

# Guide to the Preparation for Ministry Process in the Presbytery of New Harmony

## Welcome!

*This guide explains the process of preparation for ministry in the Presbytery of New Harmony.*<sup>1</sup>

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## **I: Important Things to Know as You Begin**

God is merciful. God will never fail you or forsake you. Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, knows you by name and will rescue you from every trouble and danger. The Spirit of God will give you the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love to serve others in every situation. God will give to you, to your session and congregation, and to the presbytery and its Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), the wisdom to discern how best you may take up your cross and follow Jesus, our great Lord, the friend of sinners.

The path ahead of you is difficult. The process of preparation will make demands that challenge you in unexpected ways, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. This time of discernment may take you in directions you might not anticipate. Much of what you have thought was sure and certain may collapse. But, by the grace of God, your readiness for the good news of Jesus Christ will grow, and you will meet again and again the One who seeks and finds the lost!

There are no guarantees. Beginning the process of preparation does not guarantee the outcome you might expect. You may find that you are not called to the type of ministry that you had first thought. You may be called to be a teaching elder, but you also might find yourself called to be a hospital, school, or prison chaplain, a Christian Educator, or to other vocational work in the church that does not require one to be a teaching elder. Becoming an inquirer does not guarantee that you will be accepted as a candidate; becoming a candidate does not entitle you to be called to a congregation or other place of service; gaining a positive response from a search committee does not ensure that you will be approved by a presbytery. Given the job market in the PC(USA), there is no guarantee that a full-time ministry position will appear for you at the end of the process of preparation. For someone who is ready to serve, however, the future is always bright. For instance, opportunities are increasing for those who are willing to combine ministry as a teaching elder with another income-producing occupation.

The PC(USA) Book of Order outlines basic requirements for all persons seeking ordination, but these are only bare minimum requirements. Each presbytery is encouraged to add their own requirements, and the following guide will lead you through the process specific to the

Presbytery of New Harmony. However, your process may not look exactly the same as others working with the Presbytery of New Harmony's CPM. While there are some standards applied to all persons in the process with the PC(USA), and some standards applied to all persons in the process with the Presbytery of New Harmony, ultimately this process is tailored to the individual. CPM is concerned with making sure that you have the best tools possible to help you in your discernment and preparation for ministry. Therefore, you may be asked to complete requirements that another student does not have to fulfill, and likewise, other students may be asked to complete requirements that you do not need to fulfill.

### **You are responsible for your preparation**

This process is a path, and you must do the walking if you are going to get anywhere. If obstacles arise on this path, you may not blame others for those obstacles. You are responsible to seek help from God and from members of the body of Christ to overcome those obstacles or to decide that God is calling you to another kind of ministry. CPM oversees your preparation for ministry. As a committee of human beings, CPM is not perfect. There may be times when you think the committee could do its job better than it does, but ultimately, you must take responsibility for the preparation that you are asked to do.

## **II. General Requirements**

### **Annual Consultation**

You are required to have an annual consultation with CPM every year.

### **Deadline for Documents and Updates**

When you interview with CPM, all necessary documents must be received at the Presbytery office a minimum of one month before the stated meeting in which you will appear. If you have updates or requests for CPM to consider, they must be put in writing to your liaison a minimum of one week before the stated meeting in which you would like it discussed. Dates of stated meetings can be found on the Presbytery of New Harmony's calendar on its webpage.

### **Choosing a Seminary**

Your Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree must be from a theological institution that is “*accredited by the Association of Theological Schools*” and “*acceptable to the presbytery.*” (G -2.0607c) CPM strongly recommends that you enroll in a PC(USA) seminary, because the goal of the preparation process is ministry in the PC(USA). If you enroll in a non-PC(USA) seminary, additional coursework or an extra year spent doing theological education at a PC(USA) seminary may be required to ensure that you are prepared for ministry in the PC(USA). All students, in either a PC(USA) or non-PC(USA) seminary, may be required to fulfill additional requirements at the direction of CPM.

### **Acceptable Grades**

Grades must be satisfactory. Less than average academic performance will be subject to special scrutiny by CPM. A copy of your most recent transcript must be sent to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM at the end of every academic period. Prior to your final assessment, your transcript must be an official transcript. Unofficial transcripts are acceptable for all other academic periods.

