

ARE YOU BEING CALLED INTO THE MINISTRY?

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) of Charleston Atlantic Presbytery exists to assist those exploring the call of God into fulltime ministry of Word and Sacrament. We seek to put as much helpful information in one spot to make it easier for sessions, Inquirers and Candidates to know what to do, when to do it, and how to find the proper forms.

First Steps

If you are feeling the tug of God to explore becoming a minister, what do you do? First, you would talk it over with your pastor and/or clerk of session. They would be able to help you begin to test your call.

With their encouragement, your first official step would be to submit **Form 1** to your session and request a meeting with them for their endorsement of your being received as an Inquirer by the CPM. They would notify CPM in order to be properly oriented as to their responsibilities in this process. After receiving their endorsement, you would contact the moderator of the CPM to schedule a meeting with the CPM. Before that meeting, you would need to arrange for a psychological evaluation with Dr. Bill Quesenbery, 3 Gamecock Avenue, Suite 309, Charleston, SC 29407 (843-556-7820). His report needs to be in the hands of the CPM at least one week before your scheduled meeting with CPM. The cost of the evaluation is divided equally among the church, the potential Inquirer, and the CPM.

Upon your being taken under the care of presbytery as an Inquirer, the CPM would appoint a liaison, who, along with your session liaison, would be a companion and sounding board through the process of education and follow up with CPM.

Ongoing Process

Each year you are required by the *Book of Order* to meet with CPM to discuss your progress, using **Form 3** as a way to structure the conversation. The moderator of CPM will coordinate the time of the interview.

When you are convinced of your call, using **Form 5a**, you would apply for Candidacy through the session of your home church, which, after satisfactory examination, would recommend you to CPM.

Format for Submissions

- The committee values clarity and succinctness. Cover the subject, but be concise.
- **Do** submit your paperwork electronically to the committee chair or the presbytery staff person by the meeting deadline. That saves you postage and

allows the office to collate and print on both sides of the page. Forms with blanks to be filled and with signatures must be mailed for our files, but if you are able to scan and send electronically to meet deadlines, that is acceptable.

Originals still need to be mailed.

- **Do** put your name in the header or footer feature in case the pages get separated.
- **Do** use the page numbering feature in your word processor.
- **Do not** add coversheets, folders, or other elaborations.
- **Do not** start a new page for each question. Clearly label which question is being answered and continue to fill each sheet.
- Normally, submissions should be in 12 point type, preferably block style, double spacing only between paragraphs. Regular double spacing is acceptable but discouraged in the interest of conserving paper and minimizing copying and postage costs.

Ordination Exams

After your second year of seminary, you would be eligible to begin taking the Ordination Exams. The dates, fees, and procedures for taking those exams are available at denominational seminaries and at the PCUSA website through this link: <http://www.pcusa.org/exams/ordination.htm>. A handbook to guide you can be downloaded from this link: <http://www.pcusa.org/exams/ordination-exams-handbook.pdf>. The Candidate is responsible for sending in necessary forms, complete with required signatures, in a timely manner. Please bear in mind that the CPM moderator and Executive Presbyter may not be readily available at the last minute and plan accordingly.

Our policy is to encourage Candidates to take all exams they have not passed at one time. Even if you do not have time to study thoroughly for each one, you may pass anyway, thus reducing the pressure for the future. If a Candidate has a documented learning disability, there are alternative means available for testing under certain conditions.

Additional Requirements of Charleston Atlantic Presbytery's CPM

CAP requires a basic quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education of all students beyond regular supervised ministry. This is over and above requirements of the