutes. These exams must all be passed ahead of FA, or an alternative must be approved by NCP in accordance with G-2.0610. If any exam was passed over five years prior to FA, see M-4.0702.

M-4.0105 Administrative Preparation

When the Calendar for each year is approved at the organizational meeting, Staff shall make preliminary reservations with the host church to assure availability. Based upon the probable space needs after the second Stated meeting ahead of FA, Staff shall finalize arrangements with the host church, including confirmation of rooms to be used. If alternate sites are needed, the Executive Committee should be made aware of this immediately.

M-4.0106 Final Assessment Commissions (FAC)

¹ Up to 2 exams being taken/retaken before date of FA should not cause delay in scheduling, though FA will then need to be postponed if the exams are not passed.

The **Final Assessment Moderator (FAM)** is ordinarily the Candidate's Liaison; if this is not practicable the LG Convener and Moderator of CPM shall designate a FAM preferably from the Candidate's LG. The FAM is responsible for sending materials to the FAC at least by noon 8 days ahead of the FA.

The Chair of CPM will nominate a panel of CPM members, known as the **Final Assessment Commission (FAC)** which is commissioned when elected by a simple majority of the CPM. The FAC acts with the full authority of the CPM/NCP (under its delegation) A FAC should have at least 5, and ideally 8-10 members serving as a team. No member of the Candidate's LG, except the FAM, nor anyone with a demonstrable conflict of interest may ordinarily serve on the FAC, as the principle of objectivity gives the FA decision greater authority. All FACs shall have both Ruling and Teaching Elders, both male and female members, and at least 1 member sharing the Candidate's racial/ethnic/other identity background if possible. CPM may authorize the Moderator to recruit recent members of CPM or recognized and gifted presbyters within NCP to serve on a panel if (and only if) needed.

In the rare event of a repeated FA, the selection of the FAC members should include no more than 2 members of any earlier FAC (excluding the FAM). Additionally, these should be presbyters who were neither strong advocates nor adversaries in the earlier FA, and who express a willingness to be both aware and objective so that the FAC is not biased regarding a Candidate. There shall be a majority of the FAC who were not involved in the previous FAC. The EC shall approve all FA documents prior to circulation outside of the LG and may prepare Standing Rules² for the FA to ensure a fair and appropriate process.

M-4.0107 Due Notice

All completed paperwork shall be sent to FAC members by noon 8 days ahead of the FA. FAC members are responsible for reading all materials prior to the FA. Any significant concerns or questions should be directed to the FAM prior to the FA.

M-4.0200 Paperwork

M-4.0201 LG and Candidate

Preliminary to any Annual Consultation (3.0100) or preparation meeting with the LG, a candidate, shall draft five documents based upon G-2.0607, and the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)* (2011). Each heading M-4.0202 - M-4.0205 group should be treated as a separate document. A header for all subsequent pages in each should include the Candidate's name, title of document, date of most current revision and page number. Fonts will be 12 point and margins should be 1 inch, but not less than 3/4 inch. Responsible attribution is expected throughout. Any use of exclusive (non-inclusive) language may be challenged by the CPM, and if found inappropriate or indefensible, may be counted against sustaining the part of the FA where found.

²² Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12th Edition in 2:23-24 may be a resource for this.

M-4.0202 Document 1: Summary Materials

This document should be a basic introduction that includes in one page items such as:

- A. Full name;
- B. Dates of Baptism, Membership, Inquiry and Candidacy (when known/est.);
- C. Church of membership/care (former church memberships are optional);
- D. Seminary attended and official date of graduation (or anticipated graduation);
- E. Other academic degrees (starting with most recent);
- F. Dates passed for all standard ordination exams;
- G. Listing and brief description of supervised practice of ministry experiences; (limit 3-5 lines);
- H. Indication of Sense of Call (limit 5 lines);
- I. Other information to help the FA Panel get to know the Candidate.

M-4.0203 Document 2: Statement of faith

In not more than 1 page, this statement of faith should reflect the Candidate's understanding of Reformed Christian faith with theological accuracy and clarity. A Candidate should be able to defend or speak to each phrase included. The CPM of NCP has traditionally asked that at a minimum the following topics be addressed:

- A. The Trinity;
- B. The nature of humanity;
- C. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ;
- D. The Authority of the Scriptures;
- E. The Sacraments;
- F. The Nature of the Church;
- G. The Mission of the Church;
- H. Eschatology.

As footnotes, parenthetical references and citations take up space, an appendix may be developed in order to support the documentation.

M-4.0204 Document 3: Exegesis and Sermon

The passed Exegesis ordination exam (including comments of the readers) shall be attached to a sermon manuscript based on the scripture used for the Exegesis Ordination Exam. The sermon manuscript should be prefaced with a description of the contemporary need it addresses, and a brief description of the congregation where the Candidate envisions it being preached. This sermon will be preached in front of the Final Assessment panel. The sermon should be no longer than 15 minutes. The sermon does not need to follow any outline that may be required by exegesis exam. The sermon manuscript should footnote ideas or quotations borrowed from other sources, though these need not be communicated in the preaching.

M-4.0205 Document 4: Constitutional (Ordination) Questions

Affirm an understanding of the Constitutional questions (W-4.0404)³ by preparing one to three paragraphs of reflection for each question. These responses will provide a basis for more intense

³ The text provided may be amended in the Constitution which will be the authoritative text:

conversation at FA. While answers will not be exhaustive, they should demonstrate understanding of the question, personal insight, and agreement with the question by addressing aspects such as the:

- A. Meaning, history and purpose of the question;
- B. Experience living out the question in ministry preparation;
- C. Expectations for your ministry related to the question;
- D. Understanding of the Presbyterian and Reformed gifts' place in ministry;
- E. Academic, Pastoral, and Practical integration of the Presbyterian ethos;
- F. Commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

This document should be formatted with the full text of each question (including reference letter) quoted in full using bold font, underlining or some other method of clearly distinguishing the question followed by responses.

M-4.0206 Authority Limitations

The Candidate alone controls and is responsible for the words that represent them. Except for the Exegesis Exam, each of these documents should be received as an amendable work in progress. In its ministerial and declarative role, no Liaison or LG may order a candidate to change anything; however, presbyters' concerns or suggested amendments should be given fair consideration. Only the final version presented to the FA Panel may be released beyond the CPM in any Appeal or Disciplinary matter.

M-4.0207 Exceptions

-
- a.) Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
 - b.) Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
 - c.) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
 - d.) Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
 - e.) Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
 - f.) Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
 - g.) Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
 - h.) Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
 - i.) (3) (For minister of Word and Sacrament) Will you be a faithful minister of Word and Sacrament, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Any deviation or exception to the standards of M-4.0200 should be handled on a case-by-case basis. When an Exegesis exam is taken less than 2 months ahead of FA, the LG may request the substitution of a graded exegesis paper from the Candidate's seminary course as the text for a sermon. For this and any other exception, the LG shall move a workable accommodation no less than 1 stated meeting ahead of the FA.

M-4.0300 LG Preparation Role

M-4.0301 Preliminary Review

When the Liaison and Candidate agree that all paperwork in 3.0300 is in order, the Convener should be consulted to schedule a meeting time with the full LG. Depending on distance and other factors, the LG should plan on at least two meetings with the Candidate, and may need to arrange virtual meetings. The preliminary meeting may be an hour, but the final preparation meeting should allow for as much time as needed to review all matters requiring attention before final assessment. The Convener should reserve meeting space as needed.

M-4.0302 Due notice

The Liaison is responsible for circulating all appropriate paperwork electronically to all members of the LG with cc copies to the Chair and the Session Advocate by noon 8 days prior to the scheduled meeting. Microsoft Word, PDF or a similar document format currently and generally accessible should be used. It is the responsibility of all LG members to review these materials ahead of the meeting. Any member requesting an excused absence should electronically communicate a list of any concerns to members of the LG ahead of the meeting.

M-4.0303 Preliminary Review Meeting/Meetings

Following prayer and introductions, the Convener should give a brief description of the FA process and describe the goals and duties for the current meeting(s).

- A. If multiple meetings are planned, the LG should first review with the Candidate the documents (M-4.0200) for FA, with a preliminary focus on eliminating all grammar syntax and formatting issues. In reviewing documents, the LG should assure that they accurately reflect the Candidate's theology, ecclesiology and philosophy of ministry.
- B. The final preparatory meeting should attempt to simulate the FA meeting, in order that both the Candidate and the FAM are comfortable with their roles at FA.
 - a. It is typical (except by prior arrangement) for the Candidate to preach the sermon based upon their Exegesis ordination exam. The LG should offer both affirmations and suggestions regarding the sermon. Appendix 4-1 may be a guide in preparing the Candidate for FA.
 - b. A review of the Statement of Faith should invite conversation on all areas where any weakness, lack of clarity or potentially controversial statements are found. The LG should assess whether the listed topics of M-4.0203 a-h are adequately

and identifiably covered, and in conformity with the broad range of the Confessions of the Church and the essential tenets as described in F-2.03 – F.2.05. The LG may suggest or urge amendments, but the principle of M-4.0206 must not be violated. The Candidate should be supported in theologically defending their faith and positions.

