

DISCERNING GOD’S CALL TOGETHER

Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) Guidance for CPM Members and People Under Care

Presbytery of the Cascades, PC(USA)

When God Calls

Sensing God’s call in your life is profound, whether you are called to ordained ministry or to supporting those who pursue ordination. Like a river, a sense of call carries you through challenges, changes, and joys. It sends you into new communities and fresh ways of worship and spiritual formation.

The Bible is full of call stories and the many ways people have met them. Nothing has changed since then: people in every stage of life can know that God calls them to ministry—some to preach, some to teach, some to comfort; all to discern how they will further God’s kingdom. Members of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) are called as mentors and guides to people who may be called to ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Because supporters and seekers work together to interpret and make the most of this time as applicants, inquirers, and candidates, it is helpful to have a guide that pulls together the many moving parts of this story for both seekers and mentors.

For a one-page process overview of preparation for ministry, click [here](#).

For a flowchart version of the process overview, click [here](#).

For a summary of education and field education requirements, click [here](#).

For information and documents related to CPM administration, click [here](#).

Denominational Standards and Expectations

As a regional governing body within the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Presbytery of the Cascades affirms and defers to denominational standards and expectations for the ordination and care process. Any changes to the Book of Order or official direction from the denomination take precedence over the established policies of the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The foundations of the care process and ordination can be found in the Book of Order sections [G-2.06](#) and [G-2.07](#). An additional resource entitled [Advisory Handbook for Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church \(USA\)](#) provided by the denomination provides CPM members, presbytery staff, applicants, and people under care with an overview of the care process and resources and identifies its intentions and goals.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry and Partners—Covenant and Community

The process of inquiry and candidacy rests on the biblical concept of covenant relationship. That is, the process is both a response to God’s faithfulness and an expression of the concern people have for one another. The three partners in this covenant community are the person under care, that person’s home church, and the presbytery Commission on Preparation for Ministry. Presbytery of the Cascades places strong emphasis on communication with the person under care as well as between CPM, the person’s home church session and staff, seminary liaisons, and others. Together, we share information, assessments, and discernment of a path toward serving God.

To strengthen and clarify that covenant, [CPM liaisons](#) and [church session liaisons](#) have specific duties to help people inquiring and under care. Everyone on the CPM works together for the benefit of those under care and all who support them. The presbytery helps [commissioners](#) fulfill their responsibilities in several ways.

The Application Process

The application process begins in the home congregation, when an individual who has been active in a congregation for at least six months approaches the session and declares a desire to explore the possibility of becoming a minister of the Word and Sacrament. If the session agrees to enter such a joint discernment, it will assist that individual in beginning a formal process with the CPM.

Individual Role:

It's a good idea to begin the formal application process soon after making a personal decision to explore this ministry so that the CPM can provide support and counsel as early as possible. Unless the presbytery agrees to waive the usual requirement (see [G-2.0610](#) and "Accommodations to particular circumstances"), an applicant can begin the formal process when the applicant has been "active in the work and worship of [the] congregation for at least six months" and is a member of the congregation before the session presents its endorsement to the presbytery's committee ([G-2.0602](#)).

Session Role:

In deciding whether to endorse someone for the inquiry phase, the session should consult with the person about their personal sense of call and also consider what gifts and abilities for ministry the session has observed during the person's involvement with the congregation. When a session decides to endorse a congregation member's request to be enrolled as an inquirer, it then selects a session liaison to work with the applicant and forwards that endorsement to presbytery using the [Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate](#) (Form 5B).

CPM Role:

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) requires a criminal background check on everyone entering the process. This is consistent with policies for most seminaries and with the Presbytery of the Cascades requirement of a criminal background check for all teaching elders transferring into the Presbytery. CPM also requires a psychological evaluation with an approved evaluator and makes sure the inquirer reviews the presbytery's ethics policy. When these steps are fulfilled, the CPM has the power to accept the applicant as an Inquirer. These documents are available from the presbytery at <https://cascadespresbytery.org/documents/?highlight=policy>. You can also email the presbytery for information about the documents: contactus@potc.org. For an explanation of the application interview process, [click here](#).

1. [Criminal Background Check](#)
2. **Psychological Evaluation**
3. [Ethics Policies of the Presbytery](#)
4. **Application Form**

Presbytery Office Role:

The presbytery office administers paperwork and coordinates meetings.

The Inquiry Process

The inquiry phase gives the church community and those who believe they may be called to serve as ministers of the Word and Sacrament time to explore and test that call together. In regular consultation with CPM, inquirers evaluate the personal implications of and their suitability for a vocation as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The covenant partners join them in prayerful examination of their motivations, personal faith, and experience in congregational and other ministry settings. Annual consultation forms help everyone track the Inquirer's development. For an explanation of the annual consultation process, [click here](#).

Documents

- Annual consultation forms

Inquiry Steps/Expectations

During the inquiry phase CPM encourages inquirers to

1. Continue active membership and participation in a PC(USA) congregation. If away from the home congregation, find a PC(USA) congregation in that community and keep the home congregation informed about involvement there.
2. Fulfill presbytery requirements for all inquirers along with any specific requirements in the covenant agreement, including psychological evaluation, possible career counseling, and beginning (or continuing) graduate theological education.
3. Discuss seminary options or course options with session and CPM to ensure meeting graduation requirements and maximizing preparation and development of gifts for ministry specifically within the PC(USA).
4. Obtain a copy of the [Handbook on Ordination Examinations](#) to familiarize with the Bible Content Exam (BCE) and the exams to be taken during candidacy. CPM and inquirer consult on timing for taking the BCE.
5. With CPM approval and guidance engage in some form of service to the church or field education through seminary. To the degree possible, work to ensure that supervised practica are with PC(USA) congregations or affiliated ministries.

Outcomes of Inquiry

When ready to advance to candidacy, the inquirer should be able to

1. Articulate an understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to personal sense of call.
2. Express their personal faith in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the Reformed tradition.
3. Expound upon at least one concept from that personal faith statement at greater depth, explaining what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships.
4. Explain what it means personally to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church.
5. Discuss their personal and cultural background as it relates to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, including a concern for maintaining personal spiritual, physical, and mental health. Inquirers should also be able to connect their own personal cultural location to changes in American society and its increasingly multicultural character.
6. Express an understanding of the tasks ministers of Word and Sacrament perform, including expressing their specific gifts for this particular ministry and their understanding of areas in which they need further growth.

