

## 1. Application for Inquiry

- \_\_\_\_\_ Be an active member of a PC(USA) church for at least 6 months (G-14.0403).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Speak to the pastor of your church about your desire to explore becoming a minister of Word and Sacrament.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contact the prebytery office and ask to begin the inquiry process
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read about the process of preparation.
  - The Book of Order section G-14.0401 - G.14.0474.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have official transcripts sent to you for all post-high-school education.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download the forms relevant to the application for inquiry.
  - [www.presbyteryofthejames.org](http://www.presbyteryofthejames.org) > CPM-Committee on Preparation for Ministry > Forms for those under care of the Prebytery of the James
  - Form 1, Form 2A, Form 2B, and Biographical Information.
  - Read through the forms carefully, noting especially the responsibilities of the various parties: Session (Form 1, pages 10-11); you (Form 2A, page 14), and CPM (Form 2A, page 15).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the following:
  - Form 1, pages 2-7, and write the essays required on page 5 .
  - Form 2A, page 12.
  - Form 2B, page 17: print your name on the top line.
  - Biographical Information
  - Make a complete copy of all forms, essays, and transcripts for yourself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ask the Clerk of Session of your church to arrange for you to meet with the session to ask for its endorsement of your application for inquiry. Submit to the Clerk of Session the originals of the following documents:
  - Form 1, pages 1-11, together with your essays.
  - Form 2A, pages 12-15.
  - Form 2B, pages 16-17.
  - official transcripts of all post-high-school education
- \_\_\_\_\_ CPM sends one of its members to the session of your church to explain the process of preparation (G-14.0410).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with the session of your church.
  - Request that it endorse your application that presbytery enroll you as an inquirer.
  - Session interviews you using Form 1, page 8.
  - Session makes a decision and records it on Form 1, page 9.
  - Session appoints a session liaison for you, and records the action on Form 1, page 9.
  - Clerk of session signs Form 1, page 9;
  - You and a witness sign Form 2B, page 17.
  - Moderator of session and a witness sign Form 2B, page 17.
  - Clerk of Session keeps a copy of your application.

### Presbytery of the James

#### Mailing Address

3218 Chamberlayne Avenue  
Richmond VA 23227

#### Phone

804-262-2074

877-262-2074

#### Fax

877-259-4441

#### Website

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

For questions about meetings, requirements, paperwork, etc., contact Franklin Reding, who serves part-time as Assistant to the Stated Clerk for CPM. Email him at [franklinr@pbyjames.org](mailto:franklinr@pbyjames.org). You can reach him at his church at 866-304-7994.

Jack Corley is the Moderator of CPM. Email Jack at [jackcorley@earthlink.net](mailto:jackcorley@earthlink.net)

Jacqui Ginther, Presbytery Office Manager, also helps with CPM matters. Email Jacqui at [jacquiginther@pbyjames.org](mailto:jacquiginther@pbyjames.org)

Carson Rhyne is the Stated Clerk and General Presbyter of the Presbytery. Email Carson at [carsonrhyne@pbyjames.org](mailto:carsonrhyne@pbyjames.org)

### Download Forms

At the presbytery's website listed above, click "CPM-Committee on Preparation for Ministry." You will find most of the forms you will need there.

### The Inquiry Phase

"The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together in such a way that the decision regarding the inquirer's suitability for ministry of the Word and Sacrament will be based on knowledge and experience of one another" (G-14.0404).

\_\_\_\_\_ Enter your session liaison's contact information here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The Clerk of Session delivers the originals of your inquiry application to the presbytery office:

- Form 1, pages 2-9, together with essays; clerk has signed page 9.
- Form 2A, pages 12-13; you have signed the bottom of page 12.
- Form 2B, pages 16-17, signed by you, Moderator of session, and witnesses
- transcripts
- Biographical Information
- See **Deadline for Documents** to the right.

\_\_\_\_\_ Verify when you will be meeting CPM.

- Email Franklin Reding at franklinr@pbyjames.org
- Your interview is likely to begin between 2 and 4:30 PM.
- Invite your pastor and/or session liaison to be present. CPM does not require the presence of your pastor or liaison, but they can be a source of support for you.

\_\_\_\_\_ To prepare for the interview with CPM, read carefully Form 2A, pages 14-15.