- c. The Ordination Questions document should be reviewed and discussed. Some questions may be accepted with minimal answers where they may be repetitive, but the overall document should demonstrate an integrated understanding of the Church and ministry.

M-4.0304 LG Final Approval

As the LG's work with the Candidate approaches completion, the LG must affirm that the Candidate is ready for FA. It is appropriate for the LG to excuse the Candidate briefly to discuss privately as needed and vote. The LG shall vote on the 3 documents (3.0303-0305) separately. The Candidate should be notified of the outcome. If the LG finds the Candidate is not prepared to enter ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at this time, the Candidate should be fully briefed; a plan of remedial action developed in conversation with the Candidate.

M-4.0305 Decision to delay approval

Should the LG not sustain the Candidate proceeding to FA immediately, the Convener should notify the Chair as soon as possible so that the appointed FAC can be notified or assigned as needed.

M-4.0400 Expedited Process Special Accommodation Requirement

M-4.0401 Accommodation Approval Prior to Final Assessment

At the point when a Candidate under Expedited Process provisions (M-2.0400 and M-3.0300) has set goals agreed under M-3.0302 which are progressing and has passed all Ordination Exams, the LG, in consultation with the Chair and the Stated Clerk, shall prepare a formal motion for NCP to invoke the Accommodation provisions of G-2.0610. Waiver of the Time Requirements (G-2.0602) shall ordinarily be the sole accommodation requested. The LG approval requires a simple majority of the LG.

M-4.0402 Due Notice to CPM

The text of the LG's motion shall be circulated with the call of the Stated Meeting. The CPM shall approve the motion by a three-quarters majority of those present and eligible to vote. Any motion for reconsideration shall be made by someone from a different LG in accordance with the parliamentary authority.

M-4.0403 NCP Approval

The Chair (or Vice Chair) shall present the motion to NCP and defend it. The Convener and Liaison are urged to attend the meeting of NCP, ideally as Commissioners, and should be prepared to speak to the motion at the invitation of the Chair. The Candidate is welcome to attend the Meeting as a visitor or, if eligible, as a Commissioner from their congregation. A three-quarters (3/4) vote majority of the NCP in attendance is required to pass the motion.

If the three-quarters majority is not achieved, the Chair shall advise the Candidate within 48 hours. The FA will be postponed to a scheduled FA at a point no less than 23 months beyond Enrollment as an Inquirer.

M-4.0500 Final Assessment Meeting

M-4.0501 Liaison/Moderator's Duties

The Liaison who has walked through the preparation process is ordinarily the Final Assessment Moderator (FAM) for the FA.⁴ As Moderator, it is best to arrive early and verify the allocated space is set in a manner conducive to worship and spiritual work. By tradition, the FA Moderator provides coffee, tea and light refreshments when meeting in person. If the Chair or Vice Chair are not serving on the FAC, the FAM should have a cell phone number prepared to consult or request their presence if needed.

During the FA, the FAM's role is to be neutral, guiding the panel to be fair and avoid unfounded errors and sidetracks. The FAM's responsibility must balance allowing sufficient time to fully explore all applicable topics with covering the agenda within a 3-hour window. Allowing the Candidate to present their unique holy giftedness will encourage the FAC to discover the competence the FAM already knows the Candidate possesses.

The FAC begin work at/by 9:00 AM (or set alternative time). The Candidate and Session Liaison should be advised to be ready to begin between 9:30 and 9:45 AM.

M-4.0502 FAC Review of paperwork and Planning (25-45 minutes)

Following prayer and a brief summary of the material covered in Document 1, the FAM shall affirm that the LG certified the Outcomes of Candidacy (M-4.0102). The 4 Documents listed in M-4.0300 are to be available to all 8 days prior to FA and each member is responsible for bringing a copy with any concerns marked in print or electronic form. The FAM should have additional clean copies available in case any portion is missing.

For each of the 3 areas of review, one panel member should be appointed to start questioning the Candidate, often with a general or over-arching focus. The Moderator should note areas where panelists identify topics for discussion so that they may be called upon if needed and/or assure that a thorough interface is achieved. The FAM should note the most significant points to ensure they are addressed later. This time of planning is crucial to conducting a lively, efficient and effective evaluation in a short time.

⁴ Precedent has permitted a Liaison who has recently completed their term to be invited to serve in this duty.

- A. The FAC should review the Exegesis exam to identify questions arising from it. At least 1 question should be crafted about the Biblical language which will cause the Candidate to explain basics of that language in a way Ruling Elders who have not studied the language understand the point and those who have studied it are assured the Candidate can use the language. Review of the sermon may be left until after it has been delivered. Appendix 4-1 may guide the FAC in consideration of the sermon,
- B. The Statement of Faith should be discussed for positives and negatives, creativity and clarity, theological adherence to the Reformed tradition, and completeness. A strategic plan should be set to assure all topics are addressed, and if needed opportunity is given for deeper theological reflection. Appendix 4-2 may offer guidance to make this FA review meaningful. One member should be identified to open the interview with an overarching or significant question.
- C. The Constitutional (Ordination) Questions should be reviewed and follow-up identified for at least half of the ordination questions. A member with an over-arching question may be designated to start the questioning. There is less confusion after that if the questions are addressed *ad seriatim*. Appendix 4-3 offers support and guidance for consideration of these questions.

M-4.0503 Introductions (5–10 minutes)

The FAM should invite the Candidate and Session Advocate into the meeting space and lead the group in prayer. A time of introductions should follow in a spirit of Christ-like hospitality and grace.

M-4.0504 Worship with preaching of Sermon (20-30 minutes)

The Candidate begins their FA leading the FAC in abbreviated worship, with prayer, the reading of scripture and preaching based upon the required (or agreed upon) text. By nature of this process, this is an exegetical sermon, even though that may not be the Candidate's preferred approach to preaching. If possible, the room should be set in a worshipful form.

M-4.0505 Break and brief Executive Session

After the worship a brief break should be allowed. The Candidate and Session Liaison should be invited to wait in a comfortable nearby location where they cannot hear the discussion. The FAC should hold a brief executive session to share concerns and plan review of the exegesis and sermon. Previous familiarity with Appendix 4-1 will assist in this planning.

M-4.0506 Review of Exegesis and Sermon with Candidate (15 – 25 minutes)

When all are gathered, the FAM shall declare that the pending topic is the Exegesis. A member should be invited to pose the first question regarding the Exegesis Exam as noted in M-4.0502A. All members of the FAC should be welcome to pose follow-up questions that arise.

The Sermon review planned in M-4.0505 should follow. Affirmations are a prudent place to start. The FAM should be prepared to graciously rule out of order all criticism of the person preaching rather than the sermon preached. This discussion should seek to understand the preacher's approach, choices and message. Appendix 4-1, while not exhaustive, may help focus this time. The FAM shall assure all concerns raised in planning time were (or could have been) addressed; and that sufficient time has been spent to respect the preacher's professional work.

Either the FAM may entertain, or any member of the FAC may move that this portion of the exam be arrested⁵. A second is required. This only stops consideration of the Exegesis and Sermon. No decision on approval/disapproval is (or may be) included in this vote. If there is any objection, a counted vote shall be taken. A FAM who has not voted may vote to create or to break a tie. Assuming the majority agrees, the FAM shall announce that discussion of the Exegesis and Sermon is complete.

M-4.0507 Statement of Faith (20-45 minutes)

The FAM shall announce that consideration of the Statement of Faith is now in order. The member appointed (see M-4.0502B) to pose the initial question should be recognized. If line numbers are not used, the FAM may guide the discussion by sequentially moving through the Statement of Faith, recognizing members who had questions as they appear in the document. If line numbers are provided, this is less necessary, but the FAM should clarify which line(s) are pending.

The FAM shall assure all concerns raised in planning time were (or could have been) addressed; and that sufficient time (roughly a minimum of 20 minutes) has been spent on the Statement of Faith to support an affirmative decision that the Candidate holds and can articulate a clear Reformed Theology. Appendix 4-2 may suggest further theological discussions appropriate to the Candidate being examined. Members who have not spoken may be invited to offer input. The FAM may need to allow/restrict time in light of the amount of time needed for the Ordination Questions.

