

**Presbytery of Scioto Valley
Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

**GUIDE TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)
ORDINATION PROCESS IN PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO VALLEY**

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GUIDE TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) ORDINATION PROCESS IN SCIOTO VALLEY PRESBYTERY (SVP)

Welcome to the journey!

Since you have received this manual, you must be a person who is seriously considering God's call on your life, a call that may lead to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA) – or perhaps someone close to you is seeking to discern a call.

We hope this material will be helpful to those interested in the preparation for ministry process. If you are considering formally becoming a part of the process, know that you will not be alone on your journey. In addition to your family and friends, the session of the congregation from which you come and the Presbytery, represented by the Committee on Preparation, will walk with you as you seek to discern what it is that God is stirring up within you.

Most importantly, we will listen together with our minds and hearts to the God who calls each of us to ministry in a variety of ways. First and foremost, as the Presbytery of Scioto Valley's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, we seek to provide the congregations in the PC(USA) with competent, called leadership; persons who have a heart for ministry and take seriously the educational opportunities that our seminaries provide for such important work. We also take quite seriously the spiritual nurture of those under our care.

Although our process is demanding in many ways, it is at the same time important and deeply gratifying. We pray that as you consider the possibilities of ordination or work with those who do, that you may experience the grace of God, the presence of Christ, and the discernment of the Holy Spirit.

Grace and Peace,

The Members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of Scioto Valley

Theological Background

The Presbyterian Church (USA) is firmly grounded in the Reformed tradition in its relationships with men and women who feel themselves called by God to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Both in exploring with these persons their sense of vocation and in all subsequent procedures leading to ordination, the Reformed understanding of the church underlies what the Book of Order calls “full preparation” for ministry (G-14.0401).

As Reformed Christians, Presbyterians understand the church as a community called into being by Jesus Christ. It is Christ who gives the church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its offices and ordinances, and Christ who is its head in all things (G-1.0100).

Presbyterians believe in the priesthood of all believers---that is, that all church members regardless of their vocational choice, are engaged in ministry. That is their Christian vocation (G-5.0102). Some among them may be called by the Holy Spirit, through the church, to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Thus the ministry of the Word and Sacrament is one among many vocations through which men and women express their God-given interests and abilities in life and daily work. Response to this calling, as to every other, is approached through a careful process of discernment through exploration and examination carried on within the community of faith. During this process, gifts and motivations are evaluated in light of the needs of the church and the world.

The essential role of ministers of the Word and Sacrament is set forth in both the Bible and in the church’s constitutional documents. Among its key concepts which have been proven valid by the church’s experience through the years are the following:

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

The relationship between the church and those who feel called to be Ministers of the Word and Sacrament carries important **responsibilities** for all involved.

- ❖ **For congregations**, responsibility means educating all members in the biblical and Reformed understanding of Christian vocation and helping believers understand that the

call of discipleship includes making responsible occupational choices. It also means nurturing and encouraging persons seeking to discern their call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

- ❖ **For inquirers and candidates** who enter into the process, responsibility involves a sense of commitment to God and to the church. In some cases, this means that it is the individual's responsibility to recognize and accept the fact that she or he is called to a ministry other than the ministry of the Word or Sacrament.
- ❖ **For the presbytery**, responsibility means developing an effective means of testing and validating the calls of those seeking to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament, providing them with guidance and oversight, and bringing to active candidacy those with appropriate abilities and motivation. In order to ensure that this important work is effectively carried out, those chosen to serve on the Committee on Preparation for Ministry need particular gifts, skills and commitment.
- ❖ **For theological institutions**, responsibility means upholding the Reformed standards of an educated ministry by providing scriptural, historical, doctrinal and ecclesiastical disciplines, as well as opportunities for students to develop personal and professional skills.
- ❖ **For ALL participants involved in the process of preparation for ministry**, it means relating to one another in continuing openness to God's grace, with mutual trust and respect based upon the assurance that God has given everyone gifts to use in the church's ministry. Integrity demands that each partner in the preparation process speak the truth in love to other partners at all times. It is important for partners to function in a way that reflects mutual accountability and honesty in all dealings with one another.

