

# ORDINATION PROCESS IN THE PC(USA)

(as it finds expression in Pittsburgh Presbytery)

Book of Order G-14.0400

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

- All required forms are available online at [http://www.pghpresbytery.org/committees\\_commissions/comm\\_files/cpm.htm](http://www.pghpresbytery.org/committees_commissions/comm_files/cpm.htm)
- All PC(USA) forms linked at the above site are in writeable PDF format and can be saved to your computer then emailed. Please do not send hard copies of any form to the presbytery.

## Phase 1: From Applicant to Inquirer

A	1. A person desiring to become an Inquirer talks with Pastor/Session about his/her desire to explore the personal implications of becoming a minister of the Word and Sacrament ( <i>Note: The individual must be a member of the sponsoring congregation for at least 6 months G.2.0602</i> ).
P/S	2. The Session/Pastor of the sponsoring congregation shall contact the Commission on Preparation for Ministry for orientation to the process used in Pittsburgh Presbytery if it has been more than three years since the last orientation. A CPM representative meets with the session.
A	3. The person desiring to become an Inquirer completes Forms 1 and 2 from the Pittsburgh Presbytery web site ( <a href="http://www.pghpresbytery.org">www.pghpresbytery.org</a> ) or the Presbyterian Church (USA) web site ( <a href="http://www.pcusa.org">www.pcusa.org</a> ) or contacts CPM if no computer access. At this point the candidate should begin maintaining a file containing copies of all documents he or she submits as well as all documents received during the ordination process.
S	4. Session interviews Applicant and shall make a recommendation to Presbytery. If the Session votes favorably, it assigns a liaison elder, executes Forms 1 and 2B, and forwards Forms 1, 2A and 2B to the Commission on Preparation for Ministry of Pittsburgh Presbytery at least two weeks before the CPM meeting.
CPM	5. Upon receipt of Forms 1 and 2, CPM assigns a Pre-Care Counselor, who meets with Applicant for a "Pre-Care Consultation" to review forms, to give an overview of the process, to explore the Applicant's sense of call and to provide a copy of the <u>Standards of Ethical Conduct</u> of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Applicant signs acknowledgement of receipt of the <u>Standards of Ethical Conduct</u> .
A/EL/CPM/CT	6. Applicant, with liaison elder, meets with CPM. Liaison elder speaks about the action the Session took concerning the Applicant. CPM interviews Applicant. If CPM votes favorably, its action is reported to Presbytery. A Care Team is assigned to the Inquirer, and Forms 2A and 2B are executed and distributed. The Care Team shall meet with the Inquirer for an "Initial Consultation" within the first 90 days after coming under care and contact the person's references to discuss personal traits, character, work history, etc. A permanent file is started at Pittsburgh Presbytery

A – Applicant

C – Candidate

CPM – Commission on Preparation for Ministry

CT – Care Team

I – Inquirer

P – Pastor

EL – Elder Liaison

PR – Presbytery

S – Session

	which will include all forms, reports, exams, correspondence and other pertinent documentation.
	Congratulations! You are now enrolled as an Inquirer. The two year time requirement of G-2.0602 begins at this time. The inquiry and candidacy phases shall continue for a period of no less than two years, including at least one year as a candidate.