Either the FAM may entertain, or any member of the FAC may move that this portion of the exam be arrested⁶. A second is required. This only stops consideration of the Statement of Faith. No decision on approval/disapproval is (or may be) included in this vote. If there is any objection, a counted vote shall be taken. A FAM who has not voted may vote to create or to break a tie. Assuming the majority agrees, the FAM shall announce that discussion of the Statement of Faith is complete. A brief recess may be needed at this point.

M-4.0508 Ordination Questions (20 – 45 minutes)

The FAM shall announce that consideration of the Ordination Questions is now in order. The member appointed (see M-4.0502C) to pose the initial question should be recognized. Following this, it generally works best to proceed through the questions *ad seriatim* allowing any member

⁵ If this is done prematurely, the members should object or vote against the motion.

⁶ If this is done prematurely, the members should object or vote against the motion.

to pose a question as needed. Some questions planned may have been answered earlier and may not need to be posed here. Depending on time, some later questions may be hurried. A good final question is for the Candidate to express what the exercise of addressing these questions has meant, felt like or revealed.

The motion that this portion of the exam be arrested is in order. A second is required. This only stops consideration of the Ordination Questions. No decision on approval/disapproval is (or may be) included in this vote. If there is any objection, a counted vote shall be taken. A FAM who has not voted may vote to create or to break a tie. Assuming the majority agrees, the FAM shall announce that discussion of the Ordination Questions is complete.

Depending on time and the tenor of the proceedings, the FAM may ask the Candidate and/or the Session Advocate if there is anything more that they believe should be discussed.

The FAM shall invite the Candidate and Session Advocate to return to the waiting area so that the FAC may deliberate privately. A brief break should be allowed.

M-4.0509 Deliberation

Three motions are before the FAC and must be voted upon separately. Per the standards of G-2-0607 (See M-4.0101), the FAC must evaluate the Candidate's readiness to receive a ministerial call. The standard does not require excellence, but orthodoxy and preparedness to begin ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) faithfully serving the great Head of the Church and the Mission of Christ's Church. Following discussion, the following motions shall be voted, and a simple majority result is required in each area. A FAM who has not voted may vote to create, maintain or to break a tie. A tally of votes on each question shall be recorded by the FAM and reported to the Clerk.

- A. The examination of [Candidate's name] in the area of Exegesis and preaching is sustained.
- B. The examination of [Candidate's name] in the area of the Statement of Faith is sustained.
- C. The examination of [Candidate's name] in the area of the Ordination Questions is sustained.

M-4.0510 Arranging for Meeting with the Candidate

It is appropriate for the FAC to prepare a list of commendations and concerns that need to be shared for the Candidate's edification. The FAM should have that list and speak them to the Candidate on behalf of the FAC; and share these in writing after the event. A FAC member voting on the prevailing affirmative side, perhaps one who may not even have seemed supportive, should be recruited to close the FA in prayer. When all is ready, the FAM shall (without indicating any verdict) invite the Candidate and Session Liaison back into the meeting room.

M-4.0511 Un-sustained Examination Process

Should the vote on any one or more of the areas assessed be short of a majority, the Candidate is not certified. If not part of the Commission, the Chair should immediately be summoned to deliberate and sit in on the meeting defined in M-4.0512 if possible.

- A. The FAC must declare whether the panel's reservations are disqualifying or require remedial action.
- B. If not disqualifying, the sustained portions of the exam should be declared exempt from future FA. A three-quarters vote of the FAC on an individual portion of the FA will bar examination on that aspect at a future FA.
- C. The FAC shall state areas needing development, and indicate what redemptive possibilities are envisioned. They should state when another FA will be possible.
- D. The Commission shall briefly draft a preliminary statement directing the Candidate and LG to work together to prayerfully search for the Candidate's true calling (if disqualifying) or listing the deficiencies identified. The substance of this message shall be shared with the Candidate by the full FAC.

In the event of the Candidate not being certified, the FAM may designate a single member of the Commission to clearly and charitably relate the Commission's decision.⁷ Assurance should be stated that the Commission's message will be put into writing within seven (7) days and sent to the Candidate.

Appeal of any decision by the Candidate or their Session may be sent in writing to the EC through the Chair. The EC does not have authority to overturn the decision of a Commission, but may inquire and seek compromise. As provided for in G-3.0105 a-b, a member of the FAC may orally declare a dissent or protest before adjournment. A protest shall be sent to the Chair⁸ electronically within 48 hours; this should be reviewed by the EC before the next Stated Meeting of CPM, and if in decorous and respectful language, may be included in the minutes with a response from the EC.

The FAM, as Liaison, should lead the LG at its next meeting in reflecting diagnostically on the process that put forward a Candidate not sustained in some area of ministry.

M-4.0512 Meeting with Candidate

The NCP CPM tradition is that when the Certified Candidate enters the room, all members of the Commission (as they are able) rise and applaud the Candidate as they enter the room and offer the right hand of fellowship. The FAM shall relate the decisions of the Commission. It may be appropriate to have general discussion before prayer and adjournment of the Commission. Forms 6 and 7A must be prepared and signed following adjournment.

M-4.0513 Meeting with Candidate Not Sustained

⁷ Though some may dissent about such a decision, this is the vote of the whole FAC. The footnote to G-2.0105, the Historic Principle in F-3.0102 and Principle of Presbyterian Government in F-3.0205, invite unity as the decision of the whole Commission is communicated. Prayerfully considered, it is assumed to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

⁸⁸ The FAM and Clerk of CPM shall be cc'd.

In the event of the Candidate not being certified, the FAM, may invite the designated presbyter to speak to the FAM's decision, and allow the Candidate and Session Advocate to respond. The Chair of CPM or a neutral presbyter should be asked to close the meeting with prayer. Pastoral sensitivity should be exercised by all. The FAC shall prepare its formal communication (M-4.0510) in consultation with the Chair, and the Stated Clerk if needed. When agreed upon, this shall be sent by the Staff with the signatures of the FAM, and Chair; a courtesy copy shall be sent to Session Liaison, the Pastor, each member of the FAC, and each member of the EC. CPM members are to maintain holy confidentiality, though the details should be shared by the Convener with the LG.

M-4.0514 Report to CPM

At the next Stated Meeting of CPM, the FAM shall report the results; including the fact that a dissent or protest was timely filed. The Chair shall rule out of order any re-litigation or open discussion of confidential details.

M-4.0600 Staff Actions

M-4.0601 Notification

Within 3 business days of FA, Staff shall send a formal letter from the Chair advising that the Candidate is Certified Ready to Receive a Call and may now enter into negotiations on the basis of G-2.0607, including filing a PIF. If any form is unsigned or not received, this shall be included. This "What Happens Now?" letter should note expectations of the candidate during this new phase of candidacy and describe how CPM will support the candidate through the search process.

M-4.06602 GA CLC database

Within 3 business days of FA Staff shall enter the FAC's decision into the CLC website.

M-4.0700 Special Provisions

M-4.0701 Waiver to prepare a PIF

CPM recognizes that timing and circumstances may put a Candidate in a disadvantageous position in the Call process. The LG may request that a Candidate in their last term of seminary be allowed to prepare a Personal Information Form (PIF) ahead of FA. The PIF should be clearly marked "Pending Final Assessment on [date scheduled]" and may be given to Pastor Nominating Committee's (PNC) interviewing at their seminary and orally informing the PNC that they are scheduled to receive FA on that date, and final negotiation must await that achievement. An LG may only propose this when all of the following are in order:

- A. Seminary graduation is likely within 4 months;
- B. The majority of Ordination Exams are passed;
- C. The time requirements of Inquiry and Candidacy are met (or will be within 2 months);
- D. Final Assessment is scheduled within 4 months;

- E. The LG has no reservations about the results of that waiver.

M-4.0702 Expiration of Ordination Exam Validity

Circumstances may cause a candidate to reach Final Assessment five or more years beyond taking and passing the senior ordination examinations. Although the CPM recognizes that the candidate has proven sufficient mastery of the contents of the examinations to qualify for ordination, the results of the exams may no longer be an accurate assessment of the candidate's ability. This may be due to intervening changes in the PC(USA) Constitution, or the candidate simply having lacked practical, ongoing experience in one or more of the areas the exams cover.

