

`PRESBYTERY OF UTAH (PCUSA)  
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY  
MANUAL - 2019

Mission Statement: The Presbytery of Utah is called to inspire and equip its congregations of Reformed believers to worship, grow in faith, and do ministry in Christ's name.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (USA) no longer details work of the Committees on Preparation for Ministry. The Presbytery of Utah has chosen to continue the operation of this committee, and this manual was prepared to specify presbytery requirements and actions that are needed to meet the requirements of the Book of Order, G-2.06 and G-2.07. Specific references to the Book of Order refer to the 2019-2021 edition.

This manual supplements and expands the Advisory handbook on Preparation for Ministry (Mid Council Ministries of the Office of General Assembly version 2.1, December 2017.)

As the operating manual for the Utah Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry, this manual will be adopted by vote of that committee and is subordinate to the presbytery's Manual of Administrative Operations. As the committee changes this manual with time, all changes and additions shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk to inform the presbytery of these changes (Utah Manual of Administrative Operations, 3.04).

### 1.00 - PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

#### 1.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is to accompany people who are discerning God's call in their life, and to supervise and support the needs and requirements of inquirers, candidates and those certified ready to receive a call.

#### 1.02 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

It will be the responsibility of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to perform those duties assigned to it by the Book of Order, G-2, and the Manual of Administrative Operations of the Presbytery of Utah.

### 1.03 CONSTITUTION AND ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be composed of at least six members, aiming for equal numbers of ministers of the Word and Sacraments and ruling elders. Members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and Representation and elected by the presbytery at one of its stated meetings. Members shall normally be elected for three-year terms. Re-election is possible. No more than two consecutive terms may be served at any one time. Vacancy caused by a resignation may be filled as needed.

### 1.04 OFFICERS

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall have a moderator or co-moderators. The moderator shall be selected by the Coordinating Council with advice from the current Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

### 1.05 LIAISONS

A designated member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will serve as liaison for each inquirer and candidate under care of the presbytery. It will be the duty of the liaison to have frequent contact with his/her inquirer or candidate, and to be aware of their progress in discerning a call to ministry as well as their learning objectives, ordination requirements, and ministry goals. The liaison will meet at least annually with the inquirer or candidate.

### 1.06 MEETINGS AND QUORUM

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will meet regularly at the call of the committee moderator or co-moderator. Fifty percent plus one of the members will constitute a quorum for any meeting.

### 1.07 REPORTS AT PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

Through its moderator, or co-moderator, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will make a report at each stated meeting of presbytery.

## 1.08 COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Moderator of Committee on Preparation for Ministry, or at least one of the co-moderators, will be a member of the Coordinating Council, and will report on behalf of the committee at Council meetings. The Council may act on behalf of the presbytery if the business at hand is routine, or when it requires action before the next presbytery meeting.

## 1.09 GUESTS AT MEETINGS

The Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk of Presbytery are invited to attend meetings. Other guests may also be invited.

## 1.10 MINUTES

The Committee shall keep minutes of each meeting. The moderator of the Committee will convey the minutes to all members of the Committee prior to the next meeting. The Presbytery Office shall keep all approved minutes.

## 2.00 -- PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

### 2.01 PRESBYTERY RESPONSIBILITY FOR INQUIRY AND CANDIDACY

It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacraments receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. For this purpose, the presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacraments and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy. (Book of Order G-2.0601)

### 2.02 ADVISORY HANDBOOK ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

The process and requirements for inquiry and candidacy are provided in the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry developed and updated as

needed by the Mid Council Ministries Office of the General Assembly. The presbytery may adopt or modify the Advisory Handbook to establish its own mandatory procedures.

### 2.03 ENROLLING AS AN INQUIRER

When a person wanting to become an inquirer expresses this desire to the session where he/she is a member, the session and applicant will consult, and the session will make a recommendation. The session will contact the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (COPM). The applicant shall fill out Form 1a. The session shall fill out Form 2b and provide COPM with an acceptable background check. The COPM then interviews the person and makes its recommendations to the presbytery, COPM shall fill out and complete Form 2a after its meeting with the applicant. The presbytery shall then meet with the applicant regarding enrollment as an inquirer.