## Phase 2: Inquirer/Inquirer to Candidate

CPM	1. Inquirers are gifted by the CPM with the following: <u>Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA) Manual</u> ; <u>Presbyterian Creeds: a Guide to the Book of Confessions</u> , by Jack Rogers; <u>Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers</u> , by Joan Gray and Joyce Tucker; current <u>Book of Order</u> ; <u>Standards of Ethical Conduct</u> ; and Acknowledgement of Receipt form.
I	2. Inquirer is required to send copies of seminary transcripts annually and Field Education Reports to the Commission on Preparation for Ministry of Pittsburgh Presbytery (G-2.0604).
I/CPM	3. Inquirer is encouraged to take <i>Bible Content Examination</i> during the first year of seminary. Request to take the exam is made through the Care Team and requires CPM approval. CPM will pay for the first time the exam is taken. Re-takes are at the expense of the Inquirer. The <i>Bible Content Examination</i> is given twice each year: the first Friday in February at 10:00 AM / registration deadline preceding December 15 and the Friday before Labor Day at 10:00 AM / registration deadline preceding July 15. Inquirer executes the online application and submits to the Presbyterian Church (USA) office in Louisville along with fee. CPM will reimburse Inquirer for the first time the exam is taken.
I/CPM	4. Inquirer selects a spiritual mentor and informs CPM of the person's name, address, and telephone number. If the Inquirer is married, a mentoring couple is also selected and CPM is informed of the couple's name, address, email and telephone number. CPM sends guidelines/rationale to respective mentors. Inquirers and Candidates must meet with spiritual mentor at least 2 times a year. It is strongly recommended that a meeting with marriage mentors be held at least 2 times a year. Care Team will discuss this at each annual consultation.
I/CPM/CT	5. Inquirer is required to complete a <i>Vocational Assessment and Psychological evaluation at an approved evaluation center*</i> and release the results to CPM (see "Release of Vocational Assessment Report") <i>within six months</i> of being enrolled as an Inquirer. The cost will be covered as follows: CPM – 40%; Session – 40%; Inquirer – 20%. CPM sends a copy of the assessment to the Inquirer's Care Team <i>for their review</i> , and places original in the permanent file. Care Team will discuss the assessment with the Inquirer at the Annual Consultation or at a separate time.  *Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute (412-661-1237) is a local approved center at 6324 Marchand Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15206
CT/I	6. Annual Consultations are to be held throughout the Inquirer and Candidate phases (G-2.0605). a. The Inquirer completes <i>Pre-Interview Annual Consultation Report (Form 3)</i> and electronically forwards to the Care Team one week prior to consultation. b. The Care Team meets with the Inquirer and reports to CPM for approval through the use of Form 4. All Annual Consultations become part of permanent file.

	Note: On an annual basis the CPM Chair and/or Vice Chair will review with Dean of Students at seminars those students under CPM's care. All inquirers and candidates must maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average. Worship and involvement at a PC(USA) church are required and will be discussed at each annual consultation. At each annual consultation the Care Team will discuss the following items: sex, substance abuse, money, higher standard to which clergy are held, and how they take care of themselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.
CPM	7. CPM, through Care Team, advises Inquirer of seminary courses or special training requirements (G-2.0605). All inquirers and candidates must attend a seminary accredited and approved by the Association of Theological Schools in USA and Canada. Those attending a non-PC(USA) seminary may be required to attend a PC(USA) seminary for coursework including, but not limited to: Presbyterian polity; reformed theology; reformed worship and sacraments; Presbyterian confessions; and a course utilizing Biblical exegetical interpretation. All students, regardless of where they attend seminary, are required to complete the course work listed in the previous sentence.
I/CT	8. The Care Team, on behalf of the CPM, approves field work or internships (G-2.0605). Field education in a supervised ministry is required. <u>One field education experience must be in a PC(USA) church.</u> <i>The home church cannot serve as sole field education experience.</i> Therefore, one field education experience must be different from home church in terms of type of church. Care Team must receive and review report from field education supervisor. Inquirer/Candidate has responsibility for ensuring that report is sent to Care Team. Care Team is encouraged to contact supervisor by telephone. Inquirers and candidates are encouraged (not required) to take Clinical Pastoral Education. CPM reserves the right to require a CPE experience. Reports from the CPE supervisor are required and Care Team is responsible for reviewing the report and contacting the CPE supervisor.
I/CT	9. Inquirer and Care Team determine time to move from Inquiry Phase to Candidacy Phase. Inquirer completes Forms 5A and 5B from the Pittsburgh Presbytery web site ( <a href="http://www.pghpresbytery.org">www.pghpresbytery.org</a> ) or contacts CPM if no computer access. If the Inquirer chooses to have a Candidacy Reception, he/she can also find a form for <u>Planning Your Reception as a Candidate for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament</u> on the website. (Such receptions are optional).
I/CT	10. Inquirer writes responses to the six statements listed on Form 5A, (note: the response to #2 "A statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition" must be no longer than 850 words with word count noted and lines numbered down the left side of the document. This statement should include a discussion of an understanding of: the triune God; each person of the God-head; the saving work of Jesus Christ; the Church; Scripture; Sacraments; eschatology; humanity and sin). This Statement of Faith is to be reviewed by the Inquirer's Care Team prior to making a request to move to Candidacy. Once the Statement is approved by the Care Team, the responses to the six statements and a completed copy of <u>Planning Your Reception as a Candidate for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament</u> (optional) are sent to the sponsoring Session and Pastor.
S	11. Session interviews Inquirer, executes Forms 5A and 5B, and forwards them to the Commission on Preparation for Ministry of Pittsburgh Presbytery with a recommendation. Executed forms must be electronically received by the CPM two weeks prior to the CPM meeting. If the session intends to have a reception service for the new Candidate, the proposed date for that event must be included with these forms.