CPM therefore reserves the right, in consultation with the candidate, to assess or re-examine the candidate in those exam areas. The CPM will use any of the following means as appropriate to assess a candidate's competence in Senior Ordination Exam areas:

- A. The candidate has served in a professional capacity requiring engagement with the content of an exam;
- B. A candidate documents timely participation in continuing education or further graduate studies that increase competence in the area of an exam;
- C. A candidate documents timely participation in conferences, Presbytery or larger church events deemed relevant and appropriate by the CPM;
- D. The liaison group, following an interview, unanimously affirms a candidate has demonstrated continuing knowledge in the area of each exam, and the CPM concurs by majority vote;
- E. The CPM through the LG requests an oral or written exam (tailored to the candidate and focused on an area of growth) given by the CPM at no cost to the candidate;
- F. When other means of examination prove impossible or insufficient, the CPM may choose to require the candidate to retake and pass the relevant senior examination.

The LG shall report its recommendations or actions to the CPM for approval before a FA may be scheduled. Care shall be given to prevent unnecessary time or financial hardship to the candidate. This policy is not meant to be an additional burden to the candidate, but a way for CPM to continue to care for the candidate and ensure their high level of preparation for ministry.

Candidates shall be notified of this policy at the beginning of their candidacy phase, when they request permission to take the senior ordination exams and during periodic consultations with their LG or Liaison.

Appendices:

The attached Appendices are internal guides for the support of the CPM and are not to be shared beyond the CPM and NCP General Council.

APPENDIX 4 - 1

Guidance for Evaluating a Candidate's Trial Sermon

The following guidelines are offered to assist CPM members in evaluating and discussing the written sermon with the candidate, but CPM members are not limited to them:

Structure

- Was the sermon easy to follow?
- Was the purpose of the sermon clear?
- Did the sermon “hang together” or were the points disjointed and unrelated?
- Was the sermon well-crafted as to movement from one point to another?
- Were a variety of illustrations and examples employed in preaching?
- Were there clear and logical transitions within the sermon?

Language

- Was the grammar correct?
- Was the vocabulary interesting and varied?
- Were there attention-getting illustrations, metaphors, and other imagery?
- Was the language appropriately inclusive?

Content

- Did the candidate use the Biblical material well?
- Was there a relationship between the sermon and the exegetical work presented for it?
- Was the candidate's theological position within the Reformed tradition?
- Were the illustrations useful, relevant and helpful to you?
- Did the writer avoid excessive use of personal examples?

Application to Life

- Did the sermon have some contemporary application?
- Was it useful to the church as a whole or individual Christians' personal lives?
- Did the sermon deal in a relevant way with any great historical theological themes?

APPENDIX 4 - 2

Guidance to Evaluating a Candidate's Statement of Faith

- Does the statement address the themes in M-4.0203 and/or the Essential Tenets of the Reformed Faith as summarized in F-2.0000?
- Does the statement present as a paraphrase of the Nicene or Apostle's Creed or the Brief Statement rather than an authentically personal expression of their faith?
- How does the progression of topics express their understanding of God and humanity?
- Would the statement inform someone who does not know Church jargon about the meaning of the gospel? Would a person reading this be attracted to faith and this tradition of the faith?
- What non-traditional phrases jump out and why?
- Is the statement Poetic? Dramatic? Prosaic? Comedy? History? Tragedy?
- Is inclusive language employed throughout? Are either exclusively masculine or feminine pronouns applied to the Divine or to creation, humanity and God? Is there a difference of pronouns between the Incarnate and Eternal Christ?
- Does the statement rely too much on any one professor or writer; to a contemporary popular theological school of thought; or to a political rather than biblical position?
- Is the writer closer to universalism or a limited atonement?
- Has the writer provided any indication of sources quoted or paraphrased?
- Are scriptural prooftexts provided in support of points made? Can the Candidate cite scriptural sources to clarify their theology?
- Does the Statement of faith express hope?

APPENDIX 4 – 3

Guidance to Evaluating Responses to the Ordination Questions

A candidate's understanding of the ordination questions and their vision of living them out provides a basis for deep conversation and assessment of their readiness to receive a call. These Constitutional questions articulate affirmative agreement with our doctrine and polity, and their willingness to exercise responsibility under the authority of Christ and the Church. Too often in a liturgical setting, these questions are read quickly and answered with the *pro forma* answer "I do." Minimal consideration is given to the significance of these historic words.

These questions with minimal change have been consistently used for years in antecedent branches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). General terms describe the questions asked of members joining the Church, but these words are specific in their questioning of those called to Church office. The first 8 are asked of all Deacons, Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders when ordained and each time installed under the principle of "parity" of office. Only the 9th is specific to the function of the office one enters.

Apart from a negative response, no one answer is inherently right or wrong, nor should any guidance suggested below be required. These brief notes offer a statement on the question followed by thoughts to consider in intelligently assessing responses.

(a) Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

More than an intellectual assent to Jesus as Savior, Lord of all creation and Head of the Church, the first question addresses faith in the Trinity and God's place in our life. Jesus, not Scripture, is our highest authority. Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection give our clearest view of the Trinity. To join the Church, one does not have to affirm the Trinity, but all who are ordained must do so as it is central to the faith.

- Why must ordained people affirm Trinitarian belief if membership does not require it?
- How does the word 'trust' rather than 'believe,' elevate this beyond intellectual assent?
- What does it mean to affirm Jesus is Lord and Head of the Church?
- From what does Jesus save and for what is one saved?
- How is Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection the clearest revelation of the Trinity?
- Is traditional wording for the Trinity used or another Trinitarian expression used--why?
- What does the communal interrelationship of the persons of the Trinity teach about the way the Church must inter-relate?

(b) Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?

Scripture is the Church's second highest authority and thus the second question. The Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament are necessary, sufficient, and reliable as witnesses to Jesus Christ, the living Word of God. In scripture we have an authoritative standard of faith and life.

- How is the relationship of inspiration of the Holy Spirit and human authorship expressed?
- Is the original context, genre or words used important to make Scripture relevant today?
- Does the Candidate keep a daily office of devotional scripture reading; enjoy teaching and discussing Bible, and enter the preaching moment with fidelity to the text? How is this expressed and what does that indicate about the place of Scripture?
- How does the Candidate balance the tensions between Reformed thought that Scripture is God's Word to us and Reformed thought that God's Word comes through Scripture?

(c) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

The 12 Confessions recognized as Constitutional by the PC(U.S.A.) are a third tier of authority that define us as a faith community. In asking about “essential⁹ tenets¹⁰” of the Reformed faith, rather than these historic instruments, we acknowledge they are both exceptional and imperfect human creations. Presbyterians historically take care not to list the essential tenets¹¹, but have expressed in general terms what is central to the Reformed tradition in the chapter *The Church and its Confessions* (F-2.05) focusing on what we share with all Christians, with other Protestants and what we hold as Reformed Christians.

- What experience does the Candidate share of using the Book of Confessions creatively?
- What does the Presbyterian Church believe in or stand for?
- What is meant by a “Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern...”?
- In what way do Presbyterians “shun ostentation...” in using the gifts of God?
- How might we be instructed and led by the confessions in their leadership of the Church?
- Should there ever be a “heresy trial” in our Church? Why or why not?

(d) Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?

This question summarizes these three authorities, and then goes further, recognizing that fulfillment of one's ministry means submission to the authority of Christ, Scriptures, and the Confessions. The wording advances from trusting and believing in Christ (first question) to obeying. This question goes from current belief (“Do you?”) to commitment to future action (“Will you?”).

⁹ Adjective; Absolutely necessary, extremely important.

¹⁰ Plural noun: a principle or belief, especially one of the main principles of a religion or philosophy.

¹¹ To make any list elevates what is chosen and minimizes what is not included, or diminishes the importance of some when too many marginal items are included.

- If “past is prologue,” how do past ideas and experiences suggest new visions?
- What does “obedience to Jesus” mean in this year and the decades to come?

(e) Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit?

After two questions on the Book of Confessions we shift to the Book of Order. These vows of submission to an orderly ordered ministry recall Foundational themes of shared power that is only ministerial and declarative. The role and ministry of Ruling and Teaching Elders and of higher councils is central to this question. How the Church lives in community is a theological issue—particularly when we disagree and the Holy Spirit speaks through a majority vote, without unanimity. The question requests a commitment to be ‘colleagues’ practicing collegiality. This very practical question begins a section of questions that address the integrity of the Church.

- Does the response reflect an Episcopal, Congregational or Presbyterian mindset?
- How are adversaries or persons of different positions described?
- Does the expressed understanding of power and privilege reflect a gracious gospel?
- If cited, is “...God alone is Lord of the Conscience¹²” used properly?
- Does the response suggest reliance upon laws already made?
- Is the principle of mutual forbearance visible in the response?
- How does the Candidate view or define “friend”?

(f) Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?

The question implies a call to ordered ministry is a “24/7” committed lifestyle--not just for one day a week or when on Church property. Loving neighbors and working for reconciliation are active verbs, and not just hobbies.