### 2.04 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. (Book of Order G-2.0602)

### 2.05 TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP WHILE AN INQUIRER OR CANDIDATE

Should an inquirer or candidate transfer membership to another congregation within the presbytery, while under care, and should the sessions of both congregations concur, care and sponsorship will transfer to the new congregation of membership. The process and time frames of inquiry or candidacy shall not be affected.

## 2.06 PURPOSE OF INQUIRY

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide the opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacraments to explore, together with the Presbytery, their sense of call, and discern whether a particular person has both the call and the gifts to perform the functions of ministry of the Word and Sacraments on behalf of the church. (Book of Order G-2.0603)

## 2.07 PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

All those coming under care of the Presbytery of Utah for preparation for the ministry of Word and Sacraments will undergo a psychological evaluation as early as practical and prior to advancement to the candidacy phase. The cost of this evaluation will be borne equally among the presbytery, the session of care, and the person under care.

## 2.08 ADVANCING TO CANDIDACY

An inquirer wishing to advance to candidacy shall:

- a) have been enrolled as an inquirer for at least one year;
- b) be enrolled in or completed an M.Div. program at an approved seminary;
- c) submit a preliminary statement of faith;
- d) submit Form 5a;
- e) submit Form 5b from session of care;
- f) submit completed questionnaires from two of the following: liaison or pastor of his/her home congregation, pastor or supervisor of internship, professor or chaplain of seminary being attended; and
- g) complete a psychological examination by a counseling center approved by COPM.

Successful passing of the Bible Content Exam is encouraged but not required to advance to candidacy. Each applicant will meet with the COPM, which shall make its recommendation to presbytery and fill out Form 5c. The applicant shall then be examined on the floor of presbytery regarding their sense of call.

## 2.09 PURPOSES OF CANDIDACY

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacraments. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance and evaluation of a candidate's fitness for a call to ministry requiring ordination. (Book of Order G-2.0604)

## 2.10 CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP AFTER CERTIFICATION

The relationship between a candidate, his or her session, and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry does not end when a person is certified ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. The relationship is to be maintained through a covenant of laying out new goals for how a candidate will seek a call and maintain ministry skills during the search process. Candidates are under care until ordination, withdrawal, or removal.

## 2.11 TIMELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION

In each step of the process, persons under care should submit any required documents to the committee by the end of the month prior to the committee's meeting when that person will be reviewed or evaluated. Exceptions will be considered on an individual basis.

## 3.00 -- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS

### 3.01 INSTRUCTION OF SESSIONS

The presbytery, through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, shall seek to instruct sessions on their role in the inquiry and candidacy process. Particular direction shall be given to a session that has endorsed an inquirer or candidate.

### 3.02 OVERSIGHT

During the phases of inquiry and candidacy, the individual continues to be an active member of his or her congregation and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of the covenant relationship. (Book of Order G-2.0605)

### 3.03 PRESBYTERY RESPONSIBILITY

The presbytery shall exercise responsibility for the spiritual growth of inquirers and candidates, to support them with an understanding and sympathetic interest, and to give guidance in regards to courses of study, familiarity with the Bible and with the Book of Confessions, practical training and plans for education including the choice of institutions, field education, and the inquirer's or candidate's financial needs. The presbytery shall also give guidance and instruction to the inquirer or candidate regarding the faith and polity of the church.

Regular consultations with inquirers and candidates will be based on specific goals in five areas of growth and expected outcomes: 1) education for ministry, 2) spiritual development, 3) interpersonal relationships, 4) personal growth, and 5) professional development. These consultations will help the presbytery and COPM work with each individual and, through guided discussion and goal setting, stimulate further development.

### 3.04 SESSION RESPONSIBILITY

The session shall provide support throughout all phases of inquiry and candidacy to ensure that care is provided on an ongoing basis. The session shall appoint a ruling elder from the church to be a liaison with the inquirer or candidate and the presbytery committee. The session shall consider the provision of financial support for the inquirer or candidate and is expected to pay at least one third of the cost of the psychological evaluation.

### 3.05 ANNUAL REPORTS

The presbytery shall require the inquirer or candidate to submit an annual written report (Form 3) on progress in studies and service to the church. COPM shall request a report annually on the progress toward preparation for ministry of the candidate or inquirer from the seminary or institution of theological education. The COPM shall conduct an annual consultation for the evaluation and nurture of the inquirer or candidate. In no case shall an inquirer or candidate be excused from these annual consultations.