GUIDE TO THE ORDINATION PROCESS IN THE PRESBYTERY OF SCIOTO VALLEY

Please do not lose this document. We recommend that you keep a folder with a record of all your interactions with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and keep this there. Please don't be intimidated by the length of this document; it's all information you'll be glad you have someday, maybe someday soon! Many of the questions you may have about the ordination process, especially ordination in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley (PSV), can be answered in this guide.

If you're completely new to the process, now might be a good time to skip ahead to the end and take a look through the glossary for unfamiliar terms. Defining a few terms is a useful way of beginning, and will help you make sense of the rest of the document. Also, you can find additional resources concerning the ordination process at the end of this document. The *Book of Order*, section G-14.0300ff is available for download online at: <http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/boo07-09.pdf>, and www.pcusa.org/prep4min may be of particular assistance.

I. General Help

- A. This section is a general guide to the process to describe the several steps toward the ordination journey. It should be helpful no matter what phase of the process you are in. The ordination process includes two steps leading to certification to seek a call:

- The Inquiry phase
- The Candidacy phase

The process begins with the inquiry phase, then proceeds to the candidacy phase and finally on to being certified ready to receive a call. The entire process takes a minimum of 2 years before ordination (G-14.0303e), but on average, a person under care will work with CPM for three to four years before either being ordained or deciding against ordained ministry. Either outcome is the result of discernment not only on your part, but on the part of your session and the CPM.

Communal discernment is essential to our Presbyterian Church (USA) process.

- B. Be aware that at any time, the CPM may discern additional needs of someone under care, and impose supplemental requirements, such as additional course work, classes in Reformed Theology, PC(USA) Polity, The Confessions, supervised independent study, tutoring, personal counseling, or spiritual direction.
- C. Finally, to assist you on your journey, you will be assigned a liaison from the session that endorses you for inquiry, and a liaison from Scioto Valley's CPM. The CPM liaison will help you stay on track regarding the requirements of the process. However, the responsibility for completing each stage of the process is yours.

II. Financial Aid

A. You will find a **Student Grants and Scholarship** page in this packet. Persons with demonstrated financial need are eligible for aid as soon as you are officially an inquirer, and possible sources are listed on the policy sheet.

Some tips for filling out your financial aid application:

- If you have special circumstances, such as a wedding coming up or a child in college, don't hesitate to note that on the application.
- Be specific about the amount of debt that you have, and remember that credit cards count.
- Be reasonable about your expenses. Excessively large estimates of expenses may make you appear casual with your resources.

B. Each time you meet with the committee, you are entitled to be reimbursed for your travel expenses. Keep track of your mileage and keep any receipts for other expenses you may have incurred and submit those to the chair of the CPM. This travel reimbursement includes the required annual consultation which ordinarily happens at the monthly meeting of the CPM.

C. Additionally, each year at your annual consultation we will request that you update us on your fiscal status.

III. Field Education and Clinical Pastoral Education

You will find a page entitled "Ordination Standards for Minister of the Word and Sacrament" which lays out a variety of requirements. It is a particularly important resource for you. The requirements include at least one supervised field education experience in a parish setting (other than your local congregation or the congregation which endorsed you) and one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Please note that CPE does not compensate you, and instead, often requires your paying tuition.

It is your responsibility to make sure that evaluations from your field education and CPE program get to your CPM liaison. **In addition, it is your responsibility to see that we receive official transcripts for each term of your seminary work.** Your final assessment takes place after all requirements in the inquiry and candidacy phases have been fulfilled.