- Is “love” defined clearly or left as an esoteric platitude?
- How has the ministry of reconciliation been practiced by the candidate to date?
- What needs for reconciliation of the world still remain as the Church’s calling?
- Do the responses suggest ministry is a “job,” a “vocation,” a “lifestyle,” or something else?
- Do words and action go together as a seamless whole?

¹² C-6.109 is quoted in the Historic Principles (F-3.0101) with the presumption everyone knew the entire passage as it continues in C-6.110. It is now commonly presented as a libertine or personal rights issue ignoring C-6.110.

(g) Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?

This stabilizing triad has a powerful history to Presbyterians through this question. The Marks of the Church (F-1.0302) speak to the Unity and Holiness of the Church, but not peace *per se*. Scripture addresses each in many places and times, but also has not placed them together. The question does. The Greek [Eirene] and Hebrew [Shalom] for peace have rich contributions to this question. In a fallen and redeemed Church, some may argue the three are unattainable and in tension. Presbyterians, ever hope-filled, continue to seek their furtherance. Those in ordered ministry are called not just to seek peace, unity, or purity, but actively to further all three.

- What experiences can the Candidate describe in this effort?
- Are these aspirational goals, impractical ideals, or vain intention?
- Is there hope? Where do we find hope in troubled times?

(h) Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

Psalm 127 reminds us: “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” God’s call to ministry goes to those gifted with “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” to assume stewardship of God’s work. The active verb “service” is used here, reminding us that like Jesus, we are called “...to serve, not to be served.” The phrase ‘pray for’ was a recent addition to this question. It reminds us that no matter how gifted or zealous in this work, we are to pray for God’s people entrusted to our care, loving even those who may wish us ill.

- What evidence does the Candidate show of the place of prayer in their life or ministry?
- Does the Candidate demonstrate a servant’s heart throughout these responses?
- Does the Candidate show a forward-going prophetic vision?

(i) Will you be a faithful minister of Word and Sacrament, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

This last question is the only one specific to Teaching Elders. This functional question calls for faithfulness in proclamation of the gospel through the ministry of Word and Sacrament, in teaching the faith and pastoral care. It calls for active labor in the larger Church. It then concludes with the same wording to be answered by Ruling Elders and Deacons as well: “in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?” Justice goes beyond love alone; love goes beyond justice alone. None of us can fully show the love and justice of Jesus Christ all of the time, but we commit to trying, again relying on God’s help.

- Does this Candidate exude Good News in a gospel spirit?
- Is ministry a hopeful enterprise in spite of any obstacles?

Chapter Five Certified Ready to Receive a Call

“The word of the LORD came to me: Mortal, I have made you a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give them no warning, or speak to warn the wicked from their wicked way, in order to save their life, those wicked persons shall die for their iniquity; but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked, and they do not turn from their wickedness, or from their wicked way, they shall die for their iniquity; but you will have saved your life.” Ezekiel 3:16-19 NRSV

M-5.0100 RATIONALE

M-5.0101 Covenant Relationship Continues

Certified candidates remain under the care of CPM until ordination or withdrawal from the process. As stated in the *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church USA* in 2011,

“Certification for readiness does not end the covenant relationship between the candidate, the session and the presbytery. The session remains responsible to provide ‘concern and discipline’ for the candidate and the presbytery continues to provide ‘support, guidance and evaluation’ as the candidate seeks a first call (G- 2.0605). It is important then that certification be accompanied by a renewed covenant outlining steps that the candidate will take to find the place of ministry to which the Spirit is leading and to maintain skills for ministry developed during the preparation process, and the ways the session and the presbytery can remain partners in discerning God’s call for the person still under care.” (page 49)

M-5.0102 Discerning God’s Call Together

CPM will continue to work with all Candidates Certified Ready to Receive a Call (CCRRC) who continue to stay invested in the process of discerning God’s Call. Since Jesus does not reject the Elect, CPM shall not cease its care for Jesus’ servants.

God’s Call may or may not come in a form or timeliness perceived as normative; it may not lead to ordained and/or professional ministries in expected ways or on a human schedule. Thus, the CPM’s role in this period shifts to different forms of support with CCRRC. Since the Reformed Theology of “Call” does not stop with CPM’s decision, this may be the most intense time of discernment.

Candidates and CPM must be open to God’s Call being in un-ordained forms of ministry, volunteer, tent-making service and even in non-traditional innovative forms that may not seem (at first glance) to be ministries. Seeking a call may at times need to be suspended due to illness, further education, family situations such as childbirth or care, care of sick or elderly family members or a spouse’s pending career situations. Ideally this is temporary. During this period however, a Candidate should become appropriately involved in the life and worship of their own

or another Presbyterian congregation or a worshipping community of a denomination in correspondence with the PCUSA where they (or their spouse) offer service, offering their gifts for ministry.

M-5.0103 Completion of CPM Responsibility¹

The CPM care process continues until Ordination and only ends with an official motion by the LG and CPM reported to the presbytery:

- A. The candidate's transfer of letter to a Congregation not a part of NCP without prior notice to the Session and/or CPM of that action;
- B. Notification by COM or the Stated Clerk of the ordination of the Candidate (and transfer of their membership to this or another presbytery);
- C. The candidate's voluntarily opting to withdraw from the process;
- D. The Candidate's acceptance of ordination (without due process) in another denomination;
- E. The Candidate's Renunciation of the Jurisdiction of the Church;
- F. Action of the NCP Permanent Judicial Commission (or irregularly, of a presbytery within whose borders the candidate is laboring);
- G. The Candidate's loss of contact with the CPM over a documented period of 5 years; [See M-6.0400].

Only in the most unexpected circumstances should any situation covered under A, C, or E be termed a failure short of divine revelation of that assessment.

M-5.0200 Support After Final Assessment

M-5.0201 Personal Information Form

Once a Candidate is CRRC, they are entitled to circulate a PIF and negotiate with Pulpit Nominating Committees (PNC). The PIF should be discussed with the Liaison when it is being prepared². When filed, a copy of the PIF should be submitted to at least the following who may be called unexpectedly to speak as references or asked for suggestions of available persons:

- A. The General Presbyter of NCP;
- B. The Chair of CPM;
- C. The Convener of the LG.

M-5.0202 Annual Reporting Requirements

Every twelve months beyond Final Assessment, the CCRRC shall prepare an Annual Report based upon the questions for CCRRC (NCP Form CRRC 1). The most recent PIF or resume should be attached. The responses to the questions on the CRRC 1 and the PIF or resume will be reviewed by the LG, who will notify the CPM plenary group that the yearly written requirement has been completed by the candidate and reviewed by the LG. The LG, based upon this report, may request a face-to-face or electronic meeting if it finds concerns. Coaching sessions on ways

¹ This section may be applicable to Inquirers and Candidates at earlier stages of the Care process.

² LG Members with experience on a PNC, in HR or with PIFs should be consulted if needed.

to interview or better present their skills and abilities may be scheduled if practical. The LG shall report to CPM that the Annual Report has been received.

M-5.0203 Triennial Face-to-Face Meeting

All CCRRC are expected to attend a face-to-face (in person or electronic) interview with the LG every three years from their last face-to-face meeting, until a Call is received, accepted and the Candidate is ordained. The Candidate may request earlier or more frequent conversations. The following should guide the interview:

- A. Has the LG received a yearly report (ARRF and the candidate's PIF or resume) and noted any concerns?
- B. Is the candidate currently circulating or in the last three years circulated a PIF? [M-5.0202]
- C. Have responses to the candidate's PIF led to interviews or initial conversations/contacts?
- D. If there is interest in specialized ministry, what is the CCRRC doing to find such a call?
- E. If serving in a specialized ministry, what conversations have been started or are needed with COM toward recognizing this ministry as an Ordainable call under G-2.0503?
- F. Are the candidate's expectations of a call realistic? Is the kind of call they are willing to accept commensurate with likely opportunities in the PCUSA?
- G. What is the candidate doing in the life of the church to grow spiritually and to keep up the skills needed to be ordained to the office of Teaching Elder (Minister of the Word and Sacrament)?
- H. Has the candidate been engaged in any kind of continuing education?
- I. Are there circumstances that are preventing the candidate from actively seeking a call (e.g., family situations, geographical circumstances, discouragement over not being able to find a call)?
- J. Does the CCRRC have further thoughts on how CPM could improve their support?

In addressing the above questions, if the LG concludes that the Candidate is actively pursuing a Call or has demonstrated a desire and intent to do so, the LG shall report to CPM that the CCRRC has met with the LG as required to remain in active status.