### **Internships**

In the course of your preparation you are required to complete two internships, one in a parish and one in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program. CPM wants your practical experience of ministry to be broad and varied. Your parish internship should be in a church that is different in size, setting and/or ethnic background from your home church. CPM may grant that another internship take the place of CPE, provided that the inquirer/candidate makes this request prior to accepting this internship and explains in writing how said internship will provide, or other life experiences have already provided, the learning opportunities normally provided by a basic unit of CPE. At any point throughout your process, CPM may require field education work beyond what the theological institution requires. CPM may require modifications in your field education program to prepare you more adequately for ministry as a teaching elder. At any point in the process, CPM may require additional internship experiences.

## **Supplemental Requirements**

CPM sometimes requires work above and beyond your seminary's M.Div. curriculum. This may include, but is not limited to:

- additional academic course work, tutoring, supervised independent study for remediation or added competence, in subjects such as Polity and Reformed Theology;
- working with a counselor, therapist, or spiritual director;
- participation in a group for support, spiritual growth, or recovery;
- pulpit supply for experience in preaching and leading worship;
- additional internship/field education experiences.

## **Transcripts and Internship Evaluations**

At the end of each academic period, arrange and ensure that all transcripts and internship evaluations are sent to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM. Prior to your final assessment, your transcript must be an official transcript. Unofficial transcripts are acceptable for all other academic periods.

## **Psychological Evaluation**

You will be required to undergo psychological testing of career and personal issues at an approved testing center early in the Inquiry Phase.

## **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-2.0602)*

## **Communication With Your CPM Liaison**

Your assigned CPM liaison is your primary link to CPM and also a resource for you on CPM. The liaison can only function in this role if you keep in touch with her or him. **You are required to stay in contact with your liaison!** Initiate communication with your liaison prior to CPM's

monthly meeting and promptly respond to any contact from your liaison. Your liaison is there to field your questions about the preparation process, receive your requests to CPM, and collect any changes in your contact information. They also want to frequently hear of your plans and hopes as you journey through this process. In addition, always be sure to keep your session liaison informed of your process.

### **Waiving Requirements**

If you find that you need a waiver from any of the requirements, discuss the matter as soon as possible with your CPM liaison, as any CPM-approved waiver must also be brought before Presbytery at a stated meeting. While it is exceedingly rare, and only granted in the most extraordinary of circumstances, according to G-2.0610, the Presbytery may waive requirements for ordination, if three-fourths of the members present vote to do so.

## **III. Other Helpful Information**

### **Reimbursement**

Each time CPM requests to meet with you, you may ask for reimbursement for your travel expenses. Submit your mileage and expenses (with receipts) using the Presbytery's Expense Voucher. Reimbursement for other expenses incurred while fulfilling CPM requirements will be considered on a case to case basis.

### **Financial Aid from the Presbytery**

All enrolled inquirers and candidates are eligible for financial aid, payable directly to their seminary for tuition, room, and board. The amount of aid is prorated based on full-time or part-time status. CPM generally disperses funds early in each academic semester, *dependent upon receipt of materials required by CPM.*

### **Pulpit Supply List and Service to the Church**

For our **Candidates**, seeking and receiving CPM's permission to be added to NHP's pulpit supply list is CPM's endorsement of you to accept occasional invitations to preach at any of NHP's congregations (without seeking CPM's permission for each occasion in

advance). However, COM must also approve a request for you to be added to the Presbytery of New Harmony Pulpit Supply List. Contact the presbytery office for COM contact information.

A **Candidate** must contact CPM for its consideration and approval in **advance** of accepting any invitation to render service for the **same** congregation more than once within a **60-day period**.

It is courteous to share with your liaison where you've been invited (it's an opportunity to build relationship and for members of CPM to potentially attend.)

For our **Inquirers**, **any** service to the Church must be approved by CPM prior to accepting **any** invitation. CPM will do its best to be responsive to any such request in a timely manner.