## 4.00 -- SERVICE IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

### 4.01 MONITORING THE COVENANT

The COPM shall monitor the covenant among the presbytery, the inquirers and candidates, and the sessions. The Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry provides guidance for supervision, evaluation, and reports on the service and preparation for ministry, and may be useful.

### 4.02 INQUIRER AND CANDIDATE ACTIVITIES

Inquirers and candidates shall, with the permission of the presbytery, engage in some form of supervised service to the church. No inquirer or candidate who has not been previously ordained as a ruling elder may serve as a moderator of a session, administer the sacraments, or perform a marriage service. An inquirer or candidate previously ordained as a ruling elder may be authorized by the presbytery to preside at the Lord's Supper when invited by a session. (Book of Order G-2.0606)

## 5.00 -- EXAMINATIONS

### 5.01 REQUIRED EXAMINATIONS

Inquirers or candidates are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in their first year of seminary. The other four examinations may be taken by

inquirers or candidates after completion of two full years of theological education. These four examinations shall only be taken upon approval by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. These examination are:

- a. Bible Content
- b. Open book Bible Exegesis
- c. Theological Competence
- d. Worship and Sacraments
- e. Church Polity

## 5.02 EXAMINATION GRADING

The examinations required in the five specified areas shall be graded by representatives of the presbyteries under the supervision of the presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.

## 5.03 EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

Presbytery may not waive any of the examination requirements. If an inquirer or candidate has failed to receive a satisfactory grade after several attempts on any particular examination, an alternative testing procedure shall be investigated.

The Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on examination of Candidates supervises examination alternatives. "Accommodations and Alternatives to the Standard Examinations," are detailed in the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry (2017), Resources section.

A special accommodation to integrate an oral component must follow a certain process, as detailed in the Advisory Handbook. COPM shall appoint a special committee of three members of presbytery qualified to conduct an examination of the candidate. The special committee shall consult with the Association for Examinations in the Office of the General Assembly on an appropriate alternative examination process, such as an oral examination, and conduct the examination. The alternative examination shall require approximately the same time to complete as would the standard examination. The results of the examination

shall be reported to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the presbytery and the Preparation for Ministry in the Office of the General Assembly.

#### 5.04 EXAMINATION APPEALS

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry may, at its own discretion, file an appeal on behalf of an inquirer or candidate who has received failing marks on any examination. A written appeal will be approved by the committee prior to submission to the Cooperative Committee on Examinations.

### 6.00 -- FINAL ASSESSMENT AND NEGOTIATION FOR SERVICE

#### 6.01 ASSESSMENT OF READINESS

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a minister of the Word and Sacraments without approval of presbytery. Presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. (Book of Order G-2.0607)

In the final year of theological education or when a candidate has satisfied all of the requirements of this section, and before the candidate has received a call, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall conduct a final assessment of the candidate's readiness to begin ordained ministry. A summary of this assessment shall be reported to the presbytery and shall be transmitted to a calling presbytery when requested. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall report to the presbytery when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness for ordered ministry as a minister of the Word and Sacraments shall include:

- a. A candidate's wisdom and maturity in faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment. (Book of Order G-2.0607)
- b. A transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university. (Book of Order G-2.0607)
- c. A transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study

that includes Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek (language based), satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation. (Book of Order G-2.0607)

d. Successful completion of studies in Reformed theology and PC(USA) polity.

e. Satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers, in the areas covered by any standard ordination examinations approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries. (Book of Order G-2.0607)

f. Successful completion of at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, or its equivalent. This shall include a peer-based learning element as part of its curriculum.

g. With the approval and under the guidance of the presbytery, engage in some form of supervised practice of ministry (field education or service in a church setting). This may be through the seminary. To the degree possible, work with a PC(USA) congregation or an affiliated ministry.

## 6.02 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, and who has successfully completed all ordination examinations or has received presbytery's certification of readiness may, with approval of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, enter into negotiation for his or her ministerial service.

For candidates who have not yet completed the two years of theological education, or successfully completed all ordination examinations, the presbytery may, by three-fourths vote, permit a candidate to proceed to negotiate for service prior to certification of readiness to receive a call.