The Candidacy Process

Steps/Expectations

During the candidacy phase CPM encourages candidates to

1. Continue active membership and participation in a PC(USA) congregation. If away from the home congregation, find a PC(USA) congregation in that community and also keep the home congregation informed about involvement there.
2. Maintain regular communications and consultations with the CPM liaison, including renewing covenant agreements and goals.
3. Fulfill presbytery requirements for all candidates along with any specific requirements in the covenant agreement, including any mandatory supervised practice of ministry experiences such as clinical pastoral education (CPE).
4. With CPM approval and guidance engage in some form of service to the church or field education through the seminary. To the degree possible, work to ensure that ministry placements are with PC(USA) congregations or affiliated ministries.
5. Complete graduate theological education, being sure course selections meet graduation requirements **and** fulfill the Book of Order requirements for courses in Hebrew and Greek and in exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts ([G-2.0607c](#)) **and also** any courses required by the presbytery within the covenant agreement. See [Basic Course Requirements](#).
6. Discuss with CPM liaison at what point in candidacy to take the standard ordination examinations in Biblical Exegesis, Theological Competence, Church Polity, and Worship and Sacraments. Candidates who might need the support of an alternative exam should discuss this with their liaison. To see Presbytery of the Cascades' policy on alternative exams, click [here](#).
7. Discuss with CPM liaison the processes and requirements for “final assessment” in order to be “certified ready for examination for ordination, pending a call” ([G-2.0607](#)).

Documents

- Annual consultation forms

Resources

- Clinical Pastoral Education Opportunities: For current opportunities check with seminary placement office and/or Presbytery of the Cascades, or explore opportunities posted with the two accrediting agencies: [ACPE](#), [ICPT](#).
- Field Experience: For current opportunities check with seminary field placement office and/or Presbytery of the Cascades.

Outcomes of Candidacy

The traditional “outcomes of candidacy” include

1. Presenting evidence of competence in the fields of Reformed theology, Bible, the polity of PC(USA), and worship and sacraments, and evidence of ministerial skill attested through the supervised practice of ministry.
2. Expressing theological views compatible, in the opinion of the presbytery, with the confessional documents of the church.

3. Expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination ([W-4.0404](#)) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings.
4. Revealing commitment to service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament within PC(USA) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry.
5. Presenting a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need it addresses and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose. In the Presbytery of the Cascades, candidates preach their sermon and read their statement of faith in a meeting with CPM as part of CPM's consideration of the candidate's readiness for ordination.

The Certified Candidacy Process

A candidate ready to become certified ready for call must demonstrate preparedness and suitability for ministry, having completed the following:

1. Degree completion at an accredited theological institution and all required coursework
2. Bible content exam and all senior ordination exams
3. Clinical pastoral education (CPE)
4. Supervised ministry (field education)
5. Preaching a sermon to the CPM, accompanied by a written outline/manuscript of the sermon, a description of the contemporary need the sermon addresses, and a written exegetical interpretation of the scriptural text referenced
6. Statement of faith

Circulating a PDP

After completing the above and meeting with the CPM, a candidate may be Certified Ready to Receive a Call and be granted permission to circulate a Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) and begin seeking a call to an ordained position.

Ordination

When called to a position that a presbytery affirms as appropriate for ordination, a certified candidate is examined on their statement of faith and suitability for ministry by that presbytery. Following the presbytery's examination and affirmative vote, the candidate is ready to be ordained to that call.

For information about the service of ordination click [here](#).

Preparing for Ministry in the Presbytery of the Cascades

The *Book of Order* outlines a process for individuals seeking to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). This process requires a minimum of two years and contains eighteen separate steps. It involves a covenant between the individual, the session of the individual's home congregation, the presbytery's Commission on Preparation for Ministry [CPM], the presbytery of call, and the presbytery of care. At any time during the process, an individual may request to be removed from the covenant relationship. Specific details can be found in the *Book of Order* [G-2.06](#).

Applicant Process: The individual must be a member of a congregation for at least six months. The individual informs the session of their desire to pursue ordained ministry. The session notifies the CPM, who then meets with the session for orientation on the inquirer/candidacy process. The session meets with the individual and makes a recommendation to CPM. This recommendation, along with the individual's application, references, and a psychological assessment is shared with the CPM. The CPM then interviews the individual and makes a recommendation to presbytery to enroll the person as an inquirer.

Inquiry Process: This phase of the process is a time for exploration of the vocation of ministry and the sense of one's call to ordained ministry. Each person is assigned a liaison from the session of the home congregation and from the CPM. Once enrolled as an inquirer, an annual consultation is held for as long as the individual remains in the candidacy process with goals set in five key areas: education for ministry, spiritual formation, interpersonal relations, personal growth and professional development.

Candidacy Process: After a minimum of one year, the inquirer can request to be moved to the candidacy phase of the process. The individual again officially meets with the session of the home congregation which makes its recommendation to CPM. CPM also meets with the individual, reviews the progress made in the inquiry process, and receives the individual's one-page Statement of Christian Experience. CPM then makes its recommendation to presbytery to enroll the individual as a candidate. The individual appears before Presbytery, shares their Statement of Christian Experience and responds to questions presbytery members might have about the individual's faith journey. This phase lasts a minimum of one year. During this time, the individual is given permission to take the five ordination examinations required by our denomination.