I/CPM/CT	12. Care Team informs CPM that the Inquirer desires and is ready to move to the Candidacy Phase. The Inquirer, accompanied by liaison elder, is examined by CPM. If approved CPM introduces Inquirer to Pittsburgh Presbytery and recommends enrolling Inquirer as a Candidate.
PR/I	13. Presbytery examines the Inquirer concerning their Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry. If the examination is approved, the action is reported to Presbytery. Forms 5A and 5B are executed and distributed.
PR	14. The Candidate may choose to have a service of reception. Such services are optional. The service may be held at either the Presbytery meeting or the Candidate's home church. If a service of reception is held in the Candidate's home congregation, the commission reports to Stated Clerk of Pittsburgh Presbytery that reception of Candidate has been properly held.
	<b>Congratulations! You are now a Candidate for Ordained ministry in the PC(USA).</b>

### Phase 3: Candidate/Candidate to Certified Ready to Receive a Call

CT/C	1. Care Team continues to hold Annual Consultations with Candidate (G-2.0605).
	2. The Candidate or Inquirer (if time frame of G-2.0602 is satisfied), through the Care Team, request CPM approval to take the Standard Ordination Examinations. The <i>Standard Ordination Examinations</i> are given twice each year: the last Friday in January / registration deadline the preceding December 15 and the last full weekend in August before Labor Day weekend / registration deadline the preceding July 15. Candidate executes the online application and submits to the Presbyterian Church (USA) office in Louisville along with fee. CPM will reimburse Candidate for the first time the examinations are taken. Re-takes are at the expense of the Candidate. <b>Note: Standard Ordination exams may be taken a maximum of three times.</b>
C	3. Certified Ready to Receive a Call/Negotiation for Service: A Candidate who has completed two full years of theological education or its equivalent, who has had an annual consultation within the previous year, who has successfully completed all ordination examinations and has completed one year of candidacy, may request permission to be Certified Ready to Receive a Call and granted permission to enter into Negotiations for Service. (G-2.0607) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Candidate requests that CPM hear a sermon.</li> <li>b. The Candidate presents a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation (following the CPM guidelines approved on January 30, 2008)**</li> <li>c. CPM representative hears the sermon and reports to the Commission.</li> <li>d. The Candidate meets with the Care Team to review the candidate's one page (850 words maximum with word count noted and lines numbered down the left side of the document) Statement of Faith and the Constitutional Ordination questions (W-4.4003). The Statement of Faith should include a discussion of an understanding of: the triune God; each person of the God-head; the saving work of Jesus Christ; the Church; Scripture; Sacraments; eschatology; humanity and sin.</li> <li>e. The candidate provides CPM with a copy of his/her statement of faith two weeks prior to the</li> </ul>

	scheduled commission meeting. The candidate appears before CPM, reads her/his Statement of Faith and is examined by CPM. If approved, the candidate may request permission to circulate Personal Information Form (PIF) and enter into negotiation for service. <b>Note: A Candidate cannot receive a call until they have completed the time requirement of G-2.0602 and completed their seminary degree.</b>
CPM	4. CPM reports to the Presbytery that the Candidate is Certified Ready to receive a call.
	<b>Congratulations! You are now Certified Ready to receive a call.</b>

\*\* Reference the Exegetical Work & Sermon Guidelines

## Phase 4: From Certified Ready to Receive a Call to Ordained

C	1. The Candidate circulates her/his PIF.
C	2. The Candidate receives a call from a church or validated ministry and informs CPM.
C/CPM	3. The Candidate submits to CPM a list of members to serve on a commission for ordination for CPM approval at least one week prior to the CPM meeting. The Candidate may choose to appear before the CPM again or not, it is the Candidate's personal choice.
CPM	4. CPM certifies the Candidate is ready to be examined by Presbytery, and provides copies of the Candidate's Statement of Faith for all commissioners to Presbytery (G-2.0702).
PR	5. The Presbytery of call to a candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain and install the Candidate (G-2.0702). If Presbytery is fully satisfied of the Candidate's qualifications, it shall vote to proceed to her/his ordination, appointing a time and place for the service of ordination (G-2.0702). The CPM of the calling presbytery executes Form 7B.
PR	6. If the ordination is conducted by Pittsburgh Presbytery an appointed Commission ordains the Candidate and submits its report to the Stated Clerk of Pittsburgh Presbytery.
CPM	7. Once the Candidate is ordained, the Candidate's entire file is returned to her/him.
Rejoice!	<b>The Presbyterian Church (USA) has a newly ordained pastor. Praise be to God!</b>

The above steps represent only positive actions. At various points, negative actions or voluntary withdrawal will terminate the process. If the process is terminated, Form 7B needs to be executed.

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