

**Heartland Presbytery
Commission on Preparation for Ministry
Ordination Process**

This document is intended to be helpful but is not a definitive resource. The Book of Order, section 4.3.2 of the Heartland Presbytery Manual of Operations, and the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry are main resources.
<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/preparation-ministry-handbook/>

Inquirer

- Complete forms 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A and 2B.
- Complete the background check form from CPM.
- When you come under care as an Inquirer you first meet with your church's Session.
- Then you meet with the CPM. CPM acts on Presbytery's behalf to accept you as an Inquirer.
- Plan to take the Bible Content Exam.
- Inquiry period lasts at least 1 year.
- (At all phases of the process CPM liaison will be responsible for contacting listed persons of reference.)

Annual Responsibilities

- Keep in touch with the committee via your liaison.
- Prepare form 3 and have an in person meeting with the CPM at least once a year. (Financial grants are awarded preferentially to those who are up to date with annual consultations.)
- Regularly send your transcripts to the Presbytery office.

Candidate

- Before you move to Candidacy the CPM requires that you undergo a Psychological Evaluation. The total cost is \$1080. You will need to ask your church's session to pay 1/3, you pay 1/3 and the CPM will pay 1/3.
- Complete forms 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D and form 3 for review.
- You again meet with your Session to be approved as a Candidate.
- You meet with the CPM to be approved for Candidacy. All forms are required as well as a full Statement of Faith.
- You also need to prepare a series of essays addressing:
 - an understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to your sense of call
 - an expression of your personal faith in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the Reformed tradition (statement of faith)

- an expansion upon at least one concept from that personal faith statement at greater depth explaining what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationships
- an explanation what it means for you to be Presbyterian, indicating how that awareness grows out of participation in the life of a particular church
- a discussion of your personal and cultural background as it relates to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, including a concern for maintaining personal spiritual, physical, and mental health. Inquirers should also be able to relate their own personal cultural location to changes in American society and its increasingly multicultural character.
- an expression of your understanding of the tasks teaching elders perform, including expression both of your specific gifts for this particular ministry and of areas in which further growth is needed.
- Once approved by the CPM you need to appear before the Presbytery at a regularly scheduled Presbytery meeting. You provide a one page faith journey and a one page Statement of faith. You will be questioned on the floor in regards to your journey of faith and your sense of call.
- Start making plans to take the remaining 4 ordination exams.
- Candidacy period lasts for at least one calendar year.

Final Assessment

- You should be near completion of your M.Div.
- You should have completed one unit of CPE.
- You should have completed a field ed. experience unique from CPE.
- You should have attended a Presbytery or seminary hosted sexual misconduct prevention workshop.
- You should have participated in a “Fiscal Fitness” seminary conducted by the Board of Pensions.
- You should have passed all ORD exams.
- Prepare form 3
- Prepare the following paperwork
 - PIF
 - Statement of Faith
 - a written essay expanding on an idea in your statement of faith
 - a sermon (which you will preach) along with its exegesis
 - a theological paper from your year at school
- You meet with the CPM to preach and be questioned on your PIF and Faith Statement. If approved you are now able to begin looking for your first call!
- After receiving a call you will be examined on the floor of either Heartland Presbytery or the calling Presbytery. The examination will address your faith and your call to ministry.
- Hopefully the next step is ordination!