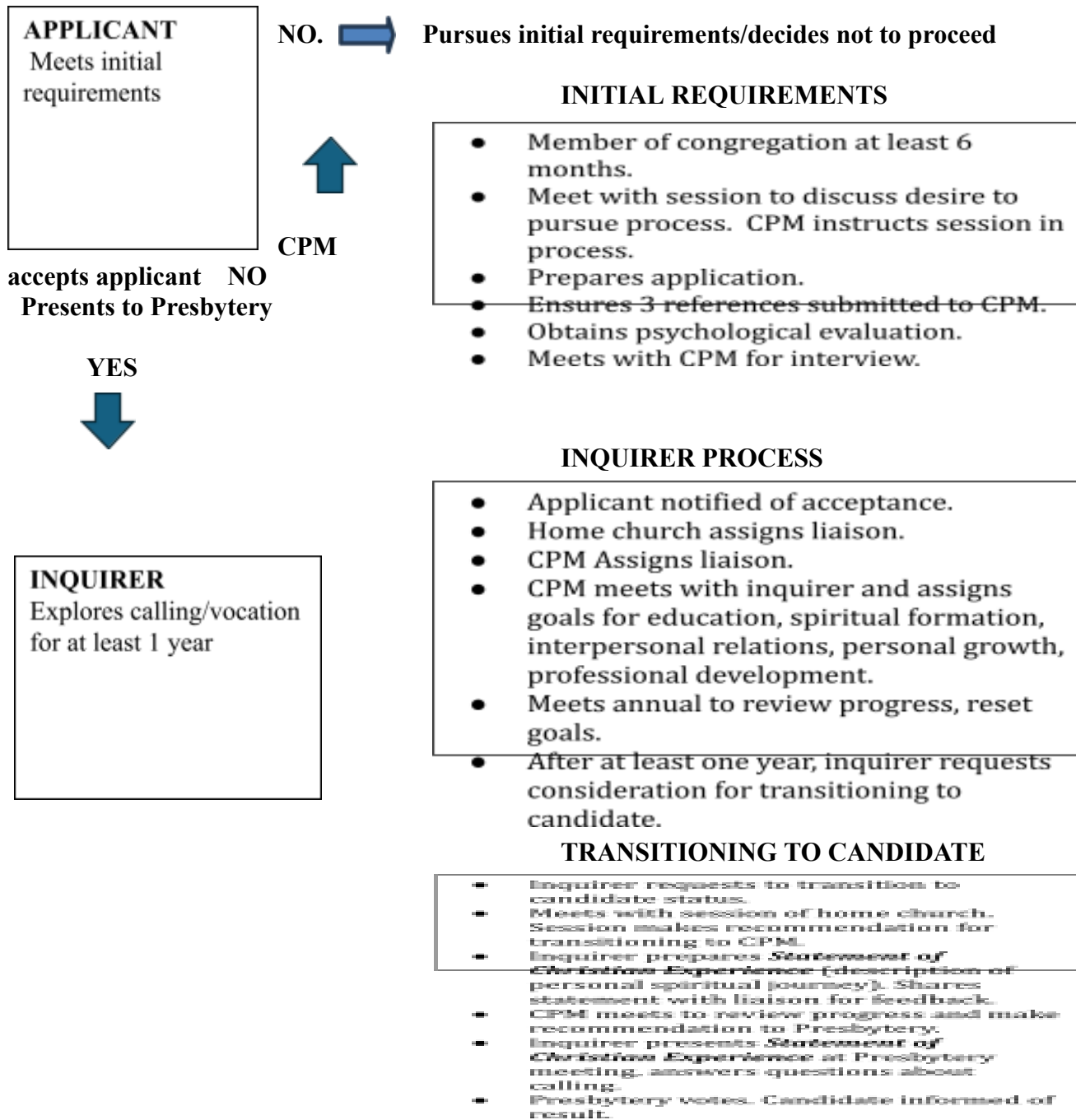
Certified Candidacy Process: Once the individual has passed those examinations, has taken a field experience and clinical pastoral education credit and is close to graduation from a Presbyterian seminary [or granted an exemption from the CPM on a case-by-case basis], the candidate appears before the CPM to be examined as certified ready to receive a call. This final assessment of the individual reviews all pertinent information from the entire candidacy process. The individual is also required to produce an exegetical paper and preach before the commission a sermon based on that text as well as defend a one-page Statement of Faith. CPM then is granted the power by operating procedures of Cascades Presbytery to approve a person certified ready to receive a call. When a candidate becomes certified, they are given permission to circulate a Personal Discernment Profile [PDP] and pursue a call to which they can be ordained.

Once a call has been extended to a validated ministry, the individual must appear before the presbytery to be examined on their Statement of Faith. This is the final step in the "trials for ordination" and is ordinarily conducted by the presbytery in which the call has been issued. Once examined and approved for ordination, the presbytery of call then ordinarily sets the time and place for the candidate's service of ordination.

Anytime during the process, an individual may request to be removed from the covenant relationship. Anyone wishing to pursue ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament or who has questions concerning the inquirer/candidacy process is encouraged to email: contactus@potc.org

See visual diagram of the process on the next page:

PROCESS OF PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY APPLICANT TO CANDIDATE STATUS



Presbytery determines that inquirer meets requirements for transitioning to candidate

NO
YES



Continues as Inquirer
Begins Candidate process

PROCESS OF PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY CANDIDATE TO CERTIFIED FOR CALL

CANDIDATE

Meet
Denomination
Ordination
Requirements – at
least one year

CANDIDATE PROCESS

- Schedule and take ordination exams.
- Schedule and complete field experience
- Schedule and complete clinical pastoral education (CPE)
- Seminary education complete or near completion.
- ~~Meet annually with CPM for review of progress and resetting goals.~~
- Request to transition to Certified Status

TRANSITION TO CERTIFIED READY FOR CALL

- Prepare exegetical paper. Prepare a sermon based on that paper.
- Prepare a one-page ***Statement of Faith.***
- Meet with the CPM to preach the sermon and defend the ***Statement of Faith.***
- ~~CPM determines if candidate is approved to be certified ready for call.~~

CPM determines candidate is
Ready for call



YES

CERTIFIED FOR CALL

Ready for call and
ordination



NO Continues as Candidate.

- Candidate may circulate a Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) and pursue a call to a validated ministry.
- Appears before Presbytery that issued the call to be examined on their ***Statement of Faith.***
- IF approved for ordination, the Presbytery will set the time and place for the service of ordination.

Education and Experience Requirements

Seminary Education

- a. [Presbyterian Seminary Attendance Policy](#)
- b. [CPM course requirements](#)
- c. [Seminary Indebtedness Policy](#)
- d. Clinical Pastoral Education and Field Education
 - Clinical Pastoral Education Opportunities: For current opportunities check with seminary placement office and/or Presbytery of the Cascades (contactus@potc.org), or explore opportunities posted with the two accrediting agencies: [ACPE](#), [ICPT](#).
 - Field Education: For current opportunities check with seminary field placement office and/or Presbytery of the Cascades.

Ordination Exams

Bible Content Exam

Senior Ordination Exams

- Biblical Exegesis
- Theology
- Worship and Sacraments
- Church Polity

Special Accommodations

[POTC Alternative Assessment Models](#) for Ordination Exams

[Presbyterian Ethos](#)

CPM Commissioner Expectations and Responsibilities

Liaison Relationships

- a. [Session Liaison](#)
- b. [CPM Liaison](#)

Commission Member Reimbursement Policy

As a commission, committee, or team member of the Presbytery of the Cascades, you are entitled to reimbursement for expenses that you incur when traveling to attend meetings of your committee, commission, or team.