IV. Ordination Exams (Ords)

Some things to note about the ordination exams:

1. You must register in advance to take the ordination exams. You can get applications for the Bible Content Exam and Ordination Exams at your seminary, from the CPM, or online at <http://www.pcusa.org/exams/forms.htm>. **Please make sure the registration is given to the presbytery office two weeks prior to deadline.**
2. You require no permission whatsoever to take the Bible Content exam. It is only offered once a year. Ordinarily, inquirers take this exam during their first year of seminary.
3. You must have permission from the Chair of the CPM to take the other four ordination exams. (See G-14.0310c). They include *Worship and Sacraments*, *Polity*, *Theology*, and *Biblical Exegesis*. The Office of Cooperative Examinations recommends that they be taken August before your final year of seminary. Ordinarily, all four are taken at the same time because statistics show that the pass rate is higher among those who take all four. Taking them during your second year of seminary requires special permission from the CPM. (G-14.031c)
4. The CPM pays the cost of taking the exams for the first time. If the candidate/inquirer fail one or more tests the cost of retaking the exams is paid by the candidate/inquirer.
5. If you take the ordination exams and fail to pass one or more exams, you must register to take them again, paying any fees and securing any permission that would normally apply.
6. If you have a documented disability which would prevent you from successfully taking the ordination exams in the usual way, there is an alternative exam policy which may apply. Ordinarily, alternative means are not pursued until the exams have been failed twice. (G-14.031b).
7. Every time you take the ordination exams, your original tests will be returned to you by the national office. You have two weeks to evaluate your tests and the reader's comments, and then you must mail the original test to the Chair of CPM and they will find their way to the appropriate file at the presbytery office. Feel free to make copies for yourself.
8. For more information about the ordination exams, look on the web at: www.pcusa.org/exams.

V. Ordination Process Timeline

This is just the most convenient possible timeline; don't feel bound by it or feel as if you're falling behind if you're not following it exactly. God has God's own timing and it is more important to follow what God is placing on your heart concerning ordination than this schedule.

Prior to Seminary

Talk to your pastor and session about beginning the inquiry process. Your pastor will notify CPM of your interest in inquiry, and we will do a session orientation prior to their considering you for formal endorsement. We will provide you with the appropriate paperwork which you will fill out and provide, first of all, to the session prior to their meeting with you, and then to the CPM prior to their meeting with you.

First Year of Seminary:

- Do your vocational/career assessment at Midwest Career Development Center
- Attend required annual consultation with the CPM (submitting form 3 to the Moderator before consultation)
- **Take Bible Content Exam**
- Participation in spiritual direction is strongly suggested (and in some circumstances may be required) for self-care and discernment process
- Think about when and where you will fulfill the CPE requirement. Often it is done in the summer after the first or second year of seminary.

Second Year of Seminary:

- Attend required annual consultation with the CPM (form 3)
- Sometime before the end of the year, complete forms and submit appropriate forms to seek to move to candidacy. (This requires examination by the session, the CPM, and the Presbytery. The Presbytery usually meets in January, March, June, and November.)

Third Year of Seminary:

- Attend required annual consultation with the CPM
- Take ordination exams in August, and if necessary, retake them in January. We recommend that you take them as early as possible.
- After passing your ordination examinations and completing CPE, indicate to CPM that you are ready for final assessment which includes providing a final statement of faith and the manuscript of a sermon you have prepared. At the final assessment, the CPM arrives at a final discernment as to whether you are ready to be certified to receive a call.

- After being certified, you may begin looking for a church and circulating your PIF. You remain under care of the CPM until you receive a call or until you choose to withdraw from the process.
 - Ordinarily, the need for the required annual consultation continues until you are certified to receive a call and circulate your PIF. After that, you will stay in relationship with your CPM liaison until you are ordained.
- ✓ **If you follow a different timeline, please note that you will be expected to stay in contact with your liaisons as well as attend an annual consultation with the CPM.**

**COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
SCIOTO VALLEY PRESBYTERY
ORDINATION STANDARDS FOR MINISTER OF THE WORD & SACRAMENT**

Theological Education

In addition to the requirements of the Book of Order (G-14.0300) all persons intending to be enrolled as inquirers shall consult with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) concerning choice of seminary. Inquirers and candidates of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley should attend a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminary, if possible. The primary purpose for attending a Presbyterian seminary is to ensure that all inquirers and candidates learn in a setting where Presbyterian Reformed belief and practice is a way of life. Inquirers will be required to justify a decision not to attend a PC(USA) seminary.