M-5.0204 Pulpit Supply Listings

While circumstances do vary, the LG should support a CCRRC's offer or request to be included on local presbyteries' pulpit supply lists. For CCRRC who are resident within the bounds of this presbytery, Staff can arrange the listing on NCP's supply list. Other presbyteries where the CCRRC is resident may need some certification or validation which the Chair, Staff or Stated Clerk can supply. The Liaison should submit that request. A CCRRC who is available for such service may develop skills and contacts that will serve them well in long-term ministry. A CCRRC who shuns this, when appropriate, may need the counsel of the LG on assertiveness and owning of their role and identity.

M-5.0205 Liaison

The LG Convener shall assure that a member of the LG continues to be or is appointed each year to be the CCRRC's Liaison. An LG member working with another Inquirer or Candidate may need to serve this role. That Liaison should reach out to the CCRRC

M-5.0206 Administrative Support

When Staff sends the October letter (M-1.0406) to CCRRC, a copy of the NCP Form CRRC 1 should be attached. The anniversary of the date the Candidate was certified shall be the due date.

M-5.0300 Candidates No Longer Actively Seeking A Call

M-5.0301 Not Seeking a Call

The Liaison and the LG shall be ready to prayerfully counsel a candidate regarding possible actions without any negative judgement should any of the following be their situation:

- A. Ceases to actively seek a call or ministerial vocation;
- B. Demonstrates no receptivity to ministry opportunities;
- C. Pursues alternative professional vocation(s) with no ministry connection;
- D. Absents themselves from the life and worship of a Presbyterian congregation;
- E. Demonstrates no evidence that ministry remains an avocation.

Discernment of God's call on their lives must be allowed time to mature. The LG may suggest, but should not request the option of voluntary withdrawal from the process (by letter from the candidate to the CPM Chair addressed to the NCP Office.) Finding a redemptive use of gifts in and for the Church also honor's CPM's investment in a Candidate. Career counseling may be a recommendation. Based upon the current availability of funds, CPM may be requested by the LG to support up to 25% of the career counselling expense, taken from unused Psychological Exam funds or Scholarship funds.

A candidate should be supported in coming to such a self-realization and/or decision on their own within reason. No CCRRC should feel rushed or pressured by the LG or CPM to stop seeking God's Call to them.

M-5.0302 Summary

Provisions of the process in this chapter provide CPM a means of assessing, advising and, taking action to change the status of candidates who have not formally withdrawn from the process but who have not demonstrated a desire or intention to remain engaged beyond maintaining certification. These actions are not intended to force, encourage, or hasten withdrawal by candidates. They *are* intended to help candidates who have not been engaged come to a point of decision about their desires and intentions with respect to a Call to ordained ministry.

Chapter 6 General Policies

“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, as God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. But ask in faith...” James 1:2-6

M-6.0100 Travel Reimbursement Policy

M-6.0101 Rationale

CPM and NCP understand the tightness of Candidates’ finances as well as the presbytery’s budget constraints. Because of the important responsibility to engage candidates face-to-face in the discernment process, NCP by policy will reimburse a portion of the transportation costs associated with visits for:

- A. Enrollment meeting with LG;
- B. Annual consultation with LG;
- C. Final Assessment preparation and participation with LG and FAC;
- D. Triennial visits with LG once CCRRC;
- E. Required (and irregular) appearance before NCP.

M-6.0102 Assumptions

Our travel reimbursement policies are built on several basic assumptions:

- A. Candidates should choose a seminary with programs, faculty and orientations that will best help them to prepare for ministry. That necessitates travel from around the country for these consultations.
- B. Since inquirers and candidates are members of an NCP congregation, those under care have ties in the community to assist with some logistics associated with these visits.
- C. With the number of inquirers and candidates under care, travel expense is a major portion of our budget and as stewards we must work to hold within reasonable limits.
- D. Electronic or virtual meeting alternatives should be considered for stewardship of time, expense, natural resources and family life when the purpose for meeting allows it rather than travel of more than 2 hours to the outer bounds of NCP.

M-6.0103 Policy Guidelines

NCP will reimburse 70% of distance transportation expenses at the base mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard business mileage rate in effect at the time of travel. Only Inquirers and Candidates currently residing beyond and/or attending seminaries outside the geographical bounds of NCP are entitled to reimbursement. Mileage driven within NCP between places of accommodation and meetings, or to visit their Church and/or its members is not reimbursable to those coming from out of town.

Like General Assembly's usual business practice, NCP will reimburse distance travel expenses at the lowest expense rate of driving mileage versus airfare. Inquirers and Candidates are free to choose their mode of transportation, but are asked to compare the lowest available advance purchase airline fare cost (if applicable) with the mode chosen when submitting reimbursement request documents for actual expenses incurred in the event some other means of public transport (train, bus, etc.) is elected.

Congregations are encouraged (but not required to) contribute the remaining 30% of distance transportation expenses. Inquirers and Candidates are encouraged to inquire about such support from their home congregation.

M-6.0104 Exclusions

NCP will not reimburse hotel, rental car, taxi service, food and the like. We do not reimburse for a spouse's travel, unless we have required for some reason that the spouse be present.

M-6.0105 Processing

Requests for reimbursement with supporting documentation can be emailed directly to the NCP Staff for CPM with a cc to the LG's Convener; or mailed to CPM at the Presbytery office. The Convener's or Chair's approval is required before a voucher is submitted. *Please note that IRS requires that reimbursements requests be submitted within 90 days of occurrence.*

M-6.0200 Scholarship Policy

M-6.0201 Scholarship Special Committee

As provided in M-1.0601-0602, a Scholarship Committee is elected annually to review and propose usage of endowment and current resources given to develop and assure future educated leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) whose indebtedness does not compromise their ministry or prohibit their entering sacrificial service.

M-6.0202 NCP Manual Authority

NCP Scholarship Fund scholarships are for Candidates and Inquirers in seminary and must be approved by the Presbytery upon the recommendation of the CPM and with the approval of the Leadership Council. Any change in the designation of this fund requires the vote of the Presbytery.

M-6.0203 Timeline

The Scholarship Committee and Staff shall update approved forms for distribution the first Monday of March. Applications are due the last Friday of April. Staff shall assemble all applications and forward these to the committee which shall meet and report a plan for distribution at the May Stated Meeting.

Staff shall request from the NCP Treasurer the amount of funds available for the coming year effective May 1, with designation of sources and restrictions noted. This information shall be made available to the Chair and Scholarship Committee.

M-6.0204 Sources

Scholarship funds are available through three sources:

- A. NCP budget (Unrestricted)
- B. Offerings at ordination and/or installation services of NCP, (Unrestricted) and
- C. Presbytery Corporation endowment funds. (Restricted – unless noted)
 - a. The Bovard Fund is invested with the Presbyterian Foundation. Interest earned assists students under care as Inquirers or Candidates to prepare for a church vocation. First preference shall be given to persons recommended by the Session of Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. Recipients of scholarship assistance may, at the discretion of the CPM, be required to sign a promissory note for the amount of the aid, which shall be cancelled after five years of service to the Presbyterian Church (USA).
 - b. The George W. Toland Fund was established in 1881 by Mr. Toland's family. The income is to assist in the education of a young person studying at a Presbyterian college or presbytery- approved seminary to for ministry.
 - c. The General Scholarship Fund is a donor permanently restricted fund. It was created initially as the "Lacey Fund" in 1975 and in 1982 other permanently restricted funds were added to this fund. The income from the invested monies in this fund are used to provide scholarships to candidates and inquirers of National Capital Presbytery. The CPM is empowered to determine the recipients of these scholarship monies.
 - d. The Cacey Fund
 - e. The Grace Fund
 - f. The Kearney Fund
 - g. The Chesterbrook Fund
 - h. The Resurrection Fund (Second, Alexandria)
 - i. Preparation for Ministry Scholarship Fund (Donor Temporarily Restricted Fund)

6. 0205 Scholarship Restricted Fund Guidelines

Scholarships from restricted sources are given under the following guidelines:

- A. Scholarships are given for official Inquirers and Candidate of NCP to cover costs of academic or related preparation for ministry. Those in the process of enrolling may apply, but funds will not be disbursed until they are enrolled as an Inquirer or Candidate by CPM.
- B. Scholarship funds are sent by the NCP office directly to the Financial Office of the seminary where enrolled, or directly to the organization or instructor contracted. Any variation from this standard not presented to the Scholarship Committee must be approved by the EC before payment.