Lodging: Full reimbursement for receipted amounts up to the Federal Per Diem rate.

Meals: Full reimbursement for receipted amounts of meal expenses during meetings and travel up to the Federal Per Diem rate. Receipts needed for reimbursement.

Mileage is ordinarily reimbursed at \$0.14 per mile with additional amounts:

- An additional \$0.04 per mile for each passenger
- For travel over 350 miles round trip and carpooling not possible, an additional \$0.02/mi

Recommended Duties of the CPM Liaison: Part of a Covenant Relationship

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) liaison is part shepherd and part gatekeeper. Liaisons offer continuity and connection between the CPM and the individual inquirers and candidates. Liaisons explain the process, act as a contact person, and advocate, when necessary, for the inquirer/candidate. Liaisons also communicate any commission concerns to the inquirer/candidate and, when appropriate, to the home church pastor and the session liaison.

Best practices for CPM liaisons include the following:

1. Explain how the CPM works to your inquirer/candidate. Include their responsibilities and what they can expect of the CPM.
2. Ensure communication between the CPM and your inquirer/candidate. Confirm at least annual contact.
3. Put a human face on the process. You are there to express the presbytery's appreciation, care, and concern.
4. Establish and maintain contact with the session liaison assigned to your inquirer/candidate.
5. Initiate a conversation with your inquirer/candidate at least twice a year (more often if it seems advisable). Make the contact as personal as possible (face-to-face if possible, then phone call. Text/email is helpful where you need to document contact).
6. As you get to know your inquirer/candidate, you may recognize strengths and weaknesses. Do not be afraid to address these. Be kind, and also honest.
7. Touch base before your inquirer/candidate meets with the CPM to help ensure effective response in both directions to relevant issues.
8. Be your inquirer/candidate's advocate at points of tension with the CPM. Interpret CPM's policy whenever necessary.

9. Help your inquirer/candidate ensure timely completion of required work. Be aware of requirements/timing for ordination, including required course work, field education, CPE, Bible Content and other ordination exams, as well as any papers/forms due before meeting with the CPM.
10. Be available to assist your inquirer/candidate in preparing the various required written documents. You should review these items before the inquirer/candidate comes before the full CPM.
11. Along the way, discuss current growth objectives with your inquirer/candidate, being as supportive and encouraging as possible.
12. Contact your inquirer/candidate after each meeting with the CPM and debrief about the meeting.
13. If requested, the liaison may also assist the candidate in preparing a Personal Discernment Profile (PDP)

Session Liaison Responsibilities

Adopted by CPM: April 2010

Recommended Duties of the Session Liaison: Part of a Covenant Relationship

Background: The *Book of Order* ([G-2.0605](#)) provides for the appointment of an elder (or a group of persons including at least one elder) of the home church to act as liaison with the inquirer/candidate and with the presbytery's Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). The CPM and the home church session are true covenanting partners in the preparation process. The CPM and its moderator play an important role in supporting the session as a full partner. The session liaison participates with the inquirer/candidate and CPM as it explores and evaluates their progress in the preparation for ministry. Outlined below are important ways in which the session liaison can be of assistance:

Establishing and Maintaining Contact

1. Learn the background of your inquirer or candidate if you do not already know it. This includes parents, siblings, school, college, avocational interests and abilities, birthday, name of spouse (if married), name(s) of child(ren) (if any), (proposed) seminary, progress toward ordination, financial needs, and so forth.
2. Visit, write, or phone to introduce yourself.
3. Become acquainted in ways that seem natural to you and the inquirer or candidate.
4. Take an interest in their academic studies, field education, annual consultation, and other activities related to preparation for the ministry as a Teaching Elder.
5. Become aware of when the person under care will be available for in-person contact, even if it is only a phone call.
6. Remember your inquirer or candidate in prayer.
7. Write your inquirer or candidate on special occasions (for example, birthdays or anniversaries).
8. The role of the spouse of the inquirer or candidate is particularly important. Try to be supportive, sensitive, and understanding of the whole family. Let the CPM know if you see ways the CPM may better assist the spouses/partners of inquirers and candidates in preparing for their new roles.
9. In a word, be a friend and lend to your inquirer and candidate a sense of your personal, moral, and spiritual interest in, and support of them in training for the ministry as a Teaching Elder.
10. Be present if at all possible at the ordination and installation.

Advocating for Your Inquirer/Candidate

1. Become acquainted with the policies and procedures of Cascades Presbytery and the resources available in the PCUSA [Advisory Handbook for Preparation on Ministry](#) so that you are aware of requirements and procedures and can provide timely support (for

example, appearances before presbytery, annual consultation, presbyteries' cooperative examinations [ordination exams], final assessment, and so forth).

2. Share with the CPM especially at the time of annual consultation, any areas of particular need of the inquirer/candidate, whether financial or personal.
3. Remind your session of the responsibility of financial assists for necessary expenses incurred in relation to annual consultations.
4. Initiate conversation with your session on the possibility of providing financial assistance or other tangible support to your inquirers and candidates.
5. At the presbytery meeting at which the inquirer or candidate is to be received or examined, speak a word on their behalf.

Communication

1. Identify ways to keep the congregation aware of the names of its inquirers/candidates (away at seminary or at home) who have entered a covenant relationship with the presbytery and are preparing for the ministry as Teaching Elders.
2. Make regular reports to session on the inquirer's/candidate's progress.
3. Discuss with your session the progress the inquirer/candidate is making, as reflected in the Summary Report of Annual Consultation, which is prepared by the presbytery CPM and sent to the sponsoring session.
4. Establish and maintain contact with the CPM liaison assigned to your inquirer/candidate

Please know that as you faithfully walk with your congregation's inquirer/candidate, fulfilling tasks like these, there is a benefit to you, as well: you also grow in grace and faith!