#### **IV. Application for Inquiry**

##### **To Begin the Preparation Process**

1. You must be an active member of a PC(USA) congregation, and active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months before you can be enrolled as an inquirer. (G-2.0602)
2. Speak to the pastor of your church about your desire to explore your call to ministry.
3. Read the Book of Order G-2.06 about the preparation process. Remember that the Book of Order contains only the requirements that apply everywhere in the PC(USA). The guide that you are now reading contains the basic framework that applies to inquirers and candidates specifically within the Presbytery of New Harmony.
4. Contact the moderator/s of CPM and ask to begin the inquiry process. Once CPM is aware of your interest, it will send one of its members to the session of your church to explain to your session the process of preparation.
5. Request or download the forms relevant to the application for inquiry. These forms, and all subsequent forms you will need from the PCUSA Preparation for Ministry website over the course of your journey, can be found at: <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/>

### **Complete the Inquiry Application & Request to Meet with Session**

1. Print and Complete Forms 1A, 1B, and 1C.
2. Print Form 1D, but do not fill it out. The session will complete it after interviewing you.
3. Read Form 2A before your interview. CPM will complete this after interviewing you.
4. Print Form 2B and enter your name in the first blank.

Ask your clerk of session to arrange for you to meet with the session to gain its endorsement of your application for inquiry. Submit to the clerk of session the following:

1. A copy of forms 1A, 1B, and 1C.
2. The original forms 1D and 2B.
3. Undergraduate and any graduate school transcripts.

### **Meet with the Session of your Church**

Your church's session will use the questions from Form 1D to guide its discussion with you. They will record their actions on Form 1D, and if they endorse you, they will appoint a session liaison for you. Your session liaison will record his or her contact information on Form 1D.

The moderator of session, you, and a witness will sign Form 2B. After the clerk makes copies of Form 1D and 2B to add to their copies of 1A, 1B, and 1C that they will keep on file at the church, the clerk of session will give you back the original Form 2B and the completed original Form 1D.

### **Give your Application to the Presbytery of New Harmony**

Send your original application, including forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, and 2B, to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM ***a minimum of one month prior to your scheduled meeting with CPM.***

Send school transcripts in their original, hard-copy form, or have your school send them directly to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM. If the school is sending the transcript directly, ***it is your responsibility to make sure that CPM has received it a minimum of one month prior to your scheduled meeting.***

## **V. CPM Inquiry Interview**

Verify when you would like to meet CPM by contacting the moderator/s of CPM. Be sure that your session liaison and/or pastor can come with you to the interview, as CPM requires at least one of them to be present. In addition to your session liaison and/or pastor, you are welcome to invite others to be present to support you as well.

### **Preparing for the Interview**

1. Create a hard copy or electronic file for yourself in which you will keep all of your application materials, transcripts, internship evaluations, correspondence from CPM, and any other material pertaining to your preparation for ministry. Use this for your own reference, and please bring it to all CPM interviews. For the CPM Inquiry Interview, your file should contain copies of all of your application materials and transcripts plus any correspondence you have from CPM.
2. Re-read all of your application materials, and study the covenant agreement on Form 2B.

### **Focus of the Inquiry Interview**

In this interview, the question in CPM's mind is: *"Is the applicant willing to be guided by CPM in exploring whether God is calling her or him to ministry as a teaching elder?"*

### **If you are enrolled as an Inquirer**

If CPM enrolls you as an inquirer, the following things will happen:

1. The moderator/s of CPM will explain briefly what you are expected to do next.
2. CPM will appoint a CPM liaison for you.
3. The CPM moderator/s and a witness will sign the covenant agreement on Form 2B.

On the date you are enrolled as an inquirer, the period of preparation officially begins. You will receive a follow-up letter following the CPM meeting. The letter will state CPM's decision about your application and any particular instructions that CPM has given to you. With this letter, you will receive a copy of Forms 2A and 2B for your records. Your original application will be kept in a file at the Presbytery office.

## VI. Inquiry Phase

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

(G -2.0603)

Early in your inquiry phase, you will be asked to complete the required psychological testing. You are required to undergo psychological testing of career and personal issues. Authorize the counseling service to mail the final report to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM. CPM prefers that you use the following counseling center:

Ministry Development Services  
Presbyterian Psychological Services  
5203 Sharon Rd, Charlotte, NC 28210  
704-554-9222  
mds@presbypsych.org  
www.presbypsych.org

If you want to use another counseling center (because, for instance, you are in seminary far from Charlotte), please discuss the matter with your CPM liaison.

