

PRESBYTERY OF SAN FRANCISCO
CPM - Sub- Group Interview Guidelines

As amended and approved by Presbytery on May 8, 2007

Introduction

The Task Force has outlined the three stages of the CPM process for those seeking ordination to the Minister of Word and Sacrament. This policy paper follows the current CPM process in the detailed outline of the Final Assessment Phase.

Inquirer Phase

- Purpose: explore the call to the vocational ministry of Word and Sacrament
Committee looks at **MEW** –
(Motives “for seeking ministry,” Experience of Faith, **W**ork - forms of Christian service undertaken”)
- Enrolled by Session and CPM
- Works on Covenant/Growth Objectives drawn up by CPM
 - Discussion of ordination questions and the candidate’s understanding of them. Bring up any questions/concerns that arise from discussion. If departures are declared, same process as outlined in final assessment.
- Inquirer for at least 1 year

Candidacy Phase

- Purpose: affirm call to the vocation of ministry of Word and Sacrament.
 - few outstanding issues or yellow or red flags
 - refine and deepen sense of call
 - Discussion of ordination questions and the candidate’s understanding of them. Bring up any questions/concerns that arise from discussion. If departures are declared, same process as outlined in final assessment.
- CPM recommends the candidate to entire Presbytery
 - Candidate interviewed by the Presbytery on motivation and work experience related to their sense of call
 - Presbytery votes to enroll the student as a candidate
- Works on Covenant/Growth Objectives drawn up by CPM
- Candidate for at least 1 year

Final Assessment Phase

- Ready in All Respects
- Completed all requirements
- Ready to receive and act on a call
- Trials of Ordination ensue **AFTER** receiving a call

FINAL ASSESSMENT – Interview Guidelines

The Final Assessment is typically at the close of the second year of being under care with the CPM. The CPM, the candidate and the candidate's care church have all been in communication with one another over the past two years. A relationship has been formed and this final phase usually culminates in affirmation of call by all three parties.

- 5 Preliminary review by the liaison of the candidate's status and progress
- 5 Introductions around the table; brief review and description of the meeting schedule
- 5 Opens with prayer
- 30 **Sermon** - introduction, presentation, questions and discussion
- 15 **Statement of Faith (SOF)** - The discussion will address individually the major topics, including God, humanity, sin, the Church and the sacraments, the mission and the ministry of the Church, and eschatology; and any departure from reformed faith noted by sub-group for discussion and discernment.

The candidate will be expected to demonstrate a Reformed understanding in relating these areas to Scripture and the Book of Confessions.

- 5 Review and discussion of the goals from the previous Growth Objectives

Covenant - 5 Areas

- Education for Ministry
 - Spiritual Development
 - Interpersonal Relationships
 - Personal Growth
 - Professional Development
- 20 Discussion of the ordination questions, the candidates' understanding of them, and readiness to answer them affirmatively. This discussion will include questions about G-6.0106b. CPM is reminded of Book of Order G-6.0108 as we look at each ordinand under care. As questions are asked an ordinand might declare a departure from the standards. It is up to the committee to decide if this is a serious departure from the "essentials of the Reformed faith and polity." Any departures declared by the candidate shall be reported in the motion to the Presbytery if the motion is to approve the candidate.

G-6.0108 Freedom of Conscience--Individual and Corporate

a. It is necessary to the integrity and health of the church that the persons who serve in it as officers shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in The Book of Confessions and the Form of Government. So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained.

Within Certain Bounds

b. It is to be recognized, however, that in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold office in that body. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves. (G-1.0301; G-1.0302)

Ordination Questions (Book of Order G-14.0405b)

1. Do you trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the church universal, and God's Word to you?
3. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
4. Will you be a minister of the Word and Sacrament in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and continually guided by our confessions?
5. Will be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with the, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
6. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
7. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
8. Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence imagination, and love?
9. Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith, and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Discussion of the candidate's readiness to commit to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament within the discipline of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

5 Questions from the candidate

Concerns other matters (including financial and status of any pending call)

Candidate is excused

5 Elder, pastor and any other advocates report then are excused

15 Sub-group deliberation; vote on one of the following motions:

- 1) "Move that (name of candidate) be found certified ready for examination effective today."
- 2) "Move that (name of candidate) be found certified ready for examination effective today (with departure listed in motion for discussion on Presbytery floor)."
- 3) "Move that (name of candidate) continue under care while all parties continue discernment of call."
- 4) "Move that (name of candidate) is removed from the process."

Note: Candidate or CPM member may request that the full CPM review this action.

5 Develop Growth Objectives. (This vote is recorded in the CPM minutes)

5 Candidate, pastor and elder advocate are invited back in for explanation of next steps and for a closing prayer.