- Listed are the responsibilities that you and CPM will be undertaking.

\_\_\_\_\_ CPM Interview:

- Your encounter with the committee will be in three phases: meeting the committee; waiting outside the room while the committee deliberates; meeting the committee again to be informed of its decision.
- Your photo will be taken at your first meeting with the CPM.

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

- CPM will tell you what its decision is about your application, and what it expects you to do from this point forward.
- CPM fills out Form 2A, page 13.
- CPM appoints a CPM liaison for you; contact information is recorded on Form 2A, page 13.
- CPM Moderator and a witness sign Form 2B, page 17.
- Your original application will be kept in your CPM file at the presbytery office.
- You will receive a follow-up letter about a week after the CPM meeting, stating CPM's decision about your application and any particular instructions that CPM has given you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enter your CPM liaison's contact information here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Enter the date of your enrollment as an inquirer: \_\_\_\_\_.

- Your minimum 2 year period of preparation begins now.
- See G-14.0403 for the time requirement.

**Deadline for Documents**

To be eligible for meeting CPM on the 4th Tuesday of a given month (CPM does not meet in July and December) make sure that the presbytery office has your documents by noon on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Please be aware, however, that sometimes CPM's docket is too full to accommodate everyone who wishes to be interviewed at a particular meeting

**Focus of the Inquiry Interview**

In this interview the question in CPM's mind is, "Does the applicant show promise of being willing to work cooperatively with CPM in exploring whether God is calling the applicant to the ministry of Word and Sacrament?"

**Reimbursement**

Each time you meet with the Committee, you can ask for reimbursement for your travel expenses. Submit your expenses and the receipts documenting those expenses using the presbytery's Expense Report.

**Your CPM Liaison**

The CPM liaison is your primary contact person on the Committee. It is imperative that you keep in touch with your liaison. Inform them of any change of contact information. Let know what is happening. Turn to them with any questions you have about the preparation process. They are a resource and an advocate for you on the Committee, but they can't function if you don't keep in touch with them.

## 2. The Inquiry Phase

\_\_\_\_\_ In the first six months of your inquiry phase, complete psychological testing. If you are unable to do this at the site named below, discuss other options with your CPM liaison.

Career and Personal Counseling Service      Phone 704-523-7751  
4108 Park Road, Suite 200                      Fax 704-523-7752  
Charlotte NC 28029

Email cpcs@careerservice.org  
Website www.CareerService.org

\_\_\_\_\_ You are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in your first year of seminary (G-14.0431).

- To learn more about the exam, go to [www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/exams/bible.htm)
- To get an application form for this exam, see **Download Forms** on page 1 of this Guide.

\_\_\_\_\_ You and your CPM liaison hold an Annual Consultation each year (G-14.0421).

- At least one month prior to the anniversary date of your enrollment as an inquirer, download and complete Form 3, pages 18-21, and mail it to your CPM liaison. (If this is your first annual consultation, you do not need to answer questions pertaining to previous consultations).
- Make sure the POJ office has received from your school a current transcript and evaluations for your field education or internships.
- The CPM liaison checks the references you listed on Form 3, page 18.
- The CPM liaison completes Form 4, page 22.
- Both you and the CPM liaison sign Form 4, page 23, top half.
- You sign Form 4, page 23, bottom half.
- CPM liaison submits annual consultation documents to CPM.
- CPM votes to continue you in the process.
- CPM Moderator signs Form 4, page 23, bottom half.
- CPM copies Form 4, page 23, and mails copy to you, your pastor and/or clerk, and your theological institution (see Form 4, page 23)
- CPM reports its action to the presbytery.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enroll in "a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery" (G-14.0450c).

- CPM recommends that you enroll in a PC(USA) seminary, because the goal of the preparation process is ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA).
- You may enroll in a non-PC(USA) seminary. If you do so, however, CPM may require additional course work, tutoring, mentoring, field education, or even doing a year of your theological education at a PC(USA) seminary, to insure that you are prepared for ministry in the PC(USA).

### **Psychological Evaluation**

You are required to undergo psychological testing of career and personal issues. CPM prefers that you use the services of the CPCS in Charlotte NC. CPM, your church Session, and you will each pay one third of the \$800 fee. In addition, CPM will pay up to \$200 of expenses for travel, food, hotels, etc., if you submit an Expense Report.