After completing the psychological evaluation, and prior to the end of your first year as an inquirer, you will need to have an annual consultation with CPM.

Stay in touch with your home church and your session liaison. You might send a letter that can be published in your church's newsletter to keep everyone informed. **Stay in touch with your CPM liaison!** When you correspond with your CPM liaison, you may wish to copy your correspondence to your session liaison, in order to keep your session informed of what is going on in your preparation process.

As you consider enrolling in seminary, please refer to ‘Choosing a Seminary’ in Section II. CPM is available to help in this discernment process.

Your seminary and CPM will require you to do internships. Before you choose an internship, you must discuss your options with your CPM liaison and seek CPM approval.

You are strongly encouraged, but not required, to take the Bible Content Ordination Examination in your first year of seminary.

## **VII. Annual Consultation**

Each year, every inquirer and candidate must complete Form 3, which is a written progress report. The report serves as the basis for an in-depth consultation with CPM, the results of which are recorded on Form 4. The report and the consultation are required.

The first consultation will normally occur approximately one year after you are received as an inquirer. Others will follow on a yearly basis. As timely completion of these consultations is necessary for the evaluation and nurture of the inquirer or candidate, the CPM expects them to be completed without unnecessary delay.

### **Before you have your Annual Consultation with CPM**

1. Download Form 3 and Form 4 for the annual consultation.
2. Complete Form 3 and send it to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM.
3. Make sure CPM has received your most recent transcript and evaluations for any internship you have completed.
4. The Presbytery Office must have all of the above documentation a minimum of one month before you are scheduled for your annual consultation. If you miss the deadline, you will be required to reschedule your consultation at a time convenient to CPM.
5. CPM will check the references that you list on Form 3.

### **During your Annual Consultation**

CPM will use Forms 3 and 4 to guide their conversation with you. When the conversation is over, you will be asked to leave the room while the committee discusses the conversation and votes on whether you should continue in the process. After the vote, you will be brought back

into the room, and the CPM moderator/s will let you know how the committee voted and provide you with feedback and any additional requirements that may need to be added at that time.

### **After your Annual Consultation**

Your conversation with CPM will form the basis of Form 4, which will be completed by your CPM liaison. When it is complete, your CPM liaison will send it to you for your review and signature. Promptly send the form back to your CPM liaison, who will sign the form and pass it along to the CPM moderator/s who will sign it. It will then be placed with your other materials in a file in the Presbytery office. CPM will report its action on your annual consultation at the next meeting of the Presbytery.

## **VIII. Application for Candidacy**

The process of applying for candidacy tests whether your sense of your call to the ministry is confirmed by the church. Because you must be a candidate for a minimum of one year, it is crucial to become a candidate before your second year of seminary ends if you want to be eligible to receive a call upon seminary graduation (or before your third year ends if you are a dual degree student). Your candidacy begins the date that Presbytery votes for you to begin your candidacy at a Presbytery meeting in which you appear before the body. However, note that there are a number of steps that you must take before you appear before the Presbytery.

### **To Begin Your Application**

1. Make sure CPM has received your most recent transcript and evaluations for any internships you have completed.
2. Download the application for candidacy. Complete Form 5A and read Form 5B and 5C. On Form 5D enter your name in the first blank.
3. Write a one-page summary of your call to the ministry and your motives for seeking the ministry.
4. Write a one-page summary of the ways in which you have served the church, and the ways in which you have served that affirm your call.

5. CPM may also require supplemental materials that you will be expected to complete with your application. If this is the case, CPM will provide these to you when your request to meet with the committee is granted.

### **Meeting with the Session of your Church**

Ask your church's clerk of session to arrange for you to meet with the session to gain its endorsement of your application for candidacy. Submit to the clerk the following:

1. A copy of your completed Form 5A.
2. Original copies of Forms 5B and 5D.
3. Your one-page summary of your call to the ministry and your motives for seeking the ministry.
4. Your one-page summary of the ways in which you have served the church, and the ways in which you have served that affirm that call.
5. Your personal summaries of the internships you have completed to date.