- C. Scholarship funds are ordinarily limited to M.Div. program expense. A candidate in an approved joint degree program, or pursuing an additional degree related to ministry may receive scholarship assistance during and beyond completion of the M.Div. if funds are available and their intent is to enter ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The LG should be asked to concur prior to the Scholarship Committee reporting.
- D. All scholarship assistance is considered a grant to perpetuate the PCUSA. A candidate who separates from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may have a portion of assistance given declared a loan with repayment at 1% interest per annum as of the date the candidate is notified. The EC and NCP Leadership Council may forgive such debt.
- E. Not all available restricted funds must be designated in May, and no grants should exceed requested and documented need.

M-6.0206 Scholarship Unrestricted Fund Guidelines

As direct scholarship support is primary, unrestricted funds should unquestionably support that mission when needed. When requests have been met, the Committee may within the restrictions on funds, recommend reserving funds for new Inquirers or their application to such needs:

- A. Candidates required to take special studies (such as Hebrew Exegesis, Reformed theology, Presbyterian polity or CPE) beyond completion of a degree;
- B. In support of career counselling for candidates in good standing not being called;
- C. In partial support of repeated psychological assessment (up to 40%) of cost;
- D. For candidates without insurance required to pursue short-term psychological counselling special funding may be approved for up to 3 sessions;
- E. A designated "Book Allowance" of up to \$50. for all enrolled Inquirers, Candidates, and CCRRC in good standing and current in reporting. No vouchering will be required if granted, but the emphasis is for reference materials needed throughout ministry.
- F. Technology expenses may be requested for 50% of the documented cost of emergency replacement of needed primary computer equipment once. This should be directed to the Convener of the LG for immediate consideration by the Executive Committee.
- G. Housing expense will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- H. Un-reimbursed expense for summer field placements or CPE may be considered based upon need.

M-6.0207 Approval Process

The Scholarship Committee's report is docketed for the May meeting. Upon approval, the grants for active Inquirers and Candidates shall be communicated by Staff to the Treasurer/Business Manager for presentation to the Leadership Council at their June Meeting. Grants to those not enrolled as an Inquirer are held until the next Leadership Council meeting after CPM enrolls that person.

M-6.0208 Approval of Undesignated Funds

The EC shall monitor all funds not designated at the May meeting, As appropriate applications are identified by an LG, a Convener or other Officer shall communicate that to the EC, and if

approved, may include that request in the LG report at a stated meeting. Actions shall be sent to the Leadership Council for ratification as required.

M-6.0300 Budget

M-6.0301 Budget Preparation

The Chair in response to the Budget and Finance Committee shall prepare an itemized budget for the upcoming NCP fiscal year for action at the March meeting. Staff shall provide current and past year budgeted and actual figures. Though consistent over many years, consideration should be given to the following line items:

- A. Travel Expense (see M-6.0100). Current year expense is a guide; however, variations in the number of candidates attending seminaries away from NCP should be considered along with the number of Candidates approaching FA.
- B. Scholarship Extra Expenses (see M-6.0200) anticipated. Anticipated initiatives included in the policy from designated and undesignated funds may be included here.
- C. Career Counselling Expense. The NCP expense should be multiplied by the highest number of new applicants in the past 6 years. Additionally, some allowance should be included for re-examinations or follow-up.
- D. Commission Training. This can be minimal but should be requested as unexpected opportunities may arise from seminaries, Synod or GA. Before electronic circulation this provided a current Book of Order for new members.
- E. Administrative Costs. This line item should include postage and such incidental costs as may occur.

M-6.0302 CPM approval

Action shall be a General Order at the March meeting (unless Budget and Finance requirements necessitate it be earlier). Proposed figures shall be included in the Agenda.

M-6.0400 Loss of Contact Removals

M-6.0401 Inactive

While no longer a recognized status in Presbyterian polity, for their own reasons, at all stages of the CPM care process, there can be Inquires, Candidates and CCRRC who unexpectedly seem to disappear from the care process without explanation. No undue haste should be taken to close the relationship of care of those who have become inactive.

Some who enter the process may emotionally withdraw without sharing that with others. Total loss of contact may not be the CPM's fault in all situations, but should always be a call to humility, disappointment and self-reflection. Fault may be the least important issue.

M-6.0402 Successful contact

Should successful contact be accomplished with a candidate who has become to some degree inactive, the priority is to first non-judgmentally hear the candidate's thoughts and feelings about their movement toward ministry. Just as Jonah was unable to communicate for three days, there may be reason for the break in contact. Hearing the candidate's perspective will determine whether to urge the candidate to formally withdraw or to meet with the LG. A positive choice to move forward in the process or away from it when that is God's calling is a success.

M-6.0403 Loss of Contact

CPM shall exert all effort to avoid ever losing contact with any Inquirer or Candidate by neglect. A candidate who does not perceive a relationship of care, feels powerless, or believes themselves to be unjustly disposed of, may be tempted toward anger or change of loyalties. For this reason, the Convener, Liaison, LG and staff shall regularly verify that contact has been maintained. Transition periods are the most vulnerable time for loss of contact to occur; in a rotational leadership system this is a fact of life in the Church. When a Liaison (or a Convener) rotates off, the perception of abandonment may be given unintentionally. All Liaisons should initiate communication with their candidate on at least a quarterly schedule if the candidate has not contacted them. When any Inquirer or Candidate becomes unresponsive this should be shared with the LG. Regular reporting of candidates who are delinquent on contacts should be noted in the Minutes.

M-6.0404 Two-year actions

Starting not later than two years beyond the last documented contact, the Convener shall start an electronic or written log or file of dates Liaison or others reached out. Copies of all emails or other communications should be printed and included. The Session Advocate, Pastor, and seminary should be contacted, and noted as to their most recent contact. Any returned mail should also be filed.

M-6.0405 Three-year minimum

After a candidate's failure to be in contact with the LG (past and present), the CPM, Stated Clerk, the Session Liaison and their Church of membership over a documented period of three years since last face-to-face or virtual contact with CPM, the LG may start a process of involuntary removal in accordance with G-0609.

CPM shall take all steps available to restore contact before beginning any process to remove any candidate involuntarily, at all points allowing due process to the candidate. The Convener's file shall document all steps taken. This shall include but not be limited to unsuccessful:

- A. Emails to all known or listed addresses available;
- B. Telephone calls to all known or listed numbers;
- C. Letters to all known addresses;
- D. Contact with Session Advocate(s), Clerk of Session and/or Pastor of their church;
- E. Contact with seminary registrar
- F. Contact with field placement supervisors

M-6.0406 Statement of Findings

When preparing to formally act, the LG shall prepare a 1-page statement of the motion supported by a summary of documentary evidence from enrollment as an Inquirer to the point of last contact. The Convener shall announce the intent to make a motion to remove the individual at least one stated meeting prior to moving any action. CPM members with any insight on the matter shall advise the LG.

The 1-page summary shall be circulated with the Call and agenda for the meeting such a motion will be moved so that due notice is assured. CPM shall be fully satisfied that the action is in order and due process has been allowed before voting. A simple majority of those present is required.

M-6.0407 Notification

Following CPM's action, Staff, under the Chair's signature, shall notify the Candidate at the last known address (registered/certified mail if appropriate), along with the Session and Pastor of their Church of membership that the action has been taken. Staff shall also make entries in the CLC website. The action shall be reported to NCP.

M-6.0408 Restoration

Mindful of F-3.0102, CPM shall be open to re-visiting these and all related negative decisions if requested by a candidate. Validity of the process shall be considered, and the decisions of the LG / NCP shall be spread upon the Minutes.

M-6.0500 Extended Continuation of Candidacy Policy¹

M-6.0501 Purpose

Circumstances may cause a candidate to reach Final Assessment five or more years beyond taking and passing the senior ordination examinations. Although the CPM recognizes that the candidate has proven sufficient mastery of the contents of the examinations to qualify for ordination, the results of the exams may no longer be an accurate assessment of the candidate's ability. This may be due to intervening changes in the PC(USA) Constitution, or the candidate simply having lacked practical, ongoing experience in one or more of the areas the exams cover.

M-6.0502 Reassessment

CPM therefore reserves the right, in consultation with the candidate, to assess or re-examine the candidate in those exam areas. The CPM will use any of the following means as appropriate to assess a candidate's competence in Senior Ordination Exam areas:

- A. The candidate has served in a professional capacity requiring engagement with the content of an exam;

¹ Approved by the CPM of the National Capital Presbytery, April 20th, 2017

- B. A candidate documents timely participation in continuing education or further graduate studies that increase competence in the area of an exam;
- C. A candidate documents timely participation in conferences, Presbytery or larger church events deemed relevant and appropriate by the CPM;
- D. The liaison group, following an interview, unanimously affirms a candidate has majority vote;
- E. The CPM through the liaison group requests an oral or written exam (tailored to the candidate and focused on an area of growth) given by the CPM at no cost to the candidate;
- F. And when other means of examination prove impossible or insufficient, the CPM may choose to require the candidate to retake and pass the relevant senior examination.