Basic Course Requirements

Adopted by Presbytery of the Cascades/CPM: April 2010

CPM Education Checklist

Name _____

Area Requirements – list title of the classes	School	Date	Grade	Sem/Qtr	Units
Biblical Studies: <i>2 courses minimum for both Old and New Testaments.</i>					
OT – Pentateuch focus					
OT – Other focus					
NT – Gospels focus					
NT – Pauline / other focus					
Language and Exegesis: <i>1 course each for Hebrew and Greek language and one course each in OT and NT exegesis.</i>					
Hebrew					
Greek					
Applied – Hebrew/OT Exegesis					
Applied – Greek/NT Exegesis					
Theology: <i>2 courses minimum plus 1 course Ethics</i>					
Introduction to Theology					
Reformed Theology (survey)					
Ethics					
Practical Theology:					
Presbyterian Polity					
Reformed Worship / Sacraments					
Homiletics					
Christian Education					
Pastoral Care					
Church History: <i>2 courses minimum.</i>					
Church History – 1 st to 21 st Century Survey					
Church History – Reformed/Book of Confessions					
Miscellaneous:					
Spirituality / Prayer					
Administration / Leadership					
Field Education					
Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)					

Electives: <i>List.</i>					

Note: Completing an M.Div does not necessarily mean the educational requirements of the CPM have been met. It is the student's responsibility (not the CPM's) to ensure that all courses meet our requirements. CPM must approve in advance any alternative education plans.

Preparation for Ordination

The Book of Order provides information on requirements for ordination:

[G-2.07](#) Ordination

[W-4.04](#): Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) Circulation Policy

Adopted by CPM: October 1999

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will allow candidates to circulate their PDPs after all written ordination exams have been passed and after successful completion of any/all CPM requirements. Candidates may not negotiate for a particular position until certified by CPM.

Ordination - Plans for the Service and Administrative Commission

Resources for ordination are found at the PC(USA) website or by contacting the ordaining presbytery.

Commission on Preparation for Ministry Administrative Documents

Annual Consultation

CPM meets with inquirers and candidates at least annually to assess their progress toward previously established goals in each of the five growth areas and to negotiate together appropriate new goals. Before each annual consultation, people under care must submit [Form 3 – Annual Consultation](#), which includes references.

Annual consultations address status and academic updates, issues, successes, questions, and more. We ask candidates to send updated self-assessments and progress reports a couple weeks before the consultation date so that the entire commission can be up to speed during the interview. It is also a time to examine other questions such as

1. What gifts for ministry do others recognize in this person's life?
2. Where might those gifts fit in response to the needs of the church and God's people broadly in the world?
3. Does the inquirer/candidate have the gifts, temperament, and interests needed to fulfill the functions of ministry of Word and Sacrament?
4. How willing and able is the person to follow the call of God's Spirit to serve in this ministry wherever that may lead?

Consultations may be in person or by video conference. Usually, CPM members take time to review the background information before the inquirer/candidate joins the meeting. Once the person is present, the meeting includes opening prayer (usually by the CPM liaison), introduction of CPM members and session liaison (if present), and the interview. Following the interview, the person is dismissed for a brief time while the CPM discusses what has been

covered and develops growth objectives for the next year. The person is invited to rejoin, after which the commission offers feedback and suggestions, discusses growth objectives, and closes with prayer by the liaison.

Most people under care benefit from more interaction than this annual consultation. CPM liaisons use email, texts, calls, food and beverage meet-ups, and video conferencing to encourage more regular check-ins as ways to build the relationship and trust essential to this discernment process. We also encourage people under care to reach out to each other for support and encouragement.

Summary of Recommended Interview Practice

Applicant Interviews (times given are approximates for planning guidance):

1. 15 minutes - CPM meets in executive session for general review of background information.
2. 5 minutes – Liaison introduces potential inquirer and session liaison, if present. CPM members introduce themselves.
3. 30 minutes - CPM reviews background with the applicant.
4. Dismiss potential inquirer with a reminder that discussion takes awhile and they will be called back shortly.
5. 15 minutes – vote whether or not to enroll. Develop growth objectives if the individual is enrolled.
6. 15 minutes - invite potential inquirer and session liaison (if present) back. Report decision and pray with them.

Annual Interview for People Under Care

1. CPM meets in executive session for general review of submitted reviews and other background information, if any.
2. Liaison introduces person under care and session liaison, if present. CPM members introduce themselves.
3. CPM reviews submitted documents with the person under care along with insights learned over the year, questions, concerns, and other updates.
4. Dismiss interviewee and session liaison with reminder that discussion takes awhile and they will be called back shortly.
5. CPM discusses findings and develops growth objectives for the coming year.
6. Interviewee and session liaison (if present) are invited back. Growth objectives are discussed and the CPM liaison or chair ends the interview with prayer.

Meeting to Consider Advancing from Inquirer to Candidate

This meeting differs from an annual meeting in several possible ways, mostly involving goal setting:

- The meeting includes discussion of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experience or plans not covered previously.
- CPM and person under care discuss academic requirements, Presbytery of the Cascades requirements, and ordination exams not yet taken.

Meeting to Certify Ready for Call

This meeting differs from an annual meeting with two additional activities:

- Preaching of Sermon (20-30 minutes) The candidate preaches based upon a scriptural text. Sermon is accompanied by an exegesis of that text and a summary of its relevance to contemporary need. The candidate is prepared to discuss these with the CPM
- Statement of Faith (20-45 minutes) The candidate reads and is prepared to discuss their one-page statement of faith.

Negative Decision Procedure

If opting not to advance an inquirer at the time of meeting to candidacy, the CPM 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 CPM 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 chair should indicate that the CPM has concerns that require time to put in writing, and then articulate these in general terms before the 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.

There is no limit on the times the motion to advance to candidacy may be considered. Graduation timing is not a factor in approving this motion. The CPM may set reasonable periods of time for accomplishment of such goals of less than 1 year.

If after the CPM has considered this question 3 times, and it appears that the commission does not find the inquirer suitable for ordered ministry (G-2. 0603), the CPM may pastorally begin exploring alternative areas of ministry appropriate to the inquirer. Such alternative ways of serving Christ are not be considered a failure in any way. As such, the CPM should not initiate removal from the process of any inquirer who is invested in the struggle. Instead, it is the CPM's work to help discern God's calling of the saint.

The chair and liaison should privately discuss the matter, after which the chair 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.

Seminary Indebtedness Policy

Adopted by CPM: January 2005

When the Presbytery of the Cascades is the Presbytery of Care:

1. Require an inquirer to meet during the inquiry year with a Presbyterian Foundation representative, or a regional representative from the Board of Pensions, in order to assess net worth and to make a plan for financing the cost of seminary; or
2. Require the inquirer, during the inquiry year, to participate in a "Fiscal Fitness" workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA).