Covenanting with the Presbytery

A person desiring ordination to the office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament must be in a covenant relationship with the presbytery for at least two (2) years, including at least one (1) year as a candidate. (G-14.0401)

A. Inquiry

- On becoming an inquirer, an evaluation by the Midwest Ministry Development Services, or other CPM-approved Assessment Facility. Each inquirer shall have an annual consultation with the committee.
- This consultation shall occur at a time and place of the CPM's choosing and the inquirer shall be informed early in the calendar year of such time and place. Alternate time and place may be available if this requirement places an impossible burden on the inquirer or candidate.
- Prior to the annual consultation, the inquirer shall submit to the liaisons of the CPM the following: the completed Form 3, a current official transcript, any pertinent evaluations, i.e., field education, CPE, Midwest Ministry Development Services, etc.
- Following the annual consultation, the inquirer's liaison person will complete Form 4.(title of form)

B. Candidacy

- A statement of call, incorporating an understanding of the Reformed tradition, is required and sent to one's liaisons, before the inquirer may be moved to candidate status. An examination by the Presbytery is required at that time. According to the Book of Order G-14.0305 "the Presbytery shall examine the Inquirer in person with respect to his/her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry."

After a candidate completes the educational and professional requirements below and passes all ordination examinations, (which are usually taken the fall of the last year of theological education) the candidate shall preach before the CPM and be examined by them before being given permission to circulate a PIF (Personal Information Form) in search of a call (G-14.0305 (6); G-11.0402). No candidate shall circulate a PIF without the consent of the CPM.

- When a call is received by a candidate, that person should consult with the CPM liaison and if needed, submit a second completed statement of faith. This document will be circulated to members of the presbytery of call prior to examination of the candidate for ordination. (G-14.0402)

REQUIREMENTS

BIBLICAL STUDIES

- Course study in both Greek and Hebrew with demonstrated functional proficiency in both languages
- At least two basic courses in Biblical Studies, including one Old Testament survey or introduction and one New Testament survey or introduction course
- A total of two advanced courses in exegesis: one course each in a book of the Old Testament and the New Testament in the appropriate original language

THEOLOGY

- At least two basic courses in areas of theological studies – one of which should focus particularly on basic Reformed Theology
- One advanced course in theology – either a specific theologian, theological movement or theological doctrine
- Candidate shall demonstrate a working knowledge of the Book of Confessions

ETHICS

At least one course – one in basic Christian ethics

HISTORY

At least two basic courses in church history, one of which should include an emphasis on Reformed church history

SKILLS FOR MINISTRY

- At least one course in preaching and one in worship and the sacraments in the Reformed tradition. Candidate shall demonstrate a working knowledge of the Directory for Worship
- At least one course in Christian education
- At least one course in pastoral care, which includes use of systems theory
- Ordinarily, all candidates are required to have at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education.
- One course in Presbyterian polity. Students attending non-Presbyterian seminaries may take the course entitled “Presbyterianism: Policies and Practice”, offered by the General Assembly, in order to fulfill this requirement. Other Polity courses must be approved by the CPM before the candidate takes them.
- One academic year of supervised field education, at least 10 hours per week, in a PCUSA congregation (not one’s home church). If completion of the seminary field education requirements does not require this kind of placement, this presbytery standard is an additional requirement. Field experience must be validated by the CPM before any contract is signed. Evaluation of all field education assignments should be forwarded to the liaison(s) of the CPM.

Thanks to the Presbytery of The James, Detroit, Milwaukee Chicago and Muskingum Valley for models of content and format that were helpful in the preparation of this guide.

