2026 Committee on Preparation for Ministry Policies and Procedures

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry of Holston Presbytery welcomes you to the process of ministerial preparation. What follows is some information on the general requirements for the process and the additional requirements of Holston Presbytery (which are denoted with an '*'.)

The preparation for ministry process in the PCUSA consists of two stages, Inquiry and Candidacy, each of which begins with the Session of your home church. Forms referenced for each stage of the process can be found online by following the instructions at the end of this document or they can be given to you by the CPM Chair or your liaison.

§1. Inquirer (G-2.0602, G-2.0603):
   A. To be enrolled as an inquirer, you must be a member of a congregation and must have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months. Then you may petition your Session to begin the process of preparation for ordained ministry. After completing Form 1(a-c), you will meet with the Session of your home church for endorsement of your inquiry. After being endorsed by the Session, send Forms 1(a-d) to the CPM to schedule your meeting with the CPM. Forms are due at least three weeks prior to the meeting.
   B. You must complete boundary training and provide a certificate of completion of courses approved by the presbytery.
   C. (*) Your Inquirer year is a good time to make plans to complete a unit of Supervised Ministry (minimum of 400 hours) in a PCUSA Congregational setting *or* a basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (minimum 400 hours). Both must be completed before your Final Assessment. Final reports for these must be submitted to the CPM Moderator upon completion.
   D. (*) The CPM expects that during your ministerial preparation, you will maintain regular involvement in the life of a PCUSA congregation and complete class work in the areas of Reformed Theology, Presbyterian Polity, Biblical Languages and Exegesis, and Reformed Worship and Sacraments at an institution approved by the CPM.

§ 2. Candidate (G-2.0604):
   A. After completing the Inquiry phase, you may apply to the Session of your home church to be endorsed for Candidacy. Before you can meet with the CPM, you must submit Form 5(parts a and b) to the CPM Moderator no later than three weeks prior to the meeting as well as:
      i. (*) A copy of your psychological assessment. Each candidate must schedule and complete a psychological assessment and have the report submitted to the CPM Moderator prior to the meeting. Please note that this process can often take 6-8 weeks to complete, so plan accordingly. The arrangements for this evaluation are the candidate's responsibility. You may obtain a copy of the guidelines and approved testing centers from your liaison or the CPM Moderator.
      ii. A copy of your supervised ministry evaluation from a congregational field placement or CPE evaluation.

iii. (*) A Narrative of Faith Journey, a Statement on Christian Ministry Experience, and a Statement of Faith.

B. (*) Your Candidacy year is a good time to make plans to complete a basic unit (400 hours) of Clinical Pastoral Education *or* a unit of Supervised Ministry (400 hours minimum). *Both* must be submitted to the CPM Moderator before your Final Assessment can be scheduled.

§3. Final Assessment (G-2.0607):

After at least one year as a Candidate, and not before the spring semester of your final year of Seminary, you may petition the CPM for a Final Assessment. The successful completion of your final assessment will result in your certification as ready to be examined for ordination. BEFORE you can be scheduled for a final assessment, your CPM file must be complete, including ALL the following items:

A. Successfully completed ordination exams, consisting of the following:
   a. Bible Content (ordinarily during Inquiry) and Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity (ordinarily during Candidacy).

B. A final transcript showing conferral of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

C. A final transcript from your seminary or theological institution. You may, with the approval of the CPM, apply for a final assessment in the spring semester of your final year of theological education, prior to the availability of a final transcript. It is then your responsibility to make sure that a transcript is sent immediately upon graduation. This is the only exception to the list of requirements.

D. Final Report from a unit of Supervised Ministry (400 hours) in a PCUSA congregation.

E. Final Report from a completed unit of CPE (400 hours) at an accredited facility.

§4. Annual Consultation:

A. (*) In addition to your meetings with the CPM for Inquiry, Candidacy, and a Final Assessment, every inquirer and candidate must complete an Annual Consultation for each calendar year you are under care of the committee, until such time as you are removed from the process by withdrawal, removal, or completion of the Preparation for Ministry process with a call to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Committee meeting dates are publicized at the end of the preceding calendar year, and candidates are encouraged to plan ahead to meet with the committee at one of the stated meetings.

_____ (signed)   _____(date)

By signing above, I indicate that I have received a copy of this handout. Furthermore, I understand that compliance with these requirements is my responsibility.

Instructions for accessing forms online: click on this link

https://equip.pcusa.org/course/view.php?id=524

Click on the button labeled "Proceed to course content". This will take you to a "Welcome!" page. Then click on "Preparation Process" on the left. This looks like you're starting over, but clicking on the button labeled "Proceed to course content" this time gets you to something different titled "Preparation Process". Scroll down past the video and so forth until you get to "Forms Used in the Preparation Process". From there you can download the whole folder or just parts of it.