
Conversations on Candidacy

of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

 **The Board of Pensions**
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

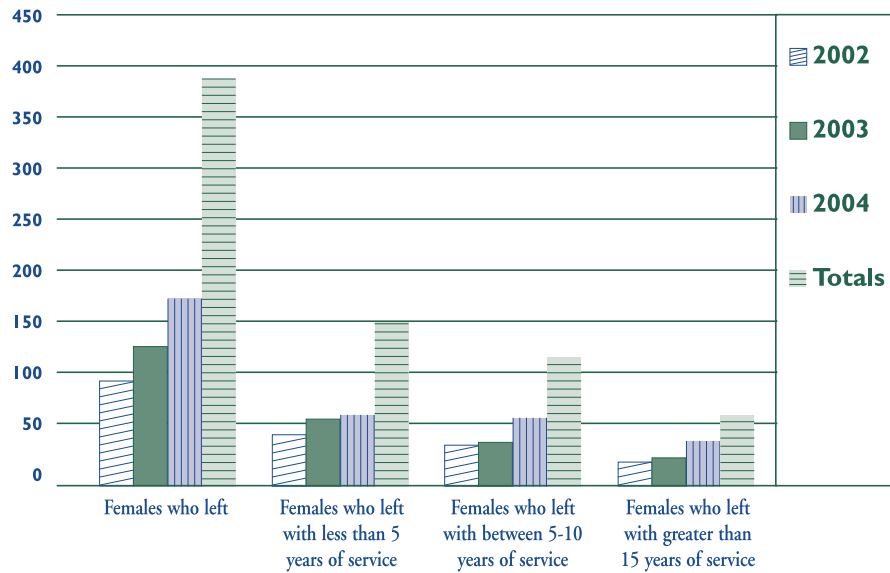
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 **The Board of Pensions**
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

**Terminated and Did Not Return to Service January 1, 2002
to December 31, 2004**



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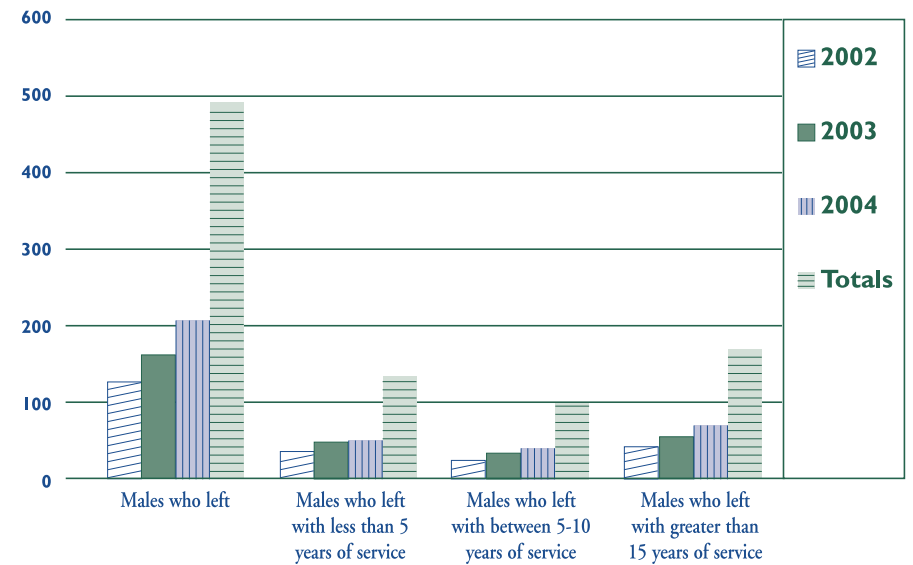
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Appendix E

Clergy Retention 2002 - 2004

Alexander McLachlan

The Board of Pensions presented a Report on Clergy Recruitment and Retention to the 216th General Assembly. In researching and gathering data for that report a disturbing picture began to emerge. This picture showed that the number of clergy leaving the Plan within seven years of ordination started to increase around the year 2000.

To discover if this was a continuing trend the number of members leaving the Plan between the years 2002-2004 was analyzed. These members did not retire, become disabled or return to service. They terminated their service to the PC (USA).

The graphs show the numbers leaving the Plan with less than five years service and between five and ten years of service increased every year. They also show that there was an exodus of both male and female clergy. Analysis of the data showed that those leaving were both first- and second-career clergy.

The graphs show that in the three year period, 283 clergy left with less and five years of service and a further 211 left between five and ten years of service. These numbers, and the fact that they are increasing annually, have to be of concern to the church. No doubt some leaving early are those who should never have been admitted into the process. The Clergy Task Force Report raised concerns about the considerations, processes and standards used in the Inquiry and Candidacy process. Concerns that many others in the church have echoed. However that alone does not explain why an increasing number men and women who have heard God's call to ministry of Word and Sacrament are leaving within a relatively short amount of time. There is no simple or obvious answer to this problem, but it is one the church must address as a priority.

Continuing the Conversation

At their 2004 fall meeting, the Chairs and Executives of the six General Assembly Agencies discussed how the respective agencies could contribute to an effort to build church leaders for the future. We heard from several people, each of whom offered valuable advice. One particular area of concern was the candidacy process. We noted that a dialogue among persons responsible for the candidacy process in middle governing bodies might yield fruitful ideas.

Since the Board of Pensions sponsors regional consultations each year, and middle governing body representatives, both lay and clergy, attend, we devoted a morning session at each consultation to presentations and small group discussions on the candidacy process.

This booklet sets forth the presentations, as well as the conversations and ideas expressed by the participants. We think it will be a useful tool to stimulate discussions on this important issue at the local level and to share the views of others.

Certainly the candidacy process is but one subject relevant to the goal of building church leadership for the future. It is, however, a critical subject.

We encourage all who read this to be creative and to contribute to this small piece with ideas of your own. You may write to us at the Board of Pensions or to Marcia Clark Myers at the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council in Louisville. We solicit church-wide discussion of this important topic.