Your session will use the above materials to guide their conversation with you. Upon the completion of their conversation:

1. The session will vote about whether or not to endorse you for candidacy, and will record its decision and put your session liaison's information on Form 5B.
2. The session moderator, you, and a witness sign Form 5D.
3. The clerk of session will make a copy of 5B and 5D to add to their copy of 5A to put in your file at the church, and will return to you the original completed 5B and the original signed and dated Form 5D.

### **In Preparation for your Interview with CPM**

1. Send your original application and supplemental materials to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM, keeping copies for yourself.
2. Send or have your seminary or place of internship send the evaluations of all internships that you have done.

3. Send your transcripts or have your seminary send your transcript in its original, hard-copy form to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM. (This can be an unofficial transcript.)
4. Check with the Associate Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to verify that CPM has on file a Form 3 and Form 4 for an annual consultation that you completed within the past twelve months.
5. ***All original application materials, transcripts, evaluations of internships, and any other supplemental materials as required by CPM must be received in the Presbytery Office no later than one month prior to your candidacy interview date with CPM.***

### **IX. CPM Candidacy Interview**

Verify when you will meet CPM by contacting your CPM liaison. Be sure that your session liaison and/or pastor can come with you to the interview, as CPM requires at least one of them to be present. In addition to your session liaison and/or pastor, you are welcome to invite others to be present to support you as well.

#### **Focus of the Candidacy Interview**

In this interview CPM wants to answer the question, "*Are you called to ministry as a teaching elder in the PC(USA)?*" More specifically, the committee wants to discern whether that call (1) is clear in your own heart and mind, and (2) has been confirmed in your practical experience of ministry. The committee reviews the evidence gained during the inquiry phase and determines whether the evidence demonstrates adequate promise for ministry. CPM is not expecting you to have all the knowledge and skills of a minister at this point, but it does want to see that your beliefs, gifts, and traits indicate a good fit between you and ministry as a teaching elder in the PC(USA).

#### **Preparing for your Interview**

1. Review all of the materials in the file that you have been keeping, being especially certain to review your most recent copies of Form 3 and Form 4 and the recent form 5A

and two supplemental one-page summaries that you have completed, as well as any other supplemental materials that CPM may have required you to prepare. Re-read the covenant agreement on Form 5D and be sure that you understand it.

2. Bring your file with you to the interview so that you may refer to it.

### **If CPM Recommends that Presbytery Receives You as a Candidate**

If CPM recommends that the Presbytery receive you as a candidate, the following things happen:

1. The CPM moderator/s will explain briefly what you are expected to do next.
2. The CPM moderator/s and a witness will sign the covenant on Form 5D.

You will receive a letter following the CPM meeting that will state CPM's decision about your application and any particular instructions that CPM has given to you. With this letter, you will receive a copy of Forms 5C and 5D for your file.

Remember that if CPM recommends that the Presbytery receive you as a candidate, that does not make you a candidate. Only the Presbytery can do that at one of their meetings.

### **X. Candidacy Examination by Presbytery**

If CPM has recommended that you be enrolled as a candidate, you will need to be examined on the floor of Presbytery. To find the dates of Presbytery meetings, please refer to the calendar on the Presbytery of New Harmony's webpage. About 10 days before the Presbytery meeting in which you will be examined, you can go to the Presbytery's website and find the agenda. Your examination will happen during the CPM report.

### **Coming to the Presbytery Meeting**

Becoming a candidate is an important step in your preparation process, and you are encouraged to invite your church, family, and friends to join you at the meeting for this special day.

Plan to arrive before the meeting starts, so that you can be present for the opening worship and see how presbytery conducts its business. (Remember that you are preparing to become a teaching elder, and that for teaching elders participation in presbytery is required!)

During the CPM report, you will stand in front of the Presbytery and make a statement (5 minutes max) speaking to three topics:

1. Your personal faith and experience of God's grace;
2. Your call to the ministry and motives for seeking the ministry;
3. The ways in which you have served the church, and the ways in which you have served that affirm your call.

The members of the Presbytery will be free to ask you questions about the same topics. After the examination, the Presbytery will vote on whether to receive you as a candidate.