M-6.0503 CPM Approval

The liaison group shall report its recommendations or actions to the CPM for approval before a final assessment may be scheduled. Care shall be given to prevent unnecessary time or financial hardship to the candidate. This policy is not meant to be an additional burden to the candidate, but a way for CPM to continue to care for the candidate and ensure their high level of preparation for ministry.

M-6.0504 Notification at Candidacy

Candidates shall be notified of this policy at the beginning of their candidacy phase, when they request permission to take the senior ordination exams and during periodic consultations with their liaison group or liaison.

DOCUMENT LIBRARY
THIS LIBRARY IS FOR SUPPORT OF THE MANUAL
AND DOES NOT CARRY MANUAL AUTHORITY

“Maintaining documentation of a presbytery’s work with each of its inquirers and candidates has become increasingly important over the years as the legal principles of “due diligence” and “negligent supervision” have developed in the courts. In brief, “due diligence” refers to whether or not a supervisory body fully complied with its policies and procedures as well as any widely accepted “best practices” within its field. “Negligent supervision” can be alleged anytime a problem arises with a person under supervision and it can be claimed that the problem would not have occurred had the standards of “due diligence” been met or had the supervisory body properly responded to information gained through the exercise of “due diligence.” Should a presbytery ever need to defend against allegations of either failure to exercise “due diligence” or “negligent supervision” in its oversight of an inquirer or candidate (G-2.0605), simply saying it followed its procedures and responded appropriately will not be sufficient; it will need to provide contemporary documentation of those actions.” From the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry PC(USA), Release 2.0 (June 2015)

NCP’s CPM utilizes forms developed by Mid Council Ministries of the Office of the General Assembly. With the exception of Form 6, CPM is authorized to amend these for NCP use; that version shall be available on the NCP website. The most current version is available on the Preparation for Ministry website (<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid---council---ministries/premin/forms>), each shall be accepted.

CPM FORMS

					Required Signatures						
<u>Enrollment as Inquirer</u>		<u>cir</u>	<u>Initial</u>		<u>Cand.</u>	<u>Liaison</u>	<u>Conven</u>	<u>CPM</u>	<u>Sta’d</u>	<u>NCP</u>	<u>File</u>
			<u>Draft</u>					<u>Mod</u>	<u>Clerk</u>	<u>Mod</u>	
Form1A	Application to be Enrolled	Y	Cand.		Y						NCP
Form 1B	Questions for Reflection	Y	Cand.		Y						NCP
Form 1C	Financial Planning for Theological Education	Y	Cand	May be optional	Y						NCP
Form 1D	Session Evaluation & Recommendation...	Y	Clerk		NO						NCP
Form 2A	Report of Consultation RE App to be an Inquirer	N	Conv		Y	Y		Y			NCP
Form 2B	Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release	N	Cand/ Session								NCP
Form 7A	Changing an Inquirer/Candidate’s Relationship of Care	N	Liaison / Cand	When CPM motion of CPM is pending					Y		NCP
<u>Annual Consultation</u>											
Form 3	Pre-consultation Report on Development Areas	Y	Cand								
Form 4	Report on Consultation	N	Liaison	(If no change in status)	Y	Y		Y			
<u>Inquirer to Candadate</u>											
Form 5A	Application to be Enrolled as a Candidate	Y	Cand.		Y						NCP
Form 5B	Session Eval. & Recommendation...Candidate	Y	Cand & Clerk	(If 1D is unchanged, not required up to a year)							NCP
Form 5C	Report of Consultation RE App to be Candidate	N	Liaison		Y	Y		Y			NCP
Form 5D	Covenant Agreement and Candidate’s Release										
Form 7A	Changing an Inquirer/Candidate’s Relationship of Care	N	Liaison / Cand	When motion of CPM is pending					Y		NCP
<u>Final Assessment</u>											
Form 6	Summary Report of Final Assessment. . .	N	Liaison	Attach Sta. of Faith & other Docs for File		Y		Y			NCP
Form 7A	Changing an Inquirer/Candidate’s Relationship of Care	N	Liaison / Cand	When motion of CPM is pending					Y		NCP

Form 1A

Date: _____

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: _____

Form 1A p.2

Name: _____

(date)
Date: _____

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:

Form 1A p. 3

Name:

Date:

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?
_____	_____	_____	_____

Form 1A p. 4

Name:

Date:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

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/initial)

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/initial)

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/initial)

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? _____

Form 1B

Date: _____

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.

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?

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.

Form 1B

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)*

Form 1C

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						
Food & household supplies						
Automobile (payments, insurance, fuel, etc.)						
Telecommunications (phone, cell, online, etc.)						
Clothing						
Incidentals						
Health insurance (only "out of pocket" expense)						
Other medical/dental						
Transportation:						
Dependent allowance						
Child Care						
Child Support payments						
Life insurance premiums						
Charitable donations						
Other (specify):						
Other (specify):						
Total Living Expenses:		\$0	\$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.					
		Applicant		(Prospective) Spouse		Total Family Debt

Student Loans:	<i>Combine Undergrad/Grad</i>	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	

Form 1D

*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?

2. How is that faith currently being expressed through the individual's participation in the worship, life, and mission of this congregation?

3. 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?

4. What real and potential talents for ministry are evident in this individual (e.g., the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, leadership or administrative abilities)?

5. What is the level and adequacy of the individual's academic interest, leadership skills, cross-cultural competencies, emotional intelligence, and motivations?

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?

Form 2A

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

Form 2A (p. 2)

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

Form 2B

Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release

I, _____ have read and discussed the goals and responsibilities of both inquirers and the presbytery with its 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.

Form 7A

Annual Consultation
Form 3

Pre-consultation Report on Development Areas

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

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

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

(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: _____ Alt phone: _____

(h/o/m) (h/o/m)

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

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.

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.

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

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

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

Inquirer to Candidate
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: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(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 hereby apply to be enrolled by _____ as a candidate.
(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. 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.

Inquirer's signature: _____ *(date)*

References for Outcomes of Inquiry

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? _____

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

Email: _____

This report was prepared for the session by:

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

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

Email: _____

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: _____ (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: _____

Form 5C

Form 5C

Report of Consultation Regarding Application to become a Candidate

The committee/commission of met with _____ 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: _____ *(h/o/m)* Alt phone: _____ *(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

Form 5D

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 its 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.

Form 7A

*Changing an Inquirer's or Candidate's Relationship of Care
with the Presbytery*

On _____, _____ took the action indicated below regarding
(date) *(presbytery name)*

Regarding _____ born on _____.
(first, middle, family name of inquirer or candidate) *(date of birth)*

Action: _____

Signature of Stated Clerk: _____ Date: _____

Please provide or update the following personal information regarding the inquirer or candidate:

Race/ethnicity: _____ Gender: _____

Most recent occupation: _____

Current address: _____

Permanent address: _____
(if same, write 'same')

Main phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____
(home/office/cell) *(home/office/cell)*

Email: _____

Has the person previously applied to a presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer or candidate? _____

If yes, name the presbytery: _____

Was the person enrolled under care? _____

If yes, dates of care: _____ Status at conclusion of relationship: _____

Church of membership: _____

Church address: _____

Date received as a member: _____ Congregational size: _____

Seminary: _____

Location: _____ Expected graduation date: _____

Stated Clerk will copy and send a copy to Office of the General Assembly

NCP FORM CRRC 1

**CPM ANNUAL REPORT
NCP Candidates Certified Ready to Receive a Call
(Revised 6/2021)**

DATE:

NAME:

PRIMARY ADDRESS:

ALTERNATE ADDRESS:

PHONES:

E-MAIL:

LOCAL CHURCH AFFILIATION:

DATE CERTIFIED READY TO RECEIVE A CALL:

DATE GRADUATED FROM SEMINARY
:

Are you circulating your PIF and actively pursuing a call? If no, please explain below.

Yes _____ No _____

of Interviews during past year _____

of Interviews pending _____

Is ordained ministry still your primary goal?

Please describe your current activities—work, school, certification program, etc.

What plans/goals do you have for the coming year—please list specifics and how they relate to a continued pursuit of your call to Ministry of Word and Sacrament?

If you have been out of seminary and certified ready to receive a call more than three years ago, what types of continuing education for ministry are you currently engaged in?

Briefly describe your spiritual disciplines, including your participation in the worship and mission of a Presbyterian congregation. Also, please describe your involvement, if any, in the Presbytery where you are located.

Are there any other issues the CPM should be aware of?

Do you desire a personal interview at this time with a CPM member?

Please answer all questions and return to:

E-mail:

Address:

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