Guidelines for Preparing a Statement of Faith

“But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence...” (I Peter 3:15-16a, NRSV)

God calls us as Christians to bear witness to what we believe before a watching and questioning world. As inquirers and candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament to the Presbyterian Church (USA), you will be asked to prepare a statement of faith prior to being cleared for ordination.

The discipline of submitting your faith to the church for its examination will help you in two ways. First, it will help to assure you that your faith is not merely your own, but stands in the tradition of the “faith delivered to the saints once for all” (Jude 3). With this in mind, candidates are encouraged to consult the Confessions of the Church for guidance, and might find the Apostles’ Creed and the Brief Statement of Faith especially helpful. (We ask that you bear in mind, however, that the statement submitted should be YOUR statement and should provide us with an accurate picture of you and what you believe.) Submitting your statement will also help you to articulate your faith to the members of Christ’s Body in your care and to the world at large.

Your statement must be no longer than one page, single spaced, in a twelve point or larger font, with one inch margins. With the above constraints in mind, we are **not** expecting your statement of faith to be exhaustive on every issue mentioned. Try to keep your word count to about 600 words. Your Statement of Faith will be read aloud at the presbytery meeting.

You will be questioned on your statement, but the mere fact of being questioned does not mean that you’ve failed to produce a good statement of faith. Our examination may show areas you need to think and pray through. Sometimes the examination results in a revision of the original statement. We hope that your faith will continue to grow and mature throughout your life. It is in that process that your statement of faith will truly become a living document.

Inquirer/Candidate Indebtedness Policy

(When the presbytery of care is the Presbytery of Scioto Valley)

- 1) Require an inquirer to meet during the 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 phase, to participate in a “Fiscal Fitness” workshop being sponsored by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA), with the presbytery picking up the travel and accommodations costs for the workshop from the CPM budget;
- 3) A designee of the presbytery’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry will counsel with an inquirer regarding the inquirer’s level of indebtedness vis a vis a perspective 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 Scioto Valley.
- 4) The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will work with each inquirer and candidate towards using his or her available assets to pay for the cost of seminary tuition and room and board rather than incurring indebtedness. If indebtedness cannot be avoided, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry 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 Committee on Ministry will make available on an annual basis to each inquirer or candidate a list of options for pursuing grants and interest free loans and funding that may be available through the Financial Aid for Studies Office of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and PC(USA) seminaries.
- 6) The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be an advocate with the congregation of which the inquirer or candidate is a member, and with other congregations of the presbytery as appropriate, in order to generate financial support for the candidate in the form of grants.

CPM GUIDELINES FOR THE USE AND DISPERSION OF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CHURCH INTERNSHIPS

OVERVIEW

Field education serves several major purposes which may not be met by other parts of the ministry learning process. It fosters integration, helps a student gain skills and experience in ministry, assists in confirming and developing ministry gifts, and serves to test the vocational call. All of these are areas which we, the CPM, hope to empower in our service to inquirers and candidates, and to the greater church. Therefore, CPM will help provide internships for its candidates under care within the bounds of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley, and will endeavor to provide scholarships, training, and supervision for churches desiring to fill ministry needs through seminary interns. Our focus is to enhance:

1. Integration - Ministry is a vocation which draws upon the wisdom and increased competence of experience, as well as the clarity of thought gained from study and reflection. It is inherently a combination of theory and practice, concepts and skills, ideas and relationships, critical reflection and action. Field education serves to integrate the learning gained from biblical studies; systematic, historical, and practical theology; and church history.

2. Experience and Skills - While ministry cannot be reduced to skills and activities, skills are needed to interpret and communicate the Christian faith and tradition. In field education, students are given opportunities to perform tasks which draw upon and develop skills necessary for ministry under the guidance of a more experienced colleague.

3. Ministry Gifts - Field education enables students to identify, confirm, and develop their gifts for service to the people of God. It also helps students to see important areas where they need to work intentionally toward developing increased competency.

