

You have graduated from seminary with a Master of Divinity degree and remained an inquirer or candidate. It may be because you have entered the preparation for ministry process late. Or you have not finished the internship or Clinical Pastoral Education required by your presbytery. Or you have not passed all of the ordination examinations. Maybe you have been certified ready to seek a call but have not found one.

You are not alone. Here is a reality checklist for you and your Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM):

Individual reality

As long as you are under care of the presbytery, stay in touch with your CPM and keep them informed of the progress you have made since your last annual consultation.

You could cultivate your gifts by serving in a variety of ways in this in-between time. Offer your services to your presbytery's Committee on Ministry for pulpit supply assignments. Volunteer at your local church, serving on a committee, as an elder or deacon if elected, or as a Sunday school teacher.

Broaden your horizons. Prayerfully consider that God may be calling you to be a Commissioned Lay Pastor, or a director of youth ministry or older adult ministry at this time.

If the concern is ordination exams, stay in touch with your CPM and ask for their help in preparing for the next exam. If necessary, ask your CPM to consider an alternative means for you to demonstrate competence in the exam area.

Seeking one's first call is a significant endeavor. If a year has passed and you have not been extended a call, have someone you trust read your Personal Information Form (PIF) and let you know whether it presents you and your gifts accurately. Discuss with family and trusted friends and colleagues your search experience, making sure that your expectations are realistic.

CPM reality

When those under your care have graduated from seminary but have not finished the requirements of the preparation for ministry process, CPM has to stay in touch with them through annual

CPM reality cont...

consultation and other informal contacts to give encouragement and guidance. Since they no longer live on campus, make sure you have their updated addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Help provide opportunities for supply preaching, teaching, and other ministry activities if possible.

If the concern is ordination exam, what are the issues? Is it time to consider an alternative means for the candidates to demonstrate their competence in a particular area?

If the candidates have been certified ready to seek a call but have not been called for over a year, help them by discussing their expectations, reading critically their PIFs, and strengthening their interviewing skills.

Above all, remember to pray for those under your care.



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Consider . . .

The Reality of Life After Seminary

*Consider your own call, sisters and brothers.
(1 Corinthians 1:26)*