### **Bible Content Exam**

You may apply to take the Bible Content Exam without getting approval from CPM (unlike the other 4 ordination exams). The exam is offered only once a year (1st Friday in February), and the deadline for applying for it is in early December. The fee is \$85.

### **Annual Consultation**

You are required to have a formal consultation with your CPM liaison every year (G-14.021). This is a face-to-face interview. In extraordinary circumstances, your CPM liaison may be able to get the Committee's permission to do the interview over the phone. The cost of the consultation is shared by CPM, session, and you.

### **Ask Now About Exceptions**

If you anticipate that you might want to seek an exemption from any requirement, as provided in G-14.0470 - 14.-0473, talk with your CPM liaison about it now in the Annual Consultation. Do not wait! Three-fourths vote of the presbytery is needed for any such exceptions.

### 3. Application for Candidacy

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure you have the most recent official transcripts and evaluations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Download the forms relevant to the application for candidacy.  
- See page 1 of this Guide, **Download Forms**. You will need Form 5, which is in two parts, Form 5A and Form 5B.

\_\_\_\_\_ Complete the following:  
- Form 5A, page 24, and write the essays required on the top of page 25 .  
- Note on Form 5A, page 25, #3, the "statement of personal faith." This statement must be about one page in length. The statement must be self-contained and self-explanatory (no footnotes or supplementary comments). The statement should express what you believe and what you intend to teach. The statement should show that you have an understanding of the reformed confessional tradition.  
- Read carefully the responsibilities of all parties in Form 5A, pages 26-29.  
- Make a complete copy of your application for you to keep.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ask the Clerk of Session of your church to arrange for you to meet with the session to ask for its endorsement of your application for candidacy. Submit to the Clerk of Session the originals of the following documents:  
- Form 5A, pages 24-29, together with your essays.  
- Form 5B, page 31.  
- official transcripts and evaluations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Meet with the session of your church.  
- Ask Session to endorse your request that presbytery enroll you as a candidate.  
- Session makes a decision and records it on Form 5A, page 25.  
- Session (re-)appoints a session liaison for you, and records the action on Form 5A, page 25.  
- Clerk of session signs Form 5A, page 25.  
- You and a witness sign Form 5B, page 31.  
- Moderator of session and a witness sign Form 5B, page 31.  
- Clerk of Session keeps a copy of your application.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enter your session liaison's contact information here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The Clerk of Session delivers the originals of your candidacy application to the presbytery office:  
- Form 5A, page 24-22, with the essays and signatures.  
- Form 5B, page 31, with the necessary signatures.  
- See **Deadline for Documents** on page 2 of this Guide.

\_\_\_\_\_ Verify when you will be meeting CPM.  
- Email Franklin Reding at franklin@pbyjames.org  
- Your interview is likely to begin between 2 and 4:30 PM.  
- As in your inquiry interview, you are free to have your pastor and/or session liaison be present.

**From Inquiry to Candidacy**  
If In the course of the inquiry phase, you gain a strong sense that God is in fact calling you to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, you may apply for candidacy. The process of applying for candidacy tests whether your sense of your call is confirmed by the church.

**When to Apply for Candidacy**  
You cannot apply for candidacy until you have completed the psychological evaluation and the Annual Consultation for the current year. You are wise to become a candidate in your second year of seminary, so that your minimum 1 year term of candidacy will be completed around the time you graduate. Remember also to take into your plan the fact that you will have to appear before presbytery to be examined for candidacy. Presbytery meetings are on the 3rd Saturday of February, the 3rd Tuesday of June, and the 3rd Saturday of October.

**The Candidacy Phase**  
"The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the guidance and evaluation of candidates, using learning contacts within the context of supportive relationships" (G-14.0405).

**Goal of the Candidacy Phase**  
At the end of this period, you shall demonstrate readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament (G-14.0450a).

\_\_\_\_\_ To prepare for the interview with CPM, read carefully Form 5A, pages 26-27.

- Note the responsibilities that you and CPM undertake in the candidacy phase.

\_\_\_\_\_ CPM Interview:

- See "CPM Interview" on page 2 of this Guide.