4. Testing of Vocational Call - Often students are unclear about their call to ministry. Field education allows students to test different facets of ministry and see if these are suited for them. This is invaluable for the student's own sense of call, ongoing assessment by denominational committees overseeing the student's candidacy process, and the seminary's role in guiding and further preparing the student. A call is not just an inner conviction, but is something which must be tested and confirmed by other members of the Body of Christ. The ministry setting is a natural place to evaluate appropriateness for ministry.

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

In setting the terms for an internship, the student and the church are free to negotiate for any stipend upon which both agree. However, the CPM considers the following guidelines to be minimal for the dispersion of funds for such internships:

1. For churches who want a student to work for 13-15 hours on weekends, \$8.00 or more per hour should be considered, plus transportation expenses, housing (if needed), and consideration for food costs.

2. For a part-time student pastorate (normally 20-30 hours per week), the church should consider a salary usually in the range of \$800-1,400 per month, plus housing, utilities, automobile transportation, expenses, medical insurance and, if possible, the denominational pension plan.

3. For a summer internship (normally full-time), the church or institution should consider a salary of \$850-1,400 per month, plus housing, utilities, automobile transportation expenses, medical insurance, and some consideration for moving expenses.

4. For a 9-15 month full-time internship, the church should consider \$850-1,400 per month salary, plus housing, utilities, automobile expenses, moving expenses, medical insurance and the denominational pension plan, if possible. In addition, the student will need funding for round trip expenses to the seminary for any required attendance at workshops or seminars for interns.

Once an agreement has been reached, the candidate will submit a letter of application for assistance to the Chair of the CPM providing the following information:

1. Church income
2. Church expenses
3. Remaining funds to apply toward internship
4. Requested amount of assistance

**FINANCIAL AID
REQUEST FORM**

Any student under the care of the Scioto Valley presbytery may request financial aid to help defer the expenses of seminary training. A request must be made through a member of CPM to the Chair and committee. The student is eligible for assistance once in any school year. When applying please submit the following information:

BASIC INFORMATION

1. DATE OF REQUEST: _____ **SCHOOL YEAR** _____

2. STUDENT'S NAME: _____

3. STUDENT'S ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____

SEMINARY: _____

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

INCOME FROM ALL SOURCES _____

(Job, Grants, Gifts, Scholarships, Loans)

TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES: _____

(Tuition, Books, Housing, Utilities, Transportation and Other Debts)

AMOUNT REQUESTING: _____

ALTERNATE EXAMINATION PROCESS

Scioto Valley Presbytery

The following process has been established by the Presbytery of Scioto Valley, and requests the Synod of the Covenant's approval of a plan to provide an alternate examination in keeping with the requirements of G-14.0310b(4) relative to ordination to Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

1. Any candidate who failed any one of the Standard Ordination Examination twice may submit a written request to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) to take an alternate examination. The same is true for a person already ordained by another denomination, desiring to be a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and coming under the auspice of the Committee on Ministry (COM). After consultation with the candidate, the CPM or COM will determine whether the candidate should: (1) be authorized to re-take the Standard Ordination Examination or (2) be recommended to the Presbytery, requesting approval to be given an alternate examination.
2. The alternate examination shall be prepared by appropriate members of the presbytery, numbering two or three, from either the CPM or the COM. The Task Group to prepare such examinations shall be selected because of their "knowledge and strengths" in the area to be covered by the examination.
3. Alternate examinations should ordinarily be in written format. In the case of a candidate who has difficulty with written examinations, an oral exam may be developed.
4. The questions for the alternate examination shall be consistent in content and scope of those asked by the Standard Ordination Examination process, approved by the chairs of the CPM and COM.
5. The examination will be proctored by a person designated by CPM or COM.
6. Following the exam, written materials will be copied and mailed to three approved readers from neighboring presbyteries who will assess the exam for pass or fail. At least two readers must pass the candidate.
7. Results of the alternate examination process will be reported to the Presbytery and to the appropriate offices of the General Assembly of the PC(USA).

Indebtedness

- A "Fiscal Fitness" seminar offered by the Board of Pensions at all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries. It is the responsibility of the inquirer/candidate to make provisions for the requirement, if not attending a PC(USA) seminary.