Earldean V.S. Robbins

Earldean V.S. Robbins
Chair, Board of Directors
The Board of Pensions

Rob Maggs

Robert W. Maggs, Jr.
President and
Chief Executive
The Board of Pensions

Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry Dialogue from the 2005 Regional Benefits Consultations

In the spring of 2005, the Board of Pensions held Regional Benefits Consultations (RBCs) in Kansas City, MO; San Francisco, CA; and Philadelphia, PA. A key component of each consultation was a pre-conference breakout session reflecting on the state of candidacy related to preparation for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The special session was an outgrowth of the Report on Clergy Recruitment and Retention, in which the Task Force recommended revisiting the Inquiry and Candidacy processes and standards in an effort to gain more careful discernment of the suitability of candidates for the ministry. The report's findings had been presented to attendees at the 2004 RBCs.

Presbyteries are represented at these annual consultations by members of the committee on ministry, the committee on preparation, executive presbyters, stated clerks, and pension liaisons. The enthusiastic participation of 235 individuals in the three dialogue groups affirms a keen interest in the topic.

Presentations were delivered by Marcia Clark Myers, associate director of Leadership and Vocation on the staff of the General Assembly Council; Philip Gehman, regional representative and assistant corporate secretary on the staff of the Board of Pensions, and former dean of student life at Columbia Theological Seminary; Alexander McLachlan, special assistant to the President on the staff of the Board of Pensions; and Peter C.S. Sime, vice president, Assistance and Retirement Housing on the staff of the Board of Pensions. (The presentations of Ms. Myers, Mr. Sime and Dr. Gehman, can be found in Appendices B, C, and D. Mr. McLachlan adds to the understanding of the Board of Pensions "Report on Clergy Recruitment and Retention" in Appendix E. The report is available from the Board of Pensions at www.pensions.org or by calling the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

Following the presentations, small attendee groups formed to discuss four primary questions:

- 1) In a perfect system of candidacy, what improvements must occur?
- 2) How do you say "No" to someone who believes he or she is called to ministry when all indications suggest that this individual will not do well in the ministry?
- 3) How might the church attract the most capable and qualified individuals to careers in ministry?

- Are seminaries too quick to accept students, thinking that CPMs have separated the wheat from the chaff?
- Or is the task for discerning readiness for ministry simply left to first-call churches and presbyteries?
- Seminaries are an untapped resource of information about candidates: CPMs must take the initiative to ask for what they need. In turn, they need to send the annual consultation reports of those under their care to the seminaries.
- CPMs need to conduct annual consultations on seminary campuses whenever possible.
- Resources, time and energy spent helping new pastors get acclimated to their new role and resist the temptation to walk out the back door are resources, time and energy well spent.

The fruitful partnership between the church and its seminaries can be even better.

preachers would do and say what they are supposed to do and say, and COMs would be left with nothing to do.

Some temptations

Now, some challenges seminaries are tempted to avoid:

- Seminaries are too easily tempted to leave all of the work of discernment regarding readiness for ministry to CPMs.
- Seminaries are not always as helpful as they could be in enabling CPMs to access the information the seminaries have and can share about the inquirers and candidates.
- Seminaries have yet to figure out how to support and encourage diverse forms of congregational ministry. Take tentmaking, for instance. Seminaries do not feel that it is a winning recruitment strategy to say to prospective students, “Give up all that you have, come to seminary, and end up with a part-time call.” In a similar vein, seminaries have not figured out ways to make themselves readily available for the education and support of commissioned lay pastors and the pastoral leadership of immigrant fellowship groups.
- Seminaries have yet to figure out how to provide field education experiences with competent supervisors in settings where their graduates are likely to go.
- As a whole, seminaries do less well in the area of practical skills for ministry. A common attitude: We only have three years to teach folks how to think theologically; they have a lifetime to learn all that other practical stuff. For certain, seminarians will not pay much attention to that practical stuff if their professors have demonstrated the stuff is not important.

Some closing thoughts

- We should all be involved in real recruitment rather than self-selection. New recruitment initiatives, such as the Pastoral Leadership Search Effort and Advocates for Ministry, offer great hope for the future of church leadership.
- CPMs and seminaries need to be more discriminating. We need to ask ourselves upfront, “can I see this person one day being a pastor of my congregation?”
- Are CPMs too quick to bring people on as inquirers? Or do they accept them as candidates before they have really determined whether or not they will stand with them until they have been ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament? Are academics and ordination examinations left to play too big a role in the winnowing process?

- 4) If you had the assignment of reinventing the inquirer/candidate process, how would it look?

The following summary of the small group conversations gives an overview of the discussions. *The quotations that appear throughout the Summary came from participants in the RBCs. (The numbers are solely for ease of reference, not priority or importance.)*

The Book of Order-defined process for inquiry and candidacy was definitely affirmed. (The sections of the *Book of Order* on candidacy G-14.0300-14.0400 can be found in Appendix A.) Salient observations about the utilization of the process, the state of ministry in general, and insights/suggestions from participants include the following suggestions.

1. Seminarians need to enter the process with their CPM (Committee on Preparation on Ministry) earlier than typically takes place. Many potential candidates for ministry initiate a conversation with their CPM following their acceptance into an M.Div. program. Surprisingly, some candidates do not begin the process until seminary graduation.
2. Communication between CPMs and seminaries needs to improve. Visits by CPMs on seminary campuses to meet with candidates enriches the candidacy experience and demonstrates a partnership and connection between academic preparation and the process of ordination initiated at the presbytery level.
3. Communication between CPMs and COMs (Committee on Ministry) needs to improve within many presbyteries. Regular meetings to discuss issues related to a particular presbytery’s candidates could raise the level of awareness about a presbytery’s responsibilities to its candidates and its role as a guide and mentor to them.
4. CPMs should enhance the preparation of candidates for the reality of what to expect in parish ministry including a variety of settings, i.e. many candidates come from large congregations and yet most wind up in smaller church settings. Ministry in smaller churches presents different challenges from serving congregations with multiple staffs.
5. Mentoring is very important; the most capable clergy in the presbytery should be utilized as mentors for inquirers and candidates. Similar to the professional training in both law and medicine, internships and experiences that involve mentoring and apprenticeship-like relationships with a master practitioner will serve to encourage, support, and indeed, teach novice pastors.

