

Candidacy 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 candidacy phase of the preparation for ministry process. The candidacy phase is the second step in the preparation for ministry process and is defined in the *Book of Order* as follows:

The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as teaching elders. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination. (G-2.0604).

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 (*Required Candidacy Application Documents* and *New Hope Presbytery Form 5D, Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*.) For all forms other than New Hope Presbytery forms, **you are urged to use the PDF, fillable versions of the PC(USA) forms. Please note that to use a fillable form, you must download the form from the PC(USA) website to your computer and save the form, then fill in the form and save the filled form to your computer.**

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

1. You must successfully complete at least one field education placement (either CPE or in a PC(USA) church or institution) before becoming a candidate. If you have done this, then proceed with the following.
2. Make sure that you send a copy of your supervisor's evaluation of your field education or CPE experience to the CPM at the presbytery office (mailing address in #8 below) or through email to Christine Kelson in the presbytery office at ckelson@nhpresbytery.org.
3. Space for candidacy interviews can fill up quickly and are set on a first come, first served basis. An interview date will not be set until all paperwork is received by the presbytery office. All paperwork must be received at least one month prior to a meeting of CPM for an applicant to be eligible for an interview. Be sure to work far enough into the future to allow yourself plenty of time to complete the remaining steps in the process and have all paperwork at the presbytery office at least one month prior to your desired candidacy interview with the CPM.
4. Complete Form 5A – *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate*.

5. Prepare the documents set out in *Required Candidacy Application Documents, Committee on Preparation for Ministry New Hope Presbytery*.
6. Set a time to meet with your session. Provide the pastor with your completed Form 5A – *Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate* and documents prepared as set out in *Required Candidacy Application Documents, Committee on Preparation for Ministry New Hope Presbytery* to be distributed to session members.
7. Meet with your session and obtain their recommendation (a member of our committee will not need to be present). Session is to complete Form 5B-*Session Evaluation and Recommendation Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate* and attach a letter explaining rationale for the session’s action in light of the inquirer’s “suitability for ministry” (G-2.0603). The applicant and the moderator of session and witnesses sign New Hope Presbytery Form 5D – *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*.
8. Send all completed forms and statements to the CPM by 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 Committee on Preparation for Ministry, The Presbytery of New Hope, 2202 McDonald Lane, Raleigh, NC 27608. Keep a copy of these forms for yourself. The forms must arrive at least a month prior to your desired interview.
9. Arrange to have your theological institution send your current official transcript to the CPM. (not a copy)
10. Meet with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and obtain our recommendation to be received as a candidate by presbytery. The CPM completes Form 5C – *Report on Consultation to Become Enrolled as a Candidate*. Moderator of the CPM and a witness sign New Hope Presbytery Form 5D – *Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release*.
11. Appear on the floor of presbytery to be examined with respect to your Christian faith, forms of Christian service and motives for seeking the ministry. This statement must be limited to 3 minutes or less, so it is imperative that you write it down and practice saying it out loud. Presbytery typically meets in February, July and October of each year.
12. Be formally received as a candidate at the same presbytery meeting by responding to the candidate questions and then being charged.

We wish you grace and peace as you move to the next phase of the preparation for ministry process.

New Hope Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Date: _____

Form 5A

Application to be Enrolled by Presbytery as a Candidate

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

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

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

Email: _____

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

Current church membership: _____
(name of church)

Church address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Date enrolled as an inquirer: _____

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: _____

Inquirer's Statement

I hereby apply to be enrolled by _____ as a candidate.
(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. If recommended to be a candidate for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, I promise in reliance upon the grace of God to participate diligently and wholeheartedly with the session and presbytery's committee/commission in matters which concern my preparation.

Inquirer's signature: _____ (date)

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 5A

References for Outcomes of Inquiry

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

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

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

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

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

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

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

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

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

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

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

Email: _____

In what capacity have you worked with this person? _____

Review and prepare any specific materials your presbytery may require as “outcomes of inquiry,” and submit them along with this application.

If the presbytery requires a formal endorsement from the session for advancement to candidacy, have the clerk submit a Form 5B.

Required Candidacy Application Documents Committee on Preparation for Ministry New Hope Presbytery

Statements should be typed in 12 point font. Each of the first six statements are expected to be about one-page long.

1. A statement of your 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. Please be sure to include what you believe about God, the Trinity (statements on each person), the concept of grace, Holy Scripture, the sacraments and the church;

Note from the CPM:

Normally at this stage in the process you will have advanced in your seminary training and will have been challenged in formal classroom settings and informal serious conversation to explain what you believe and why. The committee is looking for three primary dimensions of your statement of faith:

- Is it comprehensive? That is, do you address all the key tenets of Reformed Christian faith, including: the nature of God, as trinity and as each of the three persons; grace and salvation; the church and its sacraments; the Christian's relationship to the world in mission and discipleship; the role of scripture; and a brief statement on eschatology.
- Is it 'orthodox'? Granted, there is a measure of latitude here, but the committee will watch to see if your statement reflects a Presbyterian understanding of the above doctrines. How do we interpret sacraments differently from others? What is a Calvinist-inspired view of salvation? If necessary, use brief statements from the Confessions here, or at least verify that your views are compatible with the consistent themes of the confessions.
- Is it personal? Please do not merely cite the creeds or list doctrines without elaboration. Tell what they mean to you. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit, for instance, or in what way does the Bible capture your obedience, or when have you seen the church at its best for you and your community? Do not be surprised if at this stage in your life of faith you do not have memorable personal experiences of all the doctrines, but share the ones that you do have.