## 7.00 -- TRANSFER OF RELATIONSHIP

### 7.01 TRANSFER BETWEEN PRESBYTERIES

At the request of the inquirer or candidate, and with the approval of the presbyteries and sessions involved, a presbytery may transfer the covenant relationship of an inquirer or candidate. (Book of Order G-2.0608)

An inquirer or candidate shall not transfer her or his membership to a particular church under the jurisdiction of another presbytery without the approval of the presbytery responsible for that person's preparation for ministry. Whenever a presbytery approves such a transfer, it shall send to the other presbytery a certificate of its approval, its records concerning the individual, and the reasons for the request for transfer. Failure of an inquirer or candidate to follow the procedure shall result in forfeiture of standing as an inquirer or candidate.

### 7.02 TRANSFER TO ANOTHER REFORMED BODY

When a candidate is called to work under the jurisdiction of another Reformed body, she or he may be dismissed as a candidate by certification. Likewise, candidates may be received for this purpose from other Reformed bodies by transfer of certificate.

## 8.00 -- REMOVAL FROM RELATIONSHIP

### 8.01 PROCESS FOR WITHDRAWAL

An inquirer or candidate may, after consultation with the session and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, withdraw from covenant relationship. A presbytery may also, with sufficient reasons, remove an individual's name from the roll of inquirers and candidates. The COPM shall report this action and the reasons to the session, the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled. Prior to taking such action, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall make a reasonable attempt to give

the inquirer or candidate an opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed removal. (Book of Order G-2.0609)

## 9.00 -- ACCOMMODATIONS TO PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

### 9.01 EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

All of the requirements for final assessment, detailed in Section 6.01, shall be met except in the following circumstances: If the presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why certain of the educational requirements should not be met by an inquirer or candidate, it shall make an exception only with a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present at a stated or called meeting. A full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of presbytery. Should the inquirer or candidate seek transfer in the future, that account shall be communicated to the presbytery to which the inquirer or candidate seeks to be transferred.

### 9.02 EXCEPTION TO EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

[see section 5.03]

### 9.03 EXCEPTION TO TIME REQUIREMENTS

The time requirements of each phase shall not be waived unless the Committee on Preparation for Ministry determines there are good and sufficient reasons why the requirement should not be met and presents those reasons to the presbytery. The presbytery shall act upon a request for an exception to the time requirements of G-2.0602 only after hearing the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The exception shall be approved by a three-fourths vote of presbytery at a stated or called meeting and the account of the rationale shall be included in the minutes of presbytery. That rationale shall be communicated to a receiving presbytery should the inquirer or candidate seek to transfer their relationship in the future.

## 9.04 TRANSFER OF PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

The foregoing exceptions shall hold if the presbytery has received an inquirer or candidate from another presbytery that has approved the exemption of any of the requirements. Reception of the candidate confirms the action of the dismissing presbytery.

## 10.00 -- ORDINATION

### 10.01 PURPOSE OF ORDINATION

Ordination to the ordered ministry of minister of the Word and Sacraments is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call. (Book of Order G-2.0701)

### 10.02 EXAMINATION AND ORDINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The presbytery placing a call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain and install the candidate. (Book of Order G-2.0702)

### 10.03 EXAMINATION BEFORE PRESBYTERY

The candidate shall appear before the presbytery of examination and shall make a brief statement of personal faith and commitment to the ministry. The presbytery shall receive the report of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry that the candidate has completed all requirements and has been certified ready for ordination pending approval of the call. The report shall include a summary of waivers and exceptions to requirements, if any were granted. The presbytery may conduct further examination of the candidate's Christian faith and views in theology, the Bible, the Sacraments, and the government of the church as it deems necessary. If the presbytery is fully satisfied of the candidate's

qualifications, it shall approve the call and vote to proceed to her or his ordination and installation.

#### 10.04 RECORD OF ORDINATION

The presbytery of call shall record the ordination and installation, along with written affirmation of the new minister of the Word and Sacraments to the obligations undertaken in the ordination questions and enroll the minister of the Word and Sacraments as a member of the presbytery. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall report the addition to the General Assembly, the presbytery of care, and to the congregation of which the candidate was formerly a member. (Book of Order G-2.0704)