3. The liaison from the presbytery's Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will counsel with an inquirer regarding the inquirer's level of indebtedness vis-a-vis prospective salary that can be expected based on the current median income for the denomination reported by the Board of Pensions, and based on the minimum effective salary established by the Presbytery of the Cascades.
4. The CPM will work with each inquirer and candidate toward using their available assets to pay for the cost of seminary tuition and room and board rather than incurring indebtedness. If indebtedness cannot be avoided, the CPM will monitor, with the inquirer or candidate, the level at which this increases as well as the assets that may be made liquid to assist with seminary debt repayment.
5. The CPM will make available on an annual basis to each candidate or inquirer a list of options for pursuing grants and interest-free loans.
6. The CPM will be an advocate with the congregation of which the candidate is a member, and with other congregations of the presbytery as appropriate, in order to generate financial support for the candidate in the form of grants.

When the Presbytery of the Cascades is the Presbytery of Call:

7. Any minister answering a first call following graduation from seminary, and who comes with any educational indebtedness, will be required to show evidence of having attended a financial planning workshop such as "Fiscal Fitness" workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions. If the minister has not attended such a workshop, they will be required to do so within twelve months of start-up. The cost of registration fee, accommodation, and travel for such a workshop will be considered legitimate reimbursable expense from the presbytery.
8. The Commission on Ministry will encourage calling congregations to use further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.

Travel Reimbursement Policy

It is the practice of Cascades Presbytery to cover the travel costs (airline, mileage, motel, meals, public transportation and car rental) of inquirers and candidates for costs incurred to meet with the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) for their annual consultations and/or to appear at Presbytery meetings. The Presbytery requests that the person's home church contribute up to one-half the total of these expenses.

Candidates are responsible for travel costs that occur due to late ticketing (after 21 days before traveling) or personal preferences.

Criminal Background Check

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) requires that a criminal background check be conducted on all persons entering the candidacy process.

Rationale:

Most seminaries require a background check for entering students

Cascades Presbytery requires a criminal background check for all teaching elders transferring into the Presbytery.

File Retention

Adopted by CPM: April 2004

Revised: August 2012

In the Presbytery of the Cascades, all files maintained by the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) for persons under the care of CPM shall be destroyed by shredding or other secure means no less than seven (7) years following the last contact between CPM and the person under care as per the record retention policy adopted by the Personnel & Administration Committee, May 30, 2012.

Presbyterian Seminary Attendance Policy

The presbytery adopted a (2001) policy that would ordinarily require that a candidate for ordination by the Presbytery of the Cascades receive an M.Div. degree from a Presbyterian seminary. However, the following exceptions are possible with a two-thirds vote of the commission:

- An M.Div. degree from a non-Presbyterian seminary, earned as a full-time student, with a particular emphasis on Presbyterian experience, or
- An M.Div. degree as a commuter student at a Presbyterian seminary, or
- An M.Div. degree as a commuter to an accredited non-Presbyterian seminary, with one-year full-time residency at a Presbyterian seminary.
- An ability to demonstrate through experience, background, and education, and a thorough pastoral formation in the [Presbyterian ethos](#).

Guidance for Determining Formation in the Presbyterian Ethos Regarding Requests for Exemptions

Adopted by CPM, April 2010

Guidance for use where inquirers and candidates request an exception from study and

preparation in a Presbyterian Church (USA) seminary as they believe they can demonstrate through experience, background, and education, a thorough pastoral formation in the Presbyterian ethos.

It is recommended that a request and review of this exception come as early as possible in the inquiry phase of care, with a concrete plan for fulfilling any requirements of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) to come throughout the care process in the goals established in annual consultations. The inquirer/candidate will be willing to engage in conversation and set goals in light of the criteria below.

Are you called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA)?

Much of our conversation with individuals under care concerns the kind of ministry to which they are called (teaching elders or another ministry as a part of our understanding that all the baptized are called in the priesthood of all believers). This guideline addresses the issue of the context for the practice of ministry to which they may be called.

When an inquirer/candidate seeks an exception, invoking option (d), they will bring a portfolio to the CPM that shows their experience/background/education in areas that articulate a thorough pastoral formation in the Presbyterian ethos. They will demonstrate by their history and ongoing pastoral formation while under care how these areas will be fulfilled.

The CPM's understanding of pastoral formation in a "Presbyterian ethos" will be guided by, but not limited to, these areas:

- **Educational preparation** shall include overall grounding in Christian theology, practice and history, and also include the standards of an embodiment of Presbyterian theology, worship, spirituality and practice. The inquirer/candidate will be able to speak to a Presbyterian perspective for the broad Christian community and for the particular ministry they may serve.
- **Biblical study and the use of Scripture in the life of the congregation:** There is an expectation of rigorous intellectual disciplines in biblical interpretation; (the heart of humanism in the reformation was an excitement in the use of many different disciplines). The inquirer/candidate will be able to articulate and apply the guidelines for biblical authority and interpretation adopted by the PC(USA). [See OGA 99-022 based on documents of both of our predecessor denominations—outline attached.]
- **Pastoral leadership within the Presbyterian ethos:** The pastoral formation shall include relational and shared leadership, putting skills in service to the communal discernment of the church. A belief in parity between elders and pastors in church leadership is central to this. The inquirer/candidate will demonstrate a trust and expectation in the Holy Spirit's ability to work through the diversity of the gathered body.
- **Worship and spiritual disciplines:** Pastoral formation shall include planning and experiencing the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition, and that which is distinctively Presbyterian. Inquirer/candidate will show appropriate application of the Directory of Worship in a variety of settings, both individually and in collaboration with others, for the worship of the church, to the glory of God.
- **Pastoral formation** in the Presbyterian ethos includes a willingness and a facility to live in the tension that balances head and heart, individual and communal, order and ardor,

God's sovereignty and our responsibility. The ethos seeks a personal balance in these things, out of which service is offered the community. The inquirer/candidate will demonstrate their commitment to living in this tension, trusting in God's grace.

...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith...¹⁵speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into the one who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. Ephesians 4:12a, 15-16

Presbyterian Understanding and Use of Holy Scripture was adopted by the 123rd General Assembly (1983) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as a position statement of the General Assembly on the interpretation of Scripture.

Biblical Authority and Interpretation was received by the 194th General Assembly (1982) of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Its guidelines were adopted by the General Assembly.