\_\_\_\_\_ If CPM decides to recommend you to presbytery as a candidate, the following things happen:

- CPM will tell you what its decision is about your application, and what it expects you to do from this point forward.
- You and a witness sign Form 5B, page 31.
- CPM Moderator and a witness sign Form 5B, page 31.
- Your original application will go into your CPM file at the presbytery office.
- You will receive a follow-up letter about a week after the CPM meeting, stating CPM's decision about your application and any particular instructions that CPM has given you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enter the date on which CPM agreed to recommend you to presbytery as a candidate: \_\_\_\_\_.

- If presbytery later decides to receive you as a candidate, your minimum 1 year period of candidacy will have begun on the day of the CPM meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ At least 4 weeks in advance of the presbytery meeting in which you will be examined for candidacy, submit to the presbytery office the names of two persons to participate in the candidacy ceremony.

- Designate one to deliver a charge to you, and one to lead in prayer.
- If you are not the only candidate to be received that day, it is possible that one or both functions will be performed by others.
- Submit these names to Franklin Reding or Jacqui Ginther (see page 1 of this Guide for email addresses)

\_\_\_\_\_ Invite your church, family, and friends to be at the presbytery meeting when you are examined for candidacy.

- Once the docket for the presbytery meeting is set (about 2 weeks prior to the meeting), go to the presbytery website and find the agenda. See when the report of CPM will be. That is when you will be examined.

\_\_\_\_\_ At the presbytery meeting, you will be examined with respect to three issues (see **Examination by Presbytery** to the right),

- You will begin by making a statement (5 minutes maximum) on those topics. Then the presbytery will be free to ask you questions (do not be offended if no one asks anything!).
- Presbytery then votes whether to receive you as a candidate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery will have a brief ceremony to receive you and anyone else who is being received as a candidate that day.

- The Moderator of Presbytery will ask you questions (see **Questions to the Candidate . . .** to the right)
- Then a brief charge will be given to the new candidate(s) and the proceedings will close with prayer.

### **Focus of CPM's Candidacy Interview**

In this interview CPM wants to answer the question, "Is the applicant suited to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA)?" The Committee reviews the evidence gained during the inquiry phase and gauges your suitability for ministry of Word and Sacrament, trying to discern whether you demonstrate 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 suggest a good fit between you and the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA).

### **Examination by Presbytery**

Presbytery will examine you on three topics: (1) your Christian faith; (2) forms of Christian service undertaken; (3) your motives for seeking the ministry.

### **Questions to the Candidate in the Ceremony of Reception**

(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 the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA)?

#### 4. The Candidacy Phase

\_\_\_\_\_ You and your CPM liaison hold an Annual Consultation each year (G-14.0421).

- The face-to-face consultation with your CPM liaison continues to be required every year that you are candidate.
- For the Annual Consultation during the candidacy phase, follow the instructions that applied to the Annual Consultation for the inquiry phase (see page 3 of this Guide.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Apply to take the ordination examinations.

- Download application forms at [www.pcusa.org/exams/forms.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/exams/forms.htm)
- When applying to take any of the exams other than Bible Content, fill out the application, and write a check for the application fee made out to "Presbyterian Church (USA) - Exam Processing." Send to the presbytery office the application, the check, and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope  
Address your stamped envelope to  
Presbyterian Church - Exam Processing  
PO Box 643647  
Pittsburgh PA 15264-3647  
Presbytery staff will finish filling out the application and then mail it.

Exam	Date you took the exam	Passed?	Date you sent the graded exam paper to CPM
Bible Content	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Open Book Bible Exegesis	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Theological Competence	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Worship and Sacraments	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Church Polity	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ After your exam papers are read and graded, they will be returned to you. Photocopy them if you wish and (within two weeks) deliver them to the presbytery office.

#### Ordination Examinations

For information about the ordination examinations, go to [www.pcusa.org/exams](http://www.pcusa.org/exams)

#### The Five Examinations

Bible Content may be taken by inquirers or candidates as early as their first year of seminary, and without approval from CPM. The other four exams, Open Book Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity, may be taken by inquirers or candidates after completing two years of theological education, and only with the approval of CPM (G-14.0431).