If you are successful in the Presbytery's examination, the moderator of the Presbytery will ask you these questions:

1. *Do you believe yourself to be called by God to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament?*
2. *Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this ministry?*
3. *Do you accept the proper supervision of the Presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?*
4. *Do you desire now to be received by this Presbytery as a candidate for ministry as a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA)?*

Someone will then give a brief charge to the candidate/s, and someone else will conclude this time with prayer.

The day that Presbytery votes to accept you as a candidate is the official start date of the candidacy phase of your preparation.

## **XI. The Candidacy Phase**

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

(G -2.0604) At the end of this period, you should be able to demonstrate “*readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder.*” (G-2.0607)

During the candidacy phase, you will need to:

1. Complete both your seminary coursework and your internships.
2. Pass your ordination exams.
3. Complete all additional requirements as set out by CPM.
4. Have an in-person annual consultation with CPM every year that you are in the candidacy phase.
5. Continue to stay in touch with your home church and session liaison. You might send a letter that can be published in your church's newsletter to keep everyone informed.
6. Continue to stay in touch with your CPM liaison as laid out earlier in this guide.

### **Pulpit Supply List**

After the presbytery has received you as a candidate, you are eligible to ask the Committee on Ministry (COM) to add your name to the Presbytery of New Harmony Pulpit Supply List. Contact information for COM can be found on the Presbytery's webpage.

## **XII. Ordination Examinations**

Currently there are five ordination examinations: Bible Content, Biblical Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship & Sacraments, and Church Polity.

You may go to the following website to learn about the exams, including when they are administered and how to register for them: <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/standard-ordination-exams/>

### **Bible Content Exam**

You may apply to take the Bible Content Exam without getting approval from CPM. You are encouraged, but not required, to take the Bible Content Exam in your first year of seminary.

### **Senior Ordination Exams**

The senior ordination exams are Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship & Sacraments, and

Church Polity. You may take these exams as an inquirer or candidate, but it is best to take these exams after you have completed the necessary coursework in each of these areas. You must have the approval of CPM to take these exams, so think ahead! Make the request for approval to your liaison, who will bring your request to CPM. You must have CPM's approval before registering for the exams.

### **Accommodations**

If you have a disability that affects your test-taking ability that is documented by a person or persons acceptable to CPM, then CPM may approve accommodations when you take these exams. If you fail twice to pass an exam, CPM may authorize (1) that you have more time to complete the same exam that other students are taking, (2) that your written exam be graded by a committee chosen by CPM, or (3) that you take an oral examination administered by the grading committee.

### **Alternate Means of Ascertaining Readiness**

In an extremely rare case, presbytery (by a three-fourth's majority) may approve a means other than the standard ordination examinations “*to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations.*” (G -2.0610)

## **XIII. Application for the Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ministry as a Teaching Elder**

The final step in the preparation process is the final assessment of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder.

G-2.0607 states:

*“Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:*

- a. a candidate’s wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, 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 exam covered by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.”*

To have your final assessment, you must be able to show these signs of readiness, have completed an annual consultation within the previous 12 months of your final assessment, have passed all ordination exams, and have completed any other requirements that CPM has asked of you.

### **Preparing your Application for the Final Assessment**

Send the following documents to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM (or else make sure that they are already on file at the Presbytery):

1. Official transcripts of all academic work completed after high school.
2. An official transcript from a theological institution 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.”* (G-2.0607c)
3. If you are still in seminary when you apply for the final assessment, submit a schedule for completing your educational requirements.
4. All internship evaluations completed by you and your supervisors since your last annual consultation.
5. A one-page single-spaced statement of faith. Your statement of faith must express theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church. Topics to address include, but are not limited to, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, human nature and sin, grace, justification, sacraments, church, Scripture, and the mission of

the church. The current requirement for PIFs is that this statement of faith be no more than 3000 characters including spaces. You may wish to start working toward that limitation in the statement of faith that you submit to CPM.

**6. *All materials, transcripts, evaluations of internships, and any other supplemental materials as required by CPM must be received in the Presbytery Office no later than one month prior to your final assessment date with CPM.***

You may also be asked to preach a sermon or show an equivalent practical demonstration of your ministry skills fitting for the ministry that you seek to pursue in your first call. You will want to prepare this with care. Any written material for this practical demonstration is also due to the Presbytery Office no later than one month prior to your final assessment date.