Though it may seem impossible, condense your statement into one page, single spaced, font size 12. You can do this if you are concise, do not repeat yourself, and remove unnecessary qualifiers. Proofread and be ready to explain and defend any statement you make. If you truly disagree with a particular Presbyterian interpretation or even a particular orthodox Christian doctrine, be honest enough to say that, but be prepared to defend it and to be challenged in your examination. Best wishes! Do the best you can

for now and know that you will re-visit and revise this statement periodically in your career. It is an anchor amid inevitable doubts.

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 your personal and cultural background and includes a concern for maintaining spiritual, physical, and mental health;
6. A statement of your understanding of the tasks teaching elders perform, including an awareness of his or her specific gifts for pastoral ministry as a teaching elder and of areas in which growth is needed.
7. A short paragraph on each of the nine ordination questions (W-4.4003) explaining what your assent to that specific question will mean to you as you daily serve God as a teaching elder.

Note from CPM:

The CPM of New Hope Presbytery includes this requirement for candidacy that CPM's in most other presbyteries do not. We believe candidates for ministry will be well served by early reflection on the ordination questions they will ultimately be asked upon receipt of a call. A simple, 'Yes, I will,' isn't enough. We are looking for more than just your pledge that you agree to the questions. Here are a few suggestions of questions you can ask yourself as you are trying to explain what your assent to the question might mean.

Q. a – Have you ever stated in just a few words what “Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior” means to you? If someone is your Lord, what does that imply for your decision-making process? If Christ saves you, from what are you saved, and to what are you saved? Do you understand what it means to believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ?

Q. b – Why is the phrase “by the Holy Spirit” included here? If the O.T. and N.T. are “the unique and authoritative witness” to Jesus Christ, can we have other types of witness as well? In what way are they unique? How does their authority work in your preaching or teaching preparation?

Q. c – Can you name 4 or 5 “essential tenets” of the Reformed faith? What might they be –providence, representative government, primacy of scripture, predestination, connectional system, justification by faith? Before you say you sincerely adopt them, see if you can develop such a list.

Q. d – Is there any significance in the order of these three authorities, i.e. Jesus Christ, Scripture, and the confessions? What about contradictions within scripture or the confessions? How will you handle them?

Q. e – This is one question you probably can just answer “yes” to, but do you know the polity well enough to agree to be governed by it? If you were to be disciplined by a court of the church, would you take your punishment without complaint?

Q. f – This question emphasizes a link between what you do at church and what you do in your “own” time. It highlights that our work is not just a job, but is rather a call, a profession. It requires deep faith and integrity of character in personal relationships both on the job and off.

Q. g – Have you ever considered how hard it is to further “peace, unity, and purity” all at the same time? Most doctrinal disputes in the church pit purity against unity, and disrupt its peace. Are they still important, for sake of the church’s purity, or should unity be more important? Which of these three would you be most inclined to advocate?

Q. h – That phrase “energy, intelligence, imagination, and love” is a wonderful short check-off list for whether you are slacking off or truly doing all you can to further the ministry of the church. Are you ready for 30-40 years of this?

Q. i.3 – This question is a short summary of the responsibilities of ministry for a teaching elder. Notice the differences here from the surrounding questions for ruling elders, deacons, and educators. You are committing to a public ministry, in parish or chaplaincy or teaching position; a denominational ministry, in councils of the church; and a personal ministry throughout your life.

These ordination questions are weighty and full of future implications. Please consider them carefully. But be of good cheer - just a “short paragraph on each”!

*Session Evaluation and Recommendation
Regarding Enrollment as a Candidate*

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

met with _____ on _____.
(name of applicant) *(date)*

The session endorses _____ / does not endorse _____ this applicant's request to be enrolled as a candidate.

*Attach a letter explaining rationale for the session's action in light of the inquirer's
"suitability for ordered ministry" (G-2.0603).*

Liaison

The session has appointed the following ruler 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 or 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: _____

New Hope Presbytery Form 5D

Covenant Agreement and Candidate Release

I, _____ have read and discussed the goals and responsibilities of both candidates and the presbytery's committee/commission on preparation for ministry. I do hereby wish to be enrolled in the preparation for ministry process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter "Church") as a candidate 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 fitness and readiness for ministry may involve questions and/or inquiries that are both personal and private and 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 listed to discuss my "fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination" (G-2.0604).

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 candidate: _____
(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 continue your preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

Signature of the
moderator of the 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 continue your preparation for 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 candidate's seminary and to others from whom information regarding the candidate is being requested

Date: _____ Name: _____

Report of Consultation Regarding Application to become a Candidate

The committee/commission of met with _____ met with
_____ (presbytery)
_____ on _____ and
(name of applicant) (date)

submits the following report.

The committee/commission recommends ____ /does not recommend ____ the applicant to be enrolled by the presbytery as a candidate.

Liaison

The presbytery's committee has appointed the following person to act as a liaison with the candidate and with the committee and participate with the inquirer and the committee as they explore and evaluate his or her progress.

Name:

(title) (family) (first) (middle/natal)

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

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

Email: _____

Agreement on Further Growth Areas

We have reviewed and jointly agree to the growth objectives for the next year, as reported below.

Signature of inquirer: _____ (date)

Signature of committee liaison: _____ (date)

Signature of committee moderator: _____ (date)

Indicate the appropriate stage of theological education for which this report applies: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

Form 5C

Growth Objectives

A. In the area of education for ministry

B. In the area of spiritual development

C. In the area of interpersonal relations

D. In the area of personal growth

E. In the area of professional development