The two papers were written in response to the need for a common basis in a diverse church for understanding and using Scripture. The Office of Theology and Worship believes that they remain important resources for the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Brief summary:

We believe that scripture, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is the Living Word through which God continues to speak to us today.

1. We interpret all scripture through the lens of God's revelation in ***Jesus Christ***.
2. We give priority to the ***Plain Sense*** of the text.
3. We interpret ***Scripture by Scripture*** as each text is seen in the light of the entirety of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.
4. We apply the ***Rule of Love***, asking, "How does this affirm love of God and neighbor as self?"
5. We interpret by the ***Rule of Faith*** that is in light of the consensus of the community of faith past and present.
6. We believe the interpretation of the Bible requires ***Earnest Study*** using all the tools of critical scholarship.

All interpretation must rely on the ***Guidance of the Holy Spirit*** in determining both meaning and application.

Presbyterian Ethos Assessment Form

Adopted by CPM: April 2011

Format for Submitting Evidence of Thorough Pastoral Formation in the Presbyterian Ethos

It is recommended that a request and review of this exception come as early as possible in the inquiry phase of care. The inquirer will be willing to engage in conversation and set goals in light of the criteria below. There are three components to the assessment:

1. The individual submits an accounting of life experience to be reviewed along with documentation of hours, faculty/supervisors, institutions involved and a description of the contexts in which pastoral formation took place.
2. References that can speak to the areas being assessed are furnished and interviewed.
3. Observations of the individual providing leadership in a setting that demonstrates his/her ability is made by an individual with expertise in both observation and in the area being assessed. The documentation of the observations includes examples of practical application of the competencies being assessed.

When inquirers seek an exception to Cascades Presbytery's policy on Presbyterian Seminary Attendance [Option D], they will bring a portfolio to the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) that shows their experience/background/education in the five (5) areas that articulate thorough pastoral formation in the Presbyterian ethos. They will demonstrate by her/his history and ongoing pastoral formation while under care how these areas will be fulfilled.

All this evidence is then reviewed by a panel and an assessment is made as to the strengths and weaknesses of the individual's current competence/formation with recommendations as to the meeting of the requirement for granting an exception. Most reviews include an opportunity to furnish further documentation in an area not deemed sufficient to meet the requirements.

It is within the authority and discretion of the CPM to grant or not grant the exception [Option D] to the Presbytery's policy on Presbyterian Seminary Attendance.

A. Educational preparation includes overall grounding in Christian theology, practice and history, and also includes the (standards of an embodiment of Presbyterian) theology, worship, spirituality and practice. The inquirer can speak to a Presbyterian perspective for the broad Christian community and for the particular ministry they may serve.

CPM Comment:

B. Biblical study and the use of Scripture in the life of the congregation: There is an expectation of rigorous intellectual disciplines in biblical interpretation (the heart of humanism) in the reformation was an excitement in the use of many different disciplines. The inquirer will be able to articulate and apply the guidelines for Biblical authority and interpretation adopted by the Presbyterian Church (USA). [See OGA 99-022 based on documents of both of our predecessor denominations – outline included in Cascades Presbytery's policy on Presbyterian Seminary Attendance.]

CPM Comment:

C. Pastoral leadership within the Presbyterian ethos: The pastoral formation shall include relational and shared leadership – putting skills in service to the communal discernment of the church. A belief in parity between elders and pastors in church leadership is central to this. The inquirer will demonstrate a trust and expectation in the Holy Spirit's ability to work through the diversity of the gathered body.

CPM Comment:

D. Worship and spiritual disciplines: Pastoral formation shall include planning and experiencing the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition, and that which is distinctively Presbyterian. The inquirer will show appropriate application of the Directory of Worship in a variety of settings, both individually and in collaboration with others, for the worship of the church, to the glory of God.

CPM Comment:

E. Pastoral formation in the Presbyterian ethos includes a willingness and a facility to live in the tension that balances head and heart, individual and communal, order and ardor, God's sovereignty and our responsibility. The ethos seeks a personal balance in these things, out of which service is offered the community. The inquirer will demonstrate his/her commitment to living in this tension, trusting in God's grace.

CPM Comment:

Policies on Alternate Exam Processes

The Rationale: The Book of Order [G-2.0610]* provides for an alternative assessment process, if
Approved by a three-fourth vote of the presbytery of care.

The CPM is satisfied with the progress made in all other areas.

There is precedent in the Presbytery of Cascades to approve alternative methods for examination:

Biblical Exegesis [approved 2002; reaffirmed in 2005 and 2010]; Polity [approved 2006, reaffirmed in 2011]; Worship and Sacraments [approved 2006]

* "The minutes of presbytery shall contain a full record of the reasons for the exception and the alternate plan for determining competence." [Book of Order, G-2.0610]

Alternate Exam Process for Bible Content

Adopted by Presbytery: March 2012

To accommodate individuals who have not successfully completed the Bible Content exam after several attempts, the following plan is proposed as an alternative. This exercise is intended to not only demonstrate a familiarity with content of the Bible but to also serve as the foundation for a useful resource to remember and access specific passages.

The Plan:

After approval by the Presbytery, the candidate is to:

Write and submit a comprehensive portfolio surveying the content of the Bible. The portfolio must include a brief summary of the content of each book with identification of at least one reference of scripture/story in each book that would be useful in the pastoral context in which you expect to work. Besides citing the reference and providing a quotation of the verse(s), provide a paragraph of explanation as to how the passage is relevant in your life and/or work. In addition at least two such references shall be included for one book of each of the major

divisions of scripture (Law, Former Prophets, Wisdom Literature, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Gospels & Acts, Pauline Epistles, Non-Pauline Epistles, and Revelation). For example, your portfolio piece for the Law Portion might include 3 references from Genesis and one reference from each of the remaining books in that portion.

The portfolio must be completed on the computer so that it may be the beginning of a life-time work that may be added to as you continue your study of scripture and insight into ministry.

An evaluation panel would be composed of three persons from the Presbytery of Cascades. (NOTE: Current CPM members would not be members of this panel.)

The examination panel will provide oral feedback to the candidate following their completion of the grading process and recommendation to CPM regarding successful completion of this exam.