GLOSSARY

- **Annual Consultation:** Each year, Inquirers and Candidates are required to meet with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
- **Bible Content Exam:** A fifth ordination exam, in addition to the four which are normally taken together, this exam is a 100-question, multiple-choice test encompassing the entire Bible. A score of 70 is passing.
- **Book of Order:** The Presbyterian guide to polity, worship, discipline, and other rules of the church. This book governs how Presbyterian governing bodies work and how the work of the church is divided between them.
- **Candidate:** A candidate is someone who has a sense that God is definitely calling her/him to ordained ministry, and is moved to Candidacy status by the CPM and presbytery. One must be a candidate for at least a year before being ordained.
- **Certified Ready to Receive a Call:** At this stage in the ordination process, the candidate is fully endorsed by the CPM and has completed all requirements for ordination, save receiving and accepting a call. You must be certified ready to receive a call in order to circulate your PIF or enter into negotiations with a church concerning ministerial services.
- **Church Information Form (CIF):** The ecclesiastical counterpart of the PIF, the CIF is a standardized form that all churches seeking an ordained minister must complete.
- **Church Leadership Connection (CLC):** The website which ministers and prospective ministers use to find churches and vice versa.
- **Clinical Pastoral Education:** Half on-the-job training as a hospital chaplain, and half intensive group therapy, CPE is designed to help you identify and get past your own issues to make you into a more able and sensitive pastor.
- **Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM):** A group elected by the presbytery whose task is to prepare those called by God into the ministry for their positions in the church. Functionally, this entails guiding seminary students through the ordination process of the PC(USA) by assigning liaisons (either an elder or a minister) and providing spiritual and financial support (as available) in the form of liaisons (either an elder or a minister). In addition, the committee seeks to discern whether, indeed, God is calling the inquirer/candidate to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament or whether God might be calling the person under care to use his/her gifts in a different way.
- **Discernment:** A spiritual practice in which one person and/or a group seeks the wisdom of God in a decision-making process, trying to see a situation from God's perspective. A prayerful process calling for humility and patient listening to the Holy Spirit as well as other sources of experience and wisdom.
- **Inquirer:** An inquirer is one who is trying to discern whether or not he/she is called to ordained ministry in the PC(USA). The inquiry phase is designed to allow those who think that God may be calling them to an ordained position to explore that call and to determine if this is, indeed, what God has laid on their hearts. They covenant with their session and the presbytery's CPM to seek clear discernment together. There is no set length for the inquiry phase of the process, but ordinarily it is not shorter than one year.
- **Master of Divinity (M.Div.):** This is a three-year seminary degree most commonly earned by students interested in pursuing ordained ministry.

- **Ordination Exams (Ords):** A set of five exams required for ordination in the PC(USA), including the Bible Content exam and a group of four exams usually taken in the third year of seminary. These exams are graded on a national level by PC(USA) pastors and elders, and must be passed for a candidate to be ordained. These exams test knowledge of PC(USA) polity, the Bible, worship, theology and linguistic exegetical skills.
- **Personal Information Form (PIF):** A standardized application for all PC(USA) Minister of the Word and Sacrament positions disseminated nationally online, as well as through local presbyteries.
- **Presbyterian Church (USA) (PC(USA)):** The official name of our particular denomination.
- **Spiritual Director:** A trained person with whom you meet regularly to explore how God is speaking to you. The director is not a counselor, but one who is sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit as you share your life experience with her/him.
- **Under Care:** After you are endorsed by your session and presbytery CPM, and are officially enrolled as an inquirer, you begin a covenant relationship with both of these governing bodies. This relationship lasts until you are released from it either by exiting the ordination process by choice or by a decision of the presbytery or by accepting a call and being ordained. This language reflects the nurturing aspect of the relationship between the session, the CPM, and the inquirer or candidate.

For more terms defined please see: www.pcusa.org/cps/terms.htm