“CPMs are shepherds and gatekeepers.”

“A good mentor can be the difference between failure and success in ministry.”

6. The establishment of a year-long, required internship, grounded in the reality of the local church, should be considered as a prerequisite for ordination. An internship would provide the nurture, support, and evaluation structure that the current system lacks.
7. Sessions need to take a more serious role in the discernment process along with CPMs. Far too often, sessions merely affirm that the potential inquirer is a “nice” person who would like to go to seminary to become a minister. Their role should include a more proactive demeanor that actually observes and assesses the readiness of an individual candidate. The local congregation and session are crucial in the process of the preparation of ministers.
8. We must raise the bar for becoming a candidate for ministry. Inquirers should be required to follow through on career and psychological counseling before moving to the candidacy stage of the process of coming under care.
9. Everyone who believes that he or she is called to ministry may not be truly called to ministry. By affirming and expanding the role of the session, the CPM, and the presbytery in the discernment process, the church can more effectively support and identify committed as well as qualified individuals. The process should affirm that service to the church in the role of elder or deacon may also be an option for ministry. Indeed, all believers are called to myriad ministries; yet, it is imperative to better understand and communicate the Reformed view of vocation in the whole process.
10. Using a retreat setting for the annual consultation for inquirers and candidates is an important consideration. In such a setting, in depth assessment is more likely to occur.
11. Practical skills for ministry should be taught more intentionally in seminaries and passed on in the inquirer/candidacy process, that is conflict management, funds development, organizational development, staff management, etc. These necessary and useful skills are imperative for success in ministry.
12. All candidates should be required to participate in a Board of Pensions financial planning seminar to enter a career in ministry fully equipped to serve and to be supported by the resources of the church.

“No is ok and often more just.”

Some challenges

Now, if the seminaries are so great, why don't their graduates do better in providing the kind of pastoral leadership that the church needs today? Here are some particular challenges that our seminaries face:

- First of all, seminaries need students to continue to exist. However, they don't and can't really recruit because they lack the financial resources or the people-power to do so. The students in seminary are those whom the church has sent or who have selected themselves. Seminaries face limitations when it comes to “quality control.”
- Seminarians increasingly are seekers of spirituality and are less likely to show a passion for congregational ministry.
- Seminaries are challenged by the indebtedness of their students, the students' lack of basic biblical knowledge and the reality that many are not prepared by their previous educational experiences to fully engage in the verbal, content-oriented life of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Seminaries now spend time bringing the students up to speed; a generation ago, this time would have been spent honing the gifts and abilities that students brought with them to seminary.
- Seminaries are in an era of diminishing formal financial contributions from the church.
- There is a disconnect between where students come from, largely “successful” urban and suburban congregations, and where they go:
 - to smaller churches, or
 - if the pastor happens to be male with a spouse and 1.7 well-mannered children, he may go to a church that is larger and more complex than what he is ready for.
- Seminaries sometimes find that they are not supported when they try to be good partners and do the right thing. In my years as an Admissions Committee chair, I found that CPMs had conniptions when we turned down a person from their presbytery because that person had too much indebtedness, had limited practical experience in the church, or lacked gifts for ministry. As a CPM chair once said to me after we turned down an inquirer from her presbytery, “You're obligated to accept our people.”
- A final challenge facing seminaries is the bromide abroad in the church: If only seminaries would teach the right courses, the Kingdom of God would come in,

Appendix D

Some Reflections on the Preparation for Ministry: Seminary Partnership

Philip Gebman

While the church and its seminaries have a fruitful partnership, it could be even better. If all involved agreed to clear, realistic expectations and communicated them to each other, the partnership would be even stronger.

Before I begin, I offer as a disclaimer my lack of contemporaneous knowledge about the seminary scene today. Even without the most up-to-date knowledge, I offer a few reflections on the kind of partner seminaries are and can be in the recruiting and preparation of future church leadership. I offer some affirmations, note some challenges seminaries face, and suggest some challenges they should not avoid.

Some affirmations

- Our seminaries are worthy partners in the effort to provide effective pastoral leadership for the church.
- They are strongly committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the ministries of the church; contrary to the conventional wisdom, they do not seek to be or take pride in being ivory towers cut off from the grassroots ministries of the church.
- Our seminaries are blessed with capable and committed faculty members, administrators and staff who were nurtured in local congregations just like we were and who care deeply about the life of the church. I was blessed to be among their number.
- Our seminaries increasingly realize that a M.Div. degree by itself does not prepare a graduate for a lifetime of ministry. Ministers cannot draw living water only from that same three-year M.Div. well and remain effective.
- Most seminaries are working harder at their continuing education, advanced degree and lifelong learning offerings and are making their faculty members increasingly accessible to pastors throughout their ministries.
- Seminaries also exhibit an increasing interest and involvement in lay education.

13. Candidates with little or no church experience probably need additional requirements to learn the culture of the church. The experience of an internship or post-graduate structured experience could meet this need.
14. Spiritual formation does not seem to be consistently addressed by seminaries within the inquirer/candidacy process.
15. The cultural context for life within the church is rapidly developing.

“Do we ask for their vision of ministry? There needs to be a clarification of reality in parish ministry. Their view is often idealistic.”

“Open up the honest conversations that cut through the expectations and glamour. These conversations can be best had with time, spiritual grounding, in a climate of honesty and care.”

Expectations for pastors have changed dramatically over the past 20 years. The church is struggling to understand these changes. How do CPMs better equip inquirers/candidates for this evolving understanding of what it means to be a pastor and what it means to be in the Presbyterian Church in the 21st century?

16. There are wide differences across the denomination regarding the breadth and depth of the inquirer/candidate process and how it is applied.
17. Pastors in first calls need strong support from the COM to increase the probability of a positive and productive experience for the new pastor and the congregation served.
18. In most cases, compensation for pastors is too low and has not kept up with other service-oriented professions; such as teaching, counseling, social work, etc.
19. In the strictest sense, the inquiry phase of the process is sometimes not completely a time of inquiry. If inquiry is really a time of discernment, then a number of inquirers would logically decide that they are not called to the vocation of ministry. If an individual is advised by the CPM that perhaps he or she might consider not becoming a candidate for ministry, it is often viewed as rejection or failure.

“Higher salaries are needed for pastors.”

“We need more structured opportunities to discuss various models for ministry with inquirers/candidates. Disabuse the notion that you need to be ordained to do real ministry.”

20. Consider the Episcopal or Methodist model of becoming ordained as a deacon prior to becoming ordained as a minister. This could mean creating an ordained office one step short of ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament.
21. The training of both CPMs and COMs should be more available and accessible to attend to the full gravity of the ordination process.
22. Opportunities for extensive parish field education experiences in congregations need to be bolstered to support offerings in some seminary settings where such situations are limited.
23. CPMs should have the most capable, gifted, and experienced pastors and elders serving on the committee.
24. Consider adding a year to the candidacy process for those who enroll as candidates after completing a year of seminary. This would encourage earlier entry into the candidacy process.
25. Should the process differ for those who come to consider ministry as a vocation as a second career?

Program observations

We have learned

- Pastors greatly appreciate this program not only for the financial assistance, but also because it shows that the denomination is concerned for pastors as they begin their ministry.
- Applications for the program have been fewer than expected; this may be attributed to several factors, certainly among them is the inability of small congregations to pay salaries that will meet the living expenses of full-time pastors and the isolation of some calls.
- The amount of educational debt is increasing each year. In the initial year of the program, the average debt was about \$20,000. Last year, it was more than \$25,000.
- Our Presbyterian seminaries are concerned about the issue and several are trying to address it. Seminaries cannot prevent anyone from borrowing; they can only encourage individuals not to overextend themselves financially.
- Some Committees on Preparation for Ministry have personal and candid conversations with candidates for ministry about their financial situations, their debt and their expectations for future salaries, but in many presbyteries these conversations are limited or nonexistent.
- For about one quarter of our recipients, the Seminary Debt Assistance Program provides a substantial financial benefit and allows them to begin their ministry in a better financial position.
- However, for a sizable percentage of pastors, the issue is not simply educational but consumer debt. Particularly disturbing is the level of credit card debt some pastors are carrying. Some pastors are carrying a level beyond any reasonable amount that a financial advisor would find acceptable. For the pastors who have excessive amounts of debt, this debt may have serious negative impact on their finances. If debt continues to be a problem, it may not only affect the well-being of the pastor (and his/her family), but also the congregation.

The issue of debt needs to be addressed early in the inquirer/candidate process. While this may not be an issue we feel comfortable discussing, Committees on Preparation for Ministry are in the best position to have these discussions with inquirer/candidates about the financial realities of the church they may serve.

Appendix C

Some Reflections on the Preparation for Ministry: Seminary Debt Assistance Program

Peter C.S. Sime

We have learned that the individuals involved the Seminary Debt Assistance Program since 2001 are dedicated individuals committed to faithfully serving the church. But for some, their educational and consumer debt may adversely affect their ability to serve. Certainly this issue is a two-sided coin: on one side are the low salaries paid to many of these pastors, on the other is the personal financial stewardship of our pastors.

Program history

When the program began in 2001, we were focused on two primary issues: the amount of educational debt held by new pastors entering the ministry and the difficulty small congregations had attracting pastoral leadership - especially small congregations that had the potential for growth.

From our research, we determined that about one half of the pastors who attended seminary had borrowed to finance their education. For those who borrowed, we estimated that the average educational debt (including undergraduate debt) was about \$20,000 at graduation.

The current guidelines are:

- An eligible minister must be in his or her first seven years of ministry, serving in a full-time, installed position with a congregation.
- The congregation must have fewer than 150 members and a budget of less than \$250,000.
- The pastor must attend a financial planning seminar sponsored by the Board of Pensions and the presbytery is requested to have a policy on student/clergy indebtedness.

This pilot program is currently approved and funded through 2007.

An eligible pastor may receive \$2,500 a year for up to four years or a total of \$10,000. (For this program, we consider undergraduate and graduate educational debt as eligible.)

We have assisted about 100 pastors over the four years of the program or 25 new applicants each year.

Conclusion

The candidacy process outlined in the *Book of Order* is an excellent one that has been refined and developed over the course of many years. The *Book of Order* describes a route that the church expects to be normative. However, practice suggests that this expectation is not always the case. In the past, the candidacy process often began in the last year or two of undergraduate studies and before entering seminary. An increasing trend today is not to begin candidacy until well into the seminary experience. As this practice has become typical for candidates, the supervisory, mentoring relationships that are expected throughout candidacy simply cannot take place. Additionally, the current tendency to begin the candidacy process in midlife is no substitute for the guidance that is afforded all candidates by CPM and the presbytery as prescribed in the *Book of Order*. Regardless of earlier careers, candidates should have the full support and guidance of their predecessors in ministry.

The mentoring/guiding process begins with the session. The individual candidate's session contacts the committee on preparation so that an orientation can be scheduled to benefit the inquirer and the session. Presbytery immediately becomes involved in the discernment process for the inquirer. If this step does not take place until an individual has already completed a semester or more of seminary, how can the presbytery and the larger church properly assist in the discernment process?

The *Book of Order* states, "The phase of inquiry shall be of sufficient length for the inquirer, the session, and the committee on preparation for ministry to decide whether the inquirer should apply to become a candidate."¹ Experience suggests that this part of the process easily becomes an afterthought for both congregation and inquirer. The feeling that God has called a particular individual to the ministry becomes in the moment, not in the process that follows the initial sense of call.

The process described in the *Book of Order* clearly and very specifically describes a nurturing, guiding, and demanding relationship between the inquirer and the CPM that will produce a well-prepared and adequately equipped individual to enter the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. The process is rigorous, as it must be, for ministry is a high calling. Individuals who go through the *Book of Order* progression as it was originally intended are more likely to enjoy success in ministry than those who shortcut the process after enrolling in seminary and completing several semesters of coursework.

1. *Book of Order*, G-14.0303f, Appendix A, page 11.

During the inquirer stage of the candidacy process, individuals have the time to reflect on their sense of call and this shapes their understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed theological tradition. This protracted process enables individuals to develop their statement of personal faith grounded in the Reformed theological tradition. Presbyterian polity and history are explored and embraced by those seeking to discern God's call in their lives. For many, the connectional/relational nature of the Presbyterian Church can be more fully experienced and understood as the relationships among their own congregation, presbytery, and the entire denomination becomes a new and powerful understanding in the inquirer phase of preparation. In developing relationships with members of the committee on preparation, an individual begins to perceive how ministers of the Word and Sacrament live out their own vocation. The notion of an "apprenticeship" models the element of the preparation process for pastors that has been an integral and critical element of our vocational tradition.

As trust develops between an inquirer and the committee, the potential for nurture and guidance can only increase. The relationship between the CPM and candidate can easily become adversarial if it is not based upon mutual trust, mutual faith, and an understanding of the role of the committee and the presbytery in the candidacy process. The Reformed theological tradition affirms that the Holy Spirit typically speaks through committees in discerning God's will for individuals and communities of faith.

Excellent communication among all concerned parties provides a crucial link in the candidacy process. Additionally, evidence suggests that committees on preparation who visit inquirers and candidates on seminary campuses during the seminary experience enhance that communication.

Some traditions require a year-long intern experience prior to ordination. Other traditions call for an intermediate stage prior to ordination to full ministry status, that is becoming a deacon before becoming a pastor. Adding such a step to the Presbyterian ordination process could increase the probability of success in ministry for those newly ordained. Clearly, the Presbyterian system offers a substantial and proven path for ordination. However, it may be critical to make some modest modifications in the process to continue, increase, and underpin the relationships among candidates, the sessions, presbyteries, and future congregations to insure that ministers find themselves more connected, more prepared, and more equipped as ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

A large number of persons enter seminary without consulting with their presbytery or even a PC(USA) "home church" session. They do not enter the "Inquiry Phase" - designed to be a time of guided discernment about vocation - until they are well into seminary preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament (more appropriate for the "Candidacy Phase"). Some have little PC(USA) pew experience before seminary, so know little about congregational life.

Last year, we ordained 346 persons to ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Others remain "under care" for years because they

- are still exploring their sense of call so are not sure about ministry;
- have not completed all the requirements for ordination;
- are not able or willing to serve the types of churches or in the places where we need pastors; or
- cannot move to serve in another area because of spouse and family.

Appendix B

Some Reflections on the Preparation for Ministry: Issues 2005

Marcia Clark Myers

We have no quick solution to the systemic problem we face together. Circumstances have combined so that

- many CPMs are overworked;
- many candidates are not getting the careful assessment, nurture, and formative experiences they need to adequately prepare for ministry;
- the supply of candidates is not matching up with the demand for pastors;
- candidates' expectations of ministry do not match up with reality.

The churchwide collaborative process already underway includes seminaries, CPMs, COMs, and young adult ministries. The aim of the process is to strengthen the discernment process, help candidates form realistic expectations, and provide the guidance to enable Presbyterians to use their gifts well in ordained ministry or other forms of service. Pastors, sessions, and campus ministries are critical to the vocational formation of our future leaders.

Of our 11,031 congregations, 4,012 are “without pastors” and of these, 3,218 have 100 members or less. Many are regularly served in some way, but cannot afford to pay a full-time pastor.

We have many ministry recruitment efforts underway such as efforts by our seminaries, the Pastoral Leadership Search Effort (PLSE), Advocates for Ministry, Burning Bush, the Racial Ethnic Recruitment Task Force and others.

The number of inquirers or candidates, now 2,809 persons, has been growing monthly.

Fifteen presbyteries have 40 candidates or more. Some have more than 100 persons to guide and assess. The *Book of Order* preparation process assumes a long, close relationship between a presbytery CPM (Committee on Preparation for Ministry) and an inquirer or candidate.

Next Steps

The whole process of inquirer to candidate to ordination is a dynamic one. The Presbyterian Church has a long history of engaging in dialogue about issues of vital importance to the church. Hopefully, this small booklet will promote a continuing conversation about the process of preparation for ministry. The following suggestions are offered as possible strategies for advancing this important conversation.

At the presbytery level

- Share this report with the CPM.

Questions for consideration and discussion

- What part of the inquirer/candidate process do we do well?
- What part of the process needs improvement in this presbytery?
- What changes might we consider?

Invite a nearby presbytery CPM for a shared meeting where this report might be studied.

Make certain that your committee is represented at the next Regional Benefits Consultation sponsored by the Board of Pensions

- The RBCs take place every spring. Visit www.pensions.org for more information.

For ministers of the Word and Sacrament

- Are there some individuals within the community of faith that I serve that should be encouraged to consider a vocation of ministry?
- At the next meeting of the session, highlight some of the insights from this study and use it as a “teaching moment” during the meeting.
- Get a list of the candidates in your presbytery and send them a note of encouragement in their preparation for ministry.
- If there is an inquirer or candidate from your congregation, contact that person and see if you can get together for lunch and a conversation when he or she returns from seminary for a visit.

For elders in the Presbyterian Church

- Who do I know that I might encourage to consider ministry as a vocation?
- Have a conversation with several pastors and ask them to tell you the story of how they were lead to consider ministry as a calling.
- Get a list of the candidates in your presbytery and send each one a note of encouragement in preparation for ministry.
- If there is an inquirer or candidate from your congregation, contact that person and see if you can get together for lunch and a conversation when he or she returns from seminary for a visit.

Appendix A

Book of Order

G-14.0300 3. Preparation for the Office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

G-14.0301 It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the committee on preparation for ministry. (G-9.0902) For this purpose, presbyteries shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.

G-14.0302 The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and for those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together in such a way that a decision regarding the inquirer's suitability for ministry of the Word and Sacrament will be based on knowledge and experience of one another.

G-14.0303 The process and requirements for the inquiry phase shall be as follows:

a. A person desiring to become an inquirer shall indicate to the session of the particular church a desire to explore the personal implications of becoming a minister of the Word and Sacrament.

b. The person shall have been an active member of that particular church for at least six months.

c. The session shall contact the committee on preparation for ministry for orientation to the process used in that presbytery.

(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?

Installation c. [This section was stricken by action of the 206th General Assembly (1994).]

Prayer and Laying on of Hands d. The candidate, having answered the questions in the affirmative, shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. The member presiding shall then say:

(Name)_____, you are now ordained a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

Welcome e. Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the new minister into the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. At the conclusion of the ordination service, the new minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

G-14.0406 The presbytery shall record the ordination as a part of its Ordination Recorded official records along with the acceptance and subscription of the new minister to the obligations undertaken in the ordination vows. It shall also be the duty of the stated clerk of the presbytery to enroll the newly ordained minister as a member of the presbytery and to notify the session of the particular church of which the candidate has been a member, so that the session may record the fact that the candidate is now ordained and has been transferred to the roll of the presbytery.

Constitutional
Questions

b. The member presiding shall then ask the candidate to answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you trust in Jesus Christ 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 you 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 them, 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?

d. The session shall consult with the person and, if the individual requests to be enrolled as an inquirer, shall make a recommendation to presbytery through the stated clerk with respect to the request.

e. Upon receipt of the recommendation of the session, the committee on preparation for ministry shall recommend to the presbytery whether to enroll the person as an inquirer. The committee on preparation for ministry shall interview the person before making its recommendation. The date of the presbytery's action to enroll shall be the beginning of the covenant relationship. This period shall be at least two years, at least one year of which shall be as a candidate, required in G-14.0401. (See G-14.0313c for exception.) A presbytery may assign to its committee on preparation for ministry the power to enroll inquirers, with the provision that the action be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery. (G-9.0403)

f. The phase of inquiry shall be of sufficient length for the inquirer, the session, and the committee on preparation for ministry to decide whether the inquirer should apply to become a candidate. During this time, the committee on preparation for ministry shall make use of resources such as information provided by the inquirer, personal references, and reports from counseling services, the session, and the inquirer's institution of learning, if the inquirer is a student.

g. By the end of the inquiry phase, each inquirer shall demonstrate adequate promise for ministry by presenting

- (1) a statement of his or her understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to his or her sense of call;
- (2) a statement of personal faith which incorporates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;

(3) an analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships;

(4) a statement of what it means to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church;

(5) a statement of self-understanding which reflects the inquirer's personal and cultural background and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical, and mental health;

(6) a statement of his or her understanding of the task ministers of the Word and Sacrament perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for ministry of the Word and Sacrament and of areas in which growth is needed.

G-14.0304
Candidacy Defined

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-14.0305
Candidacy Process

The process of the candidacy phase is as follows:

a. An inquirer shall apply to the presbytery through the stated clerk to become a candidate for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament through the session of his or her church.

b. The session shall confer with the inquirer, review the evidence of the inquiry phase, and make recommendations to the presbytery through the stated clerk with respect to the application.

c. The committee on preparation for ministry shall confer with the inquirer and review the evidence which indicates whether the inquirer is ready to proceed to candidacy.

received certification of a diploma from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and acceptable to the presbytery, having heard the candidate and his or her sermon preached before the presbytery or a committee thereof (G-14.0305j(6)), and having received the recommendation of its responsible committee (G-11.0402), shall conduct any further examination of his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Bible, the Sacraments, and the government of the church as it deems necessary.

Vote to Proceed

b. If the presbytery is fully satisfied of the candidate's qualifications, it shall vote to proceed to his or her ordination, appointing a time and place for the service of ordination.

G-14.0403
Extraordinary
Circumstances

The presbytery shall not omit any of the requirements for ordination except in the case of extraordinary circumstances as provided in G-14.0313.

G-14.0404
Place of Ordination

a. The ordination of candidates to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily take place in the presence of the congregation in which the candidate is a member, and in the place for the regular worship of that congregation.

Place of Installation

b. A service of installation (G-14.0510) shall be held by the presbytery within whose bounds the candidate has been called to minister.

G-14.0405
Ordination Service

a. The presbytery or commission appointed for this purpose shall convene and shall call the congregation to worship. The service shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The member named to preside shall state briefly the proceedings of the presbytery preparatory to the ordination and shall point out its nature and importance.

Confirmation of Action	d. The foregoing exceptions shall hold if the presbytery has received the inquirer or candidate from another presbytery that approved the exemption of any of these requirements, the reception of the candidate having confirmed the action of the dismissing presbytery.
G-14.0314 Location of Ordination	a. The presbytery placing the call to a candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine and, contingent upon the candidate's successful completion of that examination and all requirements in G-14.0402, the presbytery responsible for the candidate's preparation for ministry shall ordinarily ordain the candidate.
Other Reformed Bodies	b. When a candidate is called to work under the jurisdiction of some other Reformed body, he or she may be dismissed as a candidate by certification. Likewise, candidates may be received for this purpose from other Reformed bodies by transfer of certificate.
G-14.0400	4. Ordination for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament
G-14.0401 Ordination of Candidates	Ordination for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Such a person shall have been in covenant relationship with a presbytery or presbyteries for a period of at least two years including at least one year as a candidate (see G-14.0313c for exception), met the requirements of G-14.0310 together with the completion of the theological degree, and received a call for service to a church or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and the presbytery.
G-14.0402 Examination for Ordination	a. The candidate shall appear before the presbytery in which he or she shall make a brief statement of personal faith and of commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament except as provided in G-14.0314. The presbytery, having

d. The committee on preparation for ministry shall make a definite recommendation to the presbytery with respect to whether the inquirer should be received as a candidate. Presbytery shall act on every committee recommendation regarding application for candidacy.
e. The presbytery shall receive the report and recommendation of its committee and shall examine the inquirer in person with respect to his or her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry.
f. If the examination is approved, the presbytery shall receive the inquirer as a candidate after the following manner. The moderator shall propose the following questions to the inquirer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (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 (U.S.A.)?
g. If these questions are answered in the affirmative, a brief charge shall be given, the candidate's name shall be recorded on the presbytery's roll of candidates, and the proceedings shall close with prayer.
h. A presbytery may provide, at the request of the candidate and his or her session, for the service of reception to be conducted by a commission of presbytery in the presence of the candidate's congregation.

i. The phase of candidacy lasts until the candidate receives an approved call and is examined and ordained, or until the candidate's name is removed from the roll of candidates in accord with G-14.0312.

j. By the end of the candidacy phase, each candidate to be ordained shall demonstrate readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament by

(1) presenting evidence of competence in the fields of theology, Bible, polity, and worship and Sacraments, ordinarily attested by completion of the requirements of G-14.0310; and evidence of ministerial skill attested in the supervised practice of ministry;

(2) presenting evidence of readiness to participate in a calling presbytery's plan for transition and of plans for continuing study and growth (G-11.0103n and G-14.0506, last sentence);

(3) expressing theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church;

(4) expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination (G-14.0405) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings;

(5) revealing commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament within the discipline of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry;

(6) presenting a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose. This sermon shall be preached before the calling presbytery or a committee thereof as a part of the appearance of the candidate as set forth in G-14.0402.

in such an exception shall fulfill the requirements of G-14.0310b(2) or b(3).

Examination Requirements

b. The examination requirements of G-14.0310b(4) shall not be waived until an inquirer or candidate has failed on two attempts to receive a satisfactory grade, unless the inquirer or candidate has a disability, documented by a person or persons of the presbytery's choice, which disability affects the individual's test-taking ability. If the presbytery believes that the person should be certified as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call, it shall authorize an exception only by a three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present, and must determine an alternate means whereby it will satisfy itself of competence in the area(s) of difficulty. When the individual successfully completes the alternate pattern, the presbytery may certify readiness in the usual manner. The minutes of the presbytery shall contain a full record of the reasons for the exception and the alternate pattern for determining competence. Presbyteries shall submit to the synod the process by which a candidate, who has failed one or more ordination exams twice, or who has such a documented disability, would be examined. Once that process has been approved, presbyteries may proceed with particular candidates, and note such exemptions in their minutes each occasion. Such processes will be reviewed every three years.

Time Requirements

c. The time requirements of G-14.0303 shall not be waived unless the presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why the time requirement should not be met by an inquirer or candidate. It shall make an exception only by three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present. A full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of presbytery and shall be communicated to the presbytery to which the inquirer or candidate may be transferred. (G-14.0311) Under no circumstances shall the time requirement be less than one year. (See G-14.0303e)

forfeiture of standing as an inquirer or candidate. No presbytery may restore the person's status except by beginning again under the provisions of G-14.0303.

G-14.0312
Removal from
Covenant
Relationship

An inquirer or candidate may, after consultation with the session and the committee on preparation for ministry, withdraw from covenant relationship. Upon receiving such a request transmitted through the committee on preparation for ministry, the stated clerk shall remove the individual's name from the roll of inquirers or candidates and report the removal to presbytery. A presbytery may also, for sufficient reasons, remove an individual's name from the roll of inquirers or candidates, reporting this action and the reasons to the session, to the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled. In both instances, prior to final action, the committee on preparation for ministry shall make a reasonable attempt to give the inquirer or candidate and other parties of interest an opportunity to be heard by that committee. The presbytery may arrange for the continued guidance and support of those who withdraw or are removed from the roll of inquirers or candidates.

G-14.0313
Extraordinary
Circumstances

All of the requirements of G-14.0310 shall be met except in the following extraordinary circumstances:

Educational
Requirements

a. If the inquirer's or candidate's presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why certain of the educational requirements of G-14.0310b(2) or b(3) should not be met by an inquirer or candidate, it shall make an exception only by three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present. A full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of presbytery and shall be communicated to the presbytery to which the inquirer or candidate may be transferred. (G-14.0311 and G-14.0314)
The successful completion of the course of study specified

G-14.0306
Duties of Presbytery
and Session

The duties of the presbytery and of the session shall be as follows:

a. (1) 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 a session which has endorsed an inquirer or candidate. This work could best be done by the committee on preparation for ministry.

(2) During the phases of inquiry and candidacy the individual continues to be an active member of his or her particular church and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is under the oversight of the presbytery through the committee on preparation for the ministry. It shall be the duty of the presbytery to exercise responsibility for the spiritual growth of inquirers and candidates, to support them with an understanding and sympathetic interest, and to give guidance in regard to courses of study, familiarity with the Bible and with the confessions, practical training and plans for education, including the choice of institutions, field education, and the inquirer's or candidate's financial need. The presbytery shall also seek to give guidance and instruction to the inquirer or candidate in the faith and polity of the church. (G-6.0108)

Support by Session

b. The session shall function in a supportive role during the phases of inquiry and candidacy to ensure that care is provided on a continuous basis. The session shall appoint an elder from the church to be a liaison person with the inquirer or candidate and the appropriate presbytery committee. The session should consider the provision of financial support for the inquirer or candidate.

- G-14.0307
Service in Covenant
Relationship
- The inquirer or candidate shall be encouraged to engage in some form of service to the church with the approval and under the guidance of the inquirer's or candidate's committee on preparation for ministry. Field education assignments that are under the supervision of a theological institution do not require presbytery approval; however, field education assignments that place an inquirer or candidate as the student intern having sole pastoral responsibility for the life of a church require the counsel and oversight of the committee on ministry having jurisdiction over the church. An inquirer or candidate shall not undertake to serve a church, even as a temporary supply, without the approval of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the church as well as the approval of the inquirer's or candidate's presbytery. Under no circumstances may an inquirer or candidate, who has not been previously ordained as an elder, serve as moderator of a session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a marriage ceremony. A previously ordained elder who becomes an inquirer or candidate may be authorized to administer the Lord's Supper in accordance with G-6.0304 and G-11.0103z, but may not serve as a moderator of a session nor perform a marriage ceremony, except as may be provided in G-10.0103 and G-7.0306. A previously commissioned lay pastor who becomes an inquirer or candidate may continue to be authorized to administer sacraments in accordance with the presbytery's previous grant of authority under G-14.0801c.
- G-14.0308
Annual Report
- The presbytery shall require the inquirer or candidate to make an annual written report concerning progress in studies and service to the church, including a report from the individual's institution of learning.
- G-14.0309
Consultation and
Guidance
- a. The committee on preparation for ministry shall provide for an annual consultation with each person on the rolls of inquirers and candidates. The purpose of the consultation shall be for the evaluation and nurture of inquirers and candidates. Such consultation may be held by the entire com-

(3) *Theological Competence*. This examination shall assess the candidate's capacity to make effective use of the classical theological disciplines and of the confessional documents of the church in relating the gospel to the faith of the church in the contemporary world.

(4) *Worship and Sacraments*. This examination shall assess the candidate's understanding of the meaning and purpose of corporate worship and the Sacraments, familiarity with the Directory for Worship and *The Book of Confessions* and their application to the life of worshiping communities.

(5) *Church Polity*. This examination shall assess the candidate's working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined.

How Graded

e. 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 as provided in G-11.0103m.

G-14.0311 Transfer of Covenant Relationship

A presbytery may transfer the covenant relationship of an inquirer or candidate to another presbytery, but only with the approval of the receiving presbytery and the inquirer or candidate. 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 the 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 this procedure shall result in the

satisfactory grades, and presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts;

Examination Requirements

(4) presentation of satisfactory grades together with the examination papers in the five areas covered by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.

Bible Content Examination

c. 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 of the inquirer's or candidate's presbytery.

Areas of Examination

d. The areas of these examinations are:

(1) *Open Book Bible Exegesis*. This examination shall assess the candidate's ability to find and state the meaning of an assigned passage of Scripture, demonstrating working knowledge of the original language of the text and ability to understand its historical situation.

The candidate shall have access to any or all of the following: Hebrew and Greek texts, translations, commentaries, and other exegetical tools, including those which presuppose knowledge of the biblical languages. Using these, he or she shall be asked to state the meaning of the passage, show how he or she arrived at this interpretation, and suggest how this passage might be used in the contemporary life of the church.

(2) *Bible Content*. This examination shall assess the candidate's knowledge of the form and content of the Bible.

mittee or may be carried out by persons appointed by the committee either from its own membership or with similar responsibilities in a presbytery within which the inquirer or candidate is pursuing a course of study or engaged in other approved service, except in the case of the final assessment, which should be conducted by the committee on preparation for ministry of the candidate's presbytery. Presbytery, together with the session and the inquirer or candidate, shall bear the necessary expenses of the annual consultation, which shall be concerned with the spiritual growth and needs of the individual, the financial planning for his or her educational program, and with his or her relation to the church and progress in the program of study leading to ordination for ministry. Each consultation shall include a decision, made by the whole committee, whether to continue or terminate the period of inquiry or candidacy. This decision shall be reported to presbytery.

Written Report

b. There shall be a written report of each annual consultation, including a statement of the individual's strengths and areas of needed growth, prepared jointly by the committee or its representative and the inquirer or candidate. The presbytery shall be notified of receipt of these reports and the reports themselves shall be submitted to the individual, the sponsoring session, and the theological institution.

Content

c. The content of these annual consultations shall include, but need not be limited to, assessment of the inquirer's or candidate's development in terms of the outcomes for the appropriate phase and the following in the appropriate years:

Prior to Theological Education

(1) In the years prior to entering theological education, discussion of the inquirer's or candidate's preparation for theological education and for personal growth;

First Year Theological Education	(2) For annual consultations which cover the time period of the first year of theological education, a general assessment of her or his experience and the implications this has for future professional ministry. The primary focus of this consultation(s) shall not be one of formal examination but of guidance and counseling with the inquirer and candidate. At this consultation(s) the student may ask the committee on preparation for ministry to present to the presbytery any request for an exemption from formal educational requirements of G-14.0310b(2) and b(3), such as language provisions. Should the presbytery be willing to make such an exception, the procedures of G-14.0313a shall be followed;
Second Year Theological Education	(3) For annual consultations which cover the time period of the second year of theological education, an assessment of the inquirer's or candidate's experience similar to that held in the previous year(s). In addition, the consultation(s) shall include a discussion with the individual on progress in preparation for ordination, including a preliminary statement of faith, a review of all grades, field education reports, and other appropriate evaluations. The presbytery also shall satisfy itself of the individual's thorough knowledge of the Bible. To this end, the presbytery shall accept a certificate of passing grade on the Bible Content examination of G-14.0310d(2). The committee on preparation for ministry and the inquirer or candidate shall discuss the means by which any deficiencies are to be removed.
Negotiation for Service	d. In no case shall an inquirer or candidate be excused from these annual consultations. Prior to the completion of two full years of theological education or its equivalent, prior to that year's annual consultation, and prior to the successful completion of all ordination exams or to the presbytery's certification of readiness according to the provisions of G-14.0313b, no inquirer or candidate shall enter into nego-

G-14.0310 Final Assessment	<p>tiation with a church for his or her ministerial services except by a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present, with the reasons therefor recorded in the minutes of presbytery.</p> <p>a. In the final year of theological education or when a candidate has satisfied the requirements of G-14.0310, and before a candidate may receive a call, the committee on preparation for ministry of the candidate's presbytery shall conduct a final assessment of the candidate's readiness to begin ministry. This consultation shall focus on the outcomes of inquiry (G-14.0303g) and candidacy (G-14.0305j) and shall include each of the requirements of certification set forth in G-14.0310b-e. A summary of this assessment shall be reported to the presbytery and shall be transmitted to a calling presbytery when requested. When, in the opinion of the committee on preparation for ministry, a candidate is ready for examination for ordination, pending a call, it shall recommend to the presbytery that the presbytery so certify the candidate. (See G-14.0507.) It may be given authority by the presbytery to certify candidates on behalf of the presbytery with the provision that all such actions shall be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery.</p>
Requirements to Be Certified Ready for Examination	<p>b. The candidate's presbytery shall require a candidate to fulfill the following requirements to be certified as to be ready for examination for ordination, pending a call:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) demonstration of readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament as required in G-14.0305j; (2) presentation of a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university, together with a diploma;
Educational Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (3) presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, the transcript showing