#### Exemptions

- (1) If you have a documented disability which affects your test-taking ability, the presbytery may authorize alternative means to test you. In this case, the CPM and your church will share any costs with you.
- (2) If you fail at least twice to pass one or more exams, the presbytery (with 3/4 of the members present approving) may authorize an alternate means of examination (G-14.0472). The Presbytery of the James requires that you take the same exam as other students, but you will be given one week to complete it. The written exam will be graded by a committee of presbytery members chosen by the CPM. You will be required also to take an oral examination administered by this committee.

Complete the following requirements for academic work and supervised service to the church:

- You must graduate from a regionally accredited college or university, and your grades must be satisfactory (G-14.0450b).
- You must graduate from a theological school acceptable to the presbytery and your grades must be satisfactory (G-14.0450c).
- You must pass courses in "Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts" (G-14.0450c).
- You must complete two internships, one usually in a parish and the other usually CPE (assuming the CPE is, as customarily, hospital-based). See **Internships** to the right.

Prepare your "Personal Identification Form" (PIF).

- You can fill out the document now, but you will not be able to circulate it until CPM certifies ready for examination for ordination pending a call.

### 5. Application for the Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry

To be completed (or nearly completed) before applying for readiness to be examined for ordination:

- no earlier than the final year of theological education (G-14.0450)
- an annual consultation no older than 12 months;
- two internships that the CPM has approved;
- course of study at a theological institution approved by the CPM demonstrating competency in Greek and Hebrew language as well as exegesis using those languages, or submit a plan for completing the required courses (G-14.0450c);
- satisfactory grades in all 5 ordination exams (G-14.0450d).

**Note:** (If you have still to complete any of these requirements, you may still apply for readiness; if CPM certifies you ready at that point, it will certify you ready pending completion of what remains to be done. You will not be permitted to circulate your PIF until you have completed all the requirements.

Deliver the following documents to the presbytery office, or else make sure that they are already there (see **Deadline for Documents** on page 2 of this Guide):

- Form 6, page 32 -- fill out the top half.
- undergraduate transcript -- the presbytery office should already have this in hand; make sure that it does.
- Your most recent seminary transcript (see **Grades Must Be Satisfactory**, on page 7 of this Guide).
- All field education evaluations.
- A completed "Personal Information Form" (PIF)
- The papers for all ordination exams that you have taken, whether you passed them or not.
- a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it is addressed, and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose.
- A statement of faith (about one page in length) expressing theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church. Appropriate topics include (but are not limited to) God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, human nature and sin, grace, sacraments, church, Scripture, and the mission of the church.

#### **Grades Must be Satisfactory**

See G-14.0450b, c. Less than average academic performance at either college or seminary will be subject to special scrutiny by CPM.

#### **Internships**

CPM wants your practical experience of ministry to be varied. Your parish internship should be in a church that is different in character from your home church. CPM may require additional field education work outside of what the student has done under the supervision of the theological institution. Modifications in an inquirer or candidate's field education program may be required by CPM, as necessary for the most complete preparation of the person for ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Students considering not taking CPE ought to consult with their CPM liaison in advance.

#### **PIF (Personal Information Form)**

The Personal Information Form is the "resume" or "curriculum vitae" for people seeking a call to ordained ministry in the PC(USA). To create your PIF, go to [www.pcusa.org/clc/pif.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/clc/pif.htm)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Contact the presbytery office to make sure that you are on the agenda for the CPM meeting, and to learn when you will be interviewed.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ You meet CPM. CPM will conduct a final assessment of your readiness to begin ministry (G-14.0450). See **The Readiness Interview** to the right.
  - If CPM decides to certify you ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call, then CPM Moderator signs Form 6, page 32, bottom (unless some requirements still remain to be completed)
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Even after you have been certified ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call, you still must have an annual consultation with your CPM liaison at the appropriate time of the year.

**The Readiness Interview**

"This consultation shall focus on the outcomes of inquiry and candidacy" (G-14.0350). The scope of this interview includes the outcome of both the inquiry phase (Are you called to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament?) and the candidacy phase (Are you prepared to begin the ministry of Word and Sacrament)?

Guide to the Ordination Process for CPM staff:

1. FIRST CONTACT: Make sure CPM Moderator has the information about the new contact and the church as soon as possible, so that a session orientation can be arranged as soon as possible
2. INQUIRY APPLICATION: Check references.
- 3.