Check with the Associate Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to verify that Forms 3 and 4 for an annual consultation completed within the past twelve months are on file with the Presbytery.

Review the entire file that you have created for yourself containing all of your applications, evaluations, transcripts, and correspondence with CPM since the day you applied to be an inquirer.

#### **XIV. Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry**

Verify when you will meet with CPM by contacting your CPM liaison.

Invite your session liaison, pastor, and any others that you choose to be present, if you think their presence will be an encouragement to you. CPM welcomes them, but does not require them to be present for the final assessment.

The final assessment interview focuses on the entirety of your preparation. In the final assessment, CPM is looking for evidence of your:

1. Readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder as defined in G-2.0607 (see Section XIII for the full text);
2. understanding of the ordination questions (W-4.4003), informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings;

3. commitment to ministry as a teaching elder in the PC(USA), and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry;
4. ability to carry out the practical ministry to which you are called; and
5. willingness to continue studying and growing throughout your ministry.

### **Preparing for your Final Assessment with CPM**

Read carefully the ordination questions as set out in W-4.4003. Do you understand the commitment a person makes who answers the questions affirmatively? Are you ready to answer them affirmatively? You are not expected to answer the questions in this interview, but this would be a good time to discuss any hesitation you feel about answering them.

Bring to the final assessment your binder with all of your CPM materials, including a copy of your application, so that you can refer to it if you need to.

### **If CPM Certifies You Ready to Be Examined for Ordination, Pending a Call**

If CPM decides to certify you ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call, then the following things will happen:

1. The CPM Moderator/s will authorize you and Church Leadership Connection (CLC) to circulate your PIF.
2. You are free to negotiate terms of a call.

### **If CPM Certifies You Ready to be Examined for Ordination, Upon Completion of One or More Requirements**

If CPM decides to certify you ready to be examined for ordination, upon condition that you complete one or more requirements, then the following must happen in this order:

1. You complete the unfulfilled requirements.
2. You send to the Presbytery of New Harmony c/o CPM documentation that all remaining requirements are met to the satisfaction of CPM.
3. CPM Moderator/s authorize/s you and Church Leadership Connection (CLC) to circulate your PIF.
4. You may negotiate terms of call.

### **Following the Final Assessment**

You will receive a letter following the CPM meeting that will state CPM's decision regarding your final assessment and any particular instructions that CPM has given you. It will also enclose a Form 6.

### **Preparing for Your Ordination Examination with a Calling Presbytery**

The final assessment prepares you for later examinations that you will undergo before presbytery and before the Committee on Ministry's examination subcommittee. Even if CPM certifies you ready, it may require you to get some coaching in certain areas, so that you will be better prepared to succeed in subsequent examinations.

### **Annual Consultations Following Your Final Assessment**

Even after you have been certified ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call, you must continue to have an annual consultation with CPM at the appropriate time of the year. This requirement continues until you are ordained or otherwise exit the process of preparation.

## **XV. Seeking a Call**

When CPM certifies that you are ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call, and there are no outstanding requirements from CPM, you may seek a call, circulate your Personal Information Form (PIF), and negotiate for your service as a teaching elder.

Look over the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) webpage on the PC(USA) site for seeking a call:

<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/>

### **Preparing Your Personal Identification Form (PIF)**

A PIF is the resume for people seeking a call to ordered ministry in the PC(USA).

To create your PIF, go to the Church Leadership Connection webpage and follow the instructions on that page.

It is a good idea to ask your CPM liaison to review your PIF as you write it. We also recommend that you ask trusted pastors and lay members to read your PIF and make comments.

### **VI. Presbytery and CPM Contact Information**

Committee on Preparation for Ministry  
Presbytery of New Harmony  
2352 Presbyterian Road  
Florence, SC 29501

Phone 843-662-8411

[www.newharmoniypres.org](http://www.newharmoniypres.org)

Associate Presbyter for Pastoral Concerns and Fellowship: Rev. Dr. Ella Busby  
[Ella@newharmoniypres.org](mailto:Ella@newharmoniypres.org)

Your Co-Moderators are:

Your liaison is: