Inquiry Application
New Hope Presbytery
Committee for Preparation on Ministry

Greetings from the New Hope Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

This package gives information and direction you need to apply for the inquiry phase of the preparation for ministry process. Inquiry is defined in the *Book of Order* as follows:

> *The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry. (G-2.0603):*

Note that this packet contains copies of forms to use in the application process. The numbered forms are generated and maintained by PC(USA) and are available in fillable PDF format at http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/application-forms/ and in Word and Excel formats that are not fillable at http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/sample-forms-customization-cpms/. Forms particular to New Hope Presbytery are located in this packet (*Reference Guide, Committee On Preparation For Ministry, New Hope Presbytery*; New Hope Presbytery Form 2B, *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release;* and *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under Care of New Hope Presbytery*.) For all forms other than New Hope Presbytery forms, y**ou are urged to use the PDF, fillable versions of the PC(USA) forms.**

To apply for Inquiry status under care of New Hope Presbytery, you need to do the following:

1. You must be an active member for six months in a PC(USA) church in New Hope Presbytery.
2. Contact the pastor of your home church and discuss your call and set a date to meet with the session to seek endorsement.
3. After receiving session endorsement, schedule an appointment with the Ministry Development Services in Charlotte and inform the CPM of your appointment date. Contact information: Ministry Development Services, 6100 Sardis Road, Charlotte, NC, 28270, 704-554-9222. (http://www.ministryds.org/)
4. Complete Form 1A –*Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer*, Form 1B – *Questions for Reflection* and Form 1C – *Financial Planning for Theological Education*
5. Obtain three letters of reference based on the *Reference Guide, Committee On Preparation For Ministry New Hope Presbytery*, including someone from your church, a former employer, and a peer or former professor or school administrator.
6. Read and sign the *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under Care of New Hope Presbytery*.
7. Make a copy of all of the forms and letters for your records and submit the forms to your church's clerk of session.

8. Contact the moderator of the New Hope Committee on Preparation for Ministry to indicate your plans and to request that a CPM shepherd be assigned to you. Your CPM shepherd is your main point of contact with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The contact information for the moderator is on the presbytery website. The telephone number for the Presbytery Office is 919-322-0143.
9. Meet with the Session to obtain their endorsement. If a CPM shepherd has been assigned he or she may be able to attend the session meeting with you and provide an overview of the process.
10. When you meet with session, the session will assign a liaison for you. Your session liaison is your main point of contact with your church's session. Session will complete Form 1D – *Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as an Inquirer.* You, the moderator of session and witnesses sign New Hope Presbytery Form 2B – *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*. Request that the session help you with the cost of required psychological assessment/evaluation. The cost is typically shared between the applicant, the home church and CPM. The CPM is billed directly for ½ of the cost of the evaluation. The bill you receive from Ministry Development Services is your half of the full cost.
11. Send completed Forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, New Hope Presbytery 2B; three letters of reference based on the *Reference Guide, Committee On Preparation For Ministry New Hope Presbytery*, and the signed *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under Care of New Hope Presbytery* form to Committee on Preparation for Ministry by email to Christine Kelson in the presbytery office at ckelson@nhpresbytery.org or through the postal service at Committee on Preparation for Ministry, The Presbytery of New Hope,2022 McDonald Lane, Raleigh NC 27608. Send only one copy to CPM.
12. Send a current, digital picture of yourself for use in your CPM file to Christine Kelson in the presbytery office at ckelson@nhpresbytery.org
13. Arrange to have your official post-secondary transcripts sent to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (address above). CPM requires original transcripts.
14. The CPM requires that you receive at least half of your seminary education at a Presbyterian seminary. If you are not enrolled in a Presbyterian seminary or are not planning ½ of your seminary education to be at a Presbyterian seminary, submit a letter of justification including your reasons for attending an non-Presbyterian seminary and indicating your plan for meeting educational requirements set out in the *Policies and Procedures New Hope Presbytery Committee for Preparation for Ministry.*
15. When all required paper work is received by CPM, CPM will contact you to set up an Inquiry interview. Required paperwork is:
    a. Form 1A –*Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer*
    b. Form 1B – *Questions for Reflection*
    c. Form 1C – *Financial Planning for Theological Education*
    d. Form 1D – *Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as an Inquirer*
    e. New Hope Presbytery Form 2B – *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release*
    f. Signed *Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under Care of New Hope Presbytery* form

g. Three letters of reference based on *Reference Guide, Committee On Preparation For Ministry New Hope Presbytery*
h. Report from Ministry Development Services
i. A current digital photo of the applicant
j. Official transcripts (from the educational institutions, not copies) of all post-secondary educational institutions
k. Justification documentation if you are not enrolled in a Presbyterian seminary or are not planning ½ of your seminary education at a Presbyterian seminary.

Date: _____ Form 1A

Application to Be Enrolled by Presbytery as an Inquirer

Name of applicant: _____
(family) *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

Permanent address: _____
(if same, write 'same') *(street)* *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Gender: _____ Date of birth: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____

Current church membership: _____
(name of church)

Address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Date received as a member: _____ Number of members: _____

Have you ever applied to a presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer or candidate? _____

If yes, was enrolled as: _____ in _____ presbytery

From _____ to _____

In what church occupation are you interested in at this time? _____
(e.g. pastor, youth minister, mission worker, educator)

Present or most recent school attended: _____

Location: _____ Date of graduation: _____

Applicant's Statement

I hereby apply to be enrolled by _____ Presbytery as an inquirer.
(presbytery name)

_____ I certify no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me.

_____ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer instead on the attachment a description of the complaint and/or outcome of the situation with explanatory comments.

I certify that the above statement and other information in this application are true and correct. I promise to participate diligently and wholeheartedly with the session and the presbytery in exploring my vocation.

Applicant's signature: _____ _____
(date)

Family Situation

Current marital status: _____ Ages of any children in the home: _____

Are you and your household members open to the possibility of relocation in conjunction with theological studies and/or accepting a ministry position? _____

If you are limited in your ability to relocate, please describe on the following lines:

_____

_____

_____

Church Background

Year of baptism: _____ Year of your confirmation/profession of faith: _____

Most recent church affiliations (include up to three): Dates of participation:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Have you been ordained as a ruling elder in the PC(U.S.A.)? _____ Date: _____

Have you been ordained as a deacon in the PC(U.S.A.)? _____ Date: _____

Have you been ordained in another denomination? _____ Date: _____

If so, name of denomination: _____ Office: _____

List up to five areas of involvement in the life and mission of the church, either as a participant or leader, that are most significant in your sense of call to the role of teaching elder. Mark current involvements with an asterisk.

Area of involvement: Role:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Date: _____ Form 1A

Academic Information

List the academic institutions you have attended, beginning with college, and supply the information requested in each column. If you are currently pursuing an educational program, indicate your academic classification in the final column.

Institution	Dates attended	Program/major	GPA	Diploma/degree

Briefly describe your academic interests/gifts by completing the following table:

	Subjects in which you did your best academic work:	Subjects in which you did less well:
College:		
Graduate school:		
Professional school:		
Other training:		

Have you ever had an individualized educational program (IEP)? _____

If so, what accommodations did the IEP include?

_____

_____

In the space provided, list your academic honors, awards, special recognitions, sports, organizations and extracurricular activities that have been most meaningful:

_____

_____

Occupational History

Beginning with your current or most recent position, list all full time or part time jobs in which you have been employed. Include the five most, recent up to the past 20 years. Place a PT beside the title of part time jobs.

Job title	Dates	What did you enjoy most?	What did you enjoy least?

References

References should include at least two of the following: someone from your church; a former employer; a peer; or a former professor or school administrator.

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

How long have you known this person, and in what capacity? _____

Date: _____ Form 1B

Questions for Reflection

Name: _____
(family) *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Reflect on the following questions and then write responses in the space provided (limited to about 275 words).

1. Describe yourself as a person.

2. Describe briefly your understanding of what it means to you to be an inquirer. Please include the most important events, experiences and persons that have prompted you to apply to become an inquirer.

3. Write a brief statement of your personal faith describing what you believe about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and your relationship to them.

Date: _____ Name: _____ Form 1B

4. What does it mean to you to be Presbyterian?

5. Describe your current spiritual practices and disciplines.

6. Who/what is your ideal/role model for ministry? What do you expect in your ministry? What aspect of ministry do you find least interesting?

Date: _____ Name: _____ Form 1B

7. What are you doing to maintain your physical and emotional health?

8. Comment on what have been/are some of your more meaningful interests and hobbies.

9. After completing and reviewing Form 1C of this application to be received as an inquirer, briefly discuss how you plan to finance your theological education.

Signature: _____ _____

(date)

FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

On the following pages, enter descriptions in underlined fields and whole dollar amounts in shaded fields as needed. Other fields will automatically tabulate.

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL RESOURCES

	Monthly Total	Annual Total	Overall Totals	Projected Need
Income				
Student earnings				
Spouse earnings				
Guaranteed income (Social Security, VA, etc.)				
Child Support payments received				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Income:	$0	$0		
Other Assistance				
Home Church/Congregational support				
Family/Friends support				
Presbytery support				
PCUSA scholarships/loans				
Foundations or Corporations grants				
Other (specifiy): _____				
Other (specifiy): _____				
Total Other Assistance:		$0		
Current Assets				
Cash and savings				
Investments (CDs, stocks, etc.)				
Retirement savings (IRAs, 401Ks, etc.)				
Real Estate				
Automobiles (value over any amount owed)				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Current Assets:			$0	
Total Estimated Financial Resources:			$0	

Name: _____

ESTIMATED EXPENSES

	Monthly Total	Annual Total	Overall Totals	Projected Need
Educational Expenses				
Annual tuition				
Special academic programs (CPE, intern, etc.)				
Fees				
Books				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Educatioal Expenses:		$0		
Living Expenses				
Rent/mortgage payment				
Utilities				
Food & household supplies				
Automobile (payments, insurance, fuel, etc.)				
Telecommunications (phone, cell, online, etc.)				
Clothing				
Incidentals				
Health insurance (only "out of pocket" expense)				
Other medical/dental				
Transportation:				
Dependent allowance				
Child Care				
Child Support payments				
Life insurance premiums				
Charitable donations				
Other (specify): _____				
Other (specify): _____				
Total Living Expenses:	$0	$0		
Total Estimated Expenses:			$0	
Total Income less Expenses:				$0

_____

Name: _____

OTHER INFORMATION

Indebtedness Applicant's (and spouse's or prospective spouse's) current indebtedness. Report principal amounts and related monthly payments.

		Applicant		(Prospective) Spouse		Total Family Debt
Student Loans:	*Combine Undergrad/Grad*	Balance of Principal	Monthly Payment	Balance of Principal	Monthly Payment	
	Fed. Subsidized Stafford					0
	Fed. Unsubsidized Stafford					0
	Federal Perkins Loans					0
	PC(USA) Loans					0
	Loans from parents/family					0
	Other educational loans					0
	Estimated future loans					0
	Totals:	0	0	0	0	0
Non-educational:	*List mortgage, credit cards, etc*					
	_____					0
	_____					0
	_____					0
	_____					0
	_____					0
	_____					0
	Totals:	0	0	0	0	0
Combined indebtedness totals:		0	0	0	0	0

Assets Non-seminary scholarships (grants) for which you have applied (mark with '*') or have received.

Source of Assistance	Amount Fall Term	Amount Spring Term
_____		
_____		
_____		
_____		
Totals:	0	0

I certify that the information contained on all sheets of this form is a true and accurate statement of my financial circumstances and is made in good faith.

Signature **Date**

Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as an Inquirer

The session of _____
(name of church) *(city)* *(state)*

met with _____ on _____ and submits its
(name of applicant) *(date)*

report on the following pages.

The session endorses ____ / does not endorse ____ this applicant's request to be enrolled as an inquirer.

Liaison

The session has appointed the following ruling elder to act as a liaison with this individual and with the presbytery's committee, and to participate with the individual and the presbytery as they explore and evaluate his/her progress.

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Current address: _____
(street) *(city)* *(state)* *(zip)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

This report was prepared for the session by:

Name: _____
(title) *(family)* *(first)* *(middle/natal)*

Main phone: _____ _____ Alt phone: _____ _____
(h/o/m) *(h/o/m)*

Email: _____

Report on Session's Consultation with Applicant

To assist the presbytery in reaching its decision regarding whether to enroll the applicant as an inquirer, please provide brief responses to the following issues for consideration when consulting with a prospective inquirer (see *Advisory Handbook*, pp. 68). Since this is the beginning of the process, primary attention should be given at this time to evaluating natural gifts, quality of commitment, strength of motivation, and potential for growth. Each of these issues should be pursued at greater depth during the period of inquiry.

1. What personal qualities are evidence of a healthy and vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?

2. How is that faith currently being expressed through the individual's participation in the worship, life, and mission of this congregation?

3. What motivations, whether positive or negative, impel the sense of call? Service to God and the world? Compassion for God's children? Guilt? A need for power and status?

4. What real and potential talents for ministry are evident in this individual (e.g., the ability to communicate, interpersonal skills, leadership or administrative abilities)?

5. What is the level and adequacy of the individual's academic interest, leadership skills, cross-cultural competencies, emotional intelligence, and motivations?

6. What is the evidence of his or her physical health and stamina?

Date: _____ Name: _____ Form 1D

7. What is this evidence of his or her emotional well-being?

8. What is the evidence of his or her self-discipline?

9. Does the individual have a reasonable plan to finance his or her theological education?

Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release

I, _____, have read and discussed the goals and responsibilities of both inquirers and the presbytery with its committee/commission. I do hereby wish to be enrolled in the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter "Church") with the understanding that I subject myself to the guidance, counsel and disciplines of the Church as represented by the presbytery and its committee/ commission overseeing preparation for ministry. I fully agree and understand that the decision of the presbytery's committee/commission regarding my suitability for ministry may involve questions and/or inquiries that are both personal and private, and I hereby release the Church and its committees, agents and representatives from any claims, causes, or actions, which may arise from said inquiries and answers received to such inquiries or any uses made of such answers. Further I grant permission to the presbytery's committee/commission to contact any person listed by me as a reference or any other person not so listed to discuss my "suitability for ordered ministry" (G-2.0603).

I give permission to _____ (seminary) to release information to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of New Hope Presbytery including transcripts, academic standing, awards, honor code violations, and disciplinary cases including sexual misconduct.

I covenant with God, the session, and the presbytery to rely upon the grace of God; to maintain a Christian character and conduct; and to be diligent and faithful in pursuing my call and in preparing for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. By my signature, I hereby certify that this covenant agreement and release is fully understood by me, and I sign it understanding that I will be bound by its terms.

Signature of inquirer: _____
(date)

Signature of witness: _____
(date)

The session covenants to be a faithful partner with you in this relationship and to support, to care and to nurture you with love as you discern your call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of session: _____
(date)

Signature of witness: _____
(date)

The presbytery covenants to be a faithful and just partner with you in this relationship and to support, to guide, to nurture and to evaluate you with an understanding and sympathetic interest as you discern your call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the moderator of the Committee
On Preparation for Ministry: _____
(date)

Signature of witness: _____
(date)

A copy of this page will be mailed to the Inquirer's Seminary and to others from whom information regarding the Inquirer is being requested.

Agreement for Inquirers and Candidates Under Care of New Hope Presbytery

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of New Hope emphasizes the following critical aspects of the preparation process:

1. The total preparation for ministry process will have a duration of at least two years, at least one year of which must be at the candidacy phase.
2. The start of the two-year preparation period begins when the CPM enrolls the person as inquirer, while the required one-year of candidacy begins when the person is received and enrolled at a presbytery meeting.
3. **No guarantee is implied that enrollment into the inquiry phase will be followed automatically by admission to the candidacy phase. Admission to the inquiry phase can be considered to be a "wide gate." Admission to the candidacy phase then, is considered to be a "narrow gate" wherein progress will be examined critically and the questioning will be of a more specific, theological nature.**
4. Inquirers should ordinarily successfully complete one field education unit before the CPM will approve them for Candidacy. By the end of Candidacy each person under care will complete the minimum field education requirements of (a) one quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and (b) a supervised internship in a PC(USA) church or institution. Waivers will be granted only at the discretion of the CPM.
5. The CPM exists to advise, support, and nurture those under care, but it is the inquirer's/ candidate's responsibility ultimately to be knowledgeable of and to adhere to the process outlined in the manual, including any special requirements of New Hope Presbytery or its CPM, and to meet all deadlines in a timely manner.
6. The inquirer/candidate is expected to be available for all subsequent meetings with the CPM or its designees, especially the annual consultation required each year while under care.
7. Inquirer/candidates are advised that the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-2.06), among other applicable requirements of the *Book of Order*, will govern their eventual ordination to the ministry as a teaching elder.
8. **The CPM reserves the right and responsibility to place additional requirements as it sees it is necessary during periodic evaluations of the inquirer's/candidate's progress.**
9. Conversations between applicants, enrollees, inquirers and candidates and the CPM are understood to be confidential. It is also understood that information shared with a Shepherd will be considered information to be shared with the entire CPM. Psychological assessments/evaluations are necessary to a complete and helpful file. Members on the CPM will treat these reports with extreme care and dispose of them appropriately when the process is terminated or completed. The original report will be retained in an inquirer's/candidate's permanent file.
10. While in the preparation for ministry process, the inquirer/candidate will be expected to adhere to New Hope Presbytery's policy against sexual misconduct which may be obtained from the presbytery office.
11. While in the preparation for ministry process, substantial debt may be incurred, only a portion of which will be defrayed by support from New Hope Presbytery. Limited financial support is available from New Hope Presbytery.

12. Inquirers and candidates should pay special attention to CPM's guidelines for expenses incurred by inquirers and candidates and comply with all guidelines for travel expense reimbursement.
13. Beyond the requirements stated in the *Book of Order* and *Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, only those requirements placed by New Hope Presbytery and its CPM are in effect. The requirements of other presbyteries are neither pertinent nor applicable.
14. Inquirer/candidate will arrange for and sign appropriate releases of information with his/her seminary to allow CPM and seminary staff to communicate about inquirer/candidate's course work, performance and adjustment. (New Hope Presbytery Form 2B - *Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release* and New Hope Presbytery Form 5D - *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release* which are required by CPM may be sufficient.)

I acknowledge by my signature that I have read and accept the aspects of the preparation for ministry process noted above.

Signature:

_____

Please print full name:

_____

Date:

REFERENCE GUIDE
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
NEW HOPE PRESBYTERY

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry of New Hope Presbytery is established by mandate of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to guide the preparation of those preparing to become teaching elders in the church (G-3.0301). You have been asked by an applicant for the Inquiry phase of the ordination process to provide a reference to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

The *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) states:

> *The purpose of the Inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.* (G-2.0603)

We require that each potential Inquirer submit three different references. Please send your **typed** reference regarding the applicant to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry through either email or by US postal service (please do not send multiple copies.) Email is to be sent to Christine Kelson in the Presbytery office at: ckelson@nhpresbytery.org. The mailing address is:

The Moderator
Committee on Preparation for Ministry
The Presbytery of New Hope
2022 McDonald Lane
Raleigh, NC 27608

Include the following information in your reference:

- Name of the applicant
- Your name
- Your address
- Your telephone number

Please answer the following questions:

1. How long have you known the applicant?
2. In what capacity have you known the applicant?
3. How do you describe or characterize the applicant?
4. What do you perceive to be the applicant's strengths?
5. What do you perceive to be the applicant's weaknesses?
6. State why you believe the applicant would be a good candidate for the ministry?
7. Please include other information you think would be helpful to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

Thank you for your response.