* “A full account of the reasons for exception shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.”
[Book of Order, G-2.0610]

Alternate Exam Process for Biblical Exegesis

Adopted by Presbytery: March 2002; reaffirmed: March 2005

1. A team of four (4) will be selected by the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and will include:

- a. One individual with graduate training in the area of examination (Exegesis)
- b. An active Teaching Elder
- c. An active Ruling Elder

(The above 3 team members shall not have any personal or professional relationship with the candidate)

- d. A member of CPM to act as a resource

2. The team will:

- a. Evaluate the old exam to identify reasons for failure.
- b. Interview the candidate so s/he can provide his/her own perspective on what is deemed difficult about the exam.
- c. Read letters from professors and supervisors to determine their perspective.
- d. Orally examine the candidate on his/her formal Statement of Faith, seeking support for this statement from Scripture, the Book of Confessions, and Reformed theologians. This portion shall not take longer than 1½ hours.
- e. Examine an exegesis paper that will be prepared by the candidate and properly examine the candidate about its contents.
- f. Hear a sermon prepared by the candidate based on the above exegesis and examine him/her about the application of the scripture.

- g. The above two portions having to do with exegesis and the sermon should together take no longer than 1½ hours.
 - h. Provide written evaluations indicating strengths, weaknesses and the team's recommendation for pass/fail grade, to be submitted to the CPM.
3. CPM will determine final disposition of the examination based on the evaluations of the team.

Alternate Exam Process for Polity

Adopted by Presbytery: November 2006; revised: April 2011

The Plan:

- a. After approval by the Presbytery, the Presbytery of Cascades' Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will request that the manager of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations create two separate polity exams from which the CPM will select one to administer.
- b. This Alternative Polity Exam shall include 90 minutes for the candidate's written preparation/outline of responses and another 90 minutes for the candidate's oral response to the questions. During the oral exam each question will be allowed 30 minutes with no more than 20 minutes for the candidate's presentation and no more than 10 minutes for the examination panel's elaborating, probing questions.
- c. A member of CPM will monitor the candidate's preparation time.
- d. The examination panel would be composed of three persons from the Presbytery of Cascades who have had previous experience reading ordination exams. (NOTE: Current CPM members would not be members of this panel.)
- e. During the time that the candidate is preparing and outlining his/her responses to the questions, the members of the examination panel will confer to develop criteria for evaluating the candidate's oral remarks.
- f. Examination panel members may caucus at the close of the 90 minute presentation time to discuss the candidate's responses. They will use the grading sheets normally provided for the standardized Polity Exam to individually score the candidate. Two of the three panelists must give the exam a passing score.
- g. The examination panel will provide oral feedback to the candidate following their completion of the grading process.

Alternate Exam Process for Worship & Sacraments

Adopted by Presbytery: November 2006

The Plan:

- a. The Presbytery of Cascade's Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will request that the manager of the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations create two separate Worship & Sacraments exams from which the CPM will select one to administer.
- b. This Alternative Worship & Sacraments Exam shall include 90 minutes for the candidate's written preparation/ outline of responses and another 90 minutes for the candidate's oral response to the questions. During the oral exam each question will be allowed 30 minutes, with no more than 20 minutes for the candidate's presentation and no more than 10 minutes for the examination panel's elaborating, probing questions.
- c. A member of CPM will monitor the candidate's preparation time.
- d. The examination panel would be composed of three persons from the Presbytery of Cascades who have had previous experience reading ordination exams. (NOTE: Current CPM members would not be members of this panel.)
- e. During the time that the candidate is preparing and outlining his/her responses to the questions, the members of the examination panel will confer to develop criteria for evaluating the candidate's oral remarks.
- f. Examination panel members may caucus at the close of the 90-minute presentation time to discuss the candidate's responses. They will use the grading sheets normally provided for the standardized Worship & Sacraments Exam to individually score the candidate. Two of the three panelists must give the exam a passing score.
- g. The examination panel will provide oral feedback to the candidate following their completion of the grading process.

Current Information from the Book of Order

PC(USA) Book Of Order 2019/2023

G-2.06 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

G-2.0601 Nature and Purpose of Preparation

It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.

G-2.0602 Time Requirements

To be enrolled as an inquirer, the applicant shall be a member of the sponsoring congregation, shall have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months, and shall have received the endorsement of the session of the sponsoring congregation. The inquiry and candidacy phases shall continue for a period of no less than two years, including at least one year as a candidate.

G-2.0603 Purpose of Inquiry

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore

that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.

G-2.0604 Purpose of Candidacy

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

G-2.0605 Oversight

During the phases of inquiry and candidacy the individual continues to be an active member of his or her congregation and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of their covenant relationship.

G-2.0606 Service in Covenant Relationship

Inquirers and candidates shall, with the permission of the presbytery of care, engage in some form of supervised service to the church. No inquirer or candidate who has not been previously ordained as a ruling elder may serve as moderator of a session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a marriage service. An inquirer or candidate previously ordained as a ruling elder may be authorized by the presbytery to preside at the Lord's Supper when invited by a session.

G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

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

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

G-2.0608 Transfer of Relationship

At the request of the inquirer or candidate and with the approval of the sessions and presbyteries involved, a presbytery may transfer the covenant relationship of an inquirer or candidate.

G-2.0609 Removal from Relationship

An inquirer or candidate may, after consultation with the session and the presbytery, withdraw from covenant relationship. A presbytery may also, for sufficient reasons, remove an individual's name from the roll of inquirers and candidates, reporting this action and the reasons to the session, to the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled. Prior to taking such action, the presbytery or its designated entity shall make a reasonable attempt to give the candidate or inquirer an opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed removal.

G-2.0610 Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an individual seeking ordination, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-fourths vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.

G-2.07 ORDINATION

G-2.0701 Ordination

Ordination to the ordered ministry of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call.

G-2.0702 Place of Ordination

The presbytery placing the call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain, and install the candidate.

G-2.0703 Service of Ordination

The order for that service of worship in the Directory for Worship (W-4.04) shall be followed.

G-2.0704 Record of Ordination

The presbytery of call shall record the ordination and installation, along with written affirmation of the new minister of the Word and Sacrament to the obligations undertaken in the ordination questions, and enroll the minister of the Word and Sacrament as a member of the presbytery. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall report these actions to the General Assembly, the presbytery of care, and to the congregation of which the candidate was formerly a member.

W-4.04: Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

W-4.0404: Constitutional Questions

The moderator of the council of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to face the body of membership and to answer the following questions:

- 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 the Word and Sacrament†) Will you be a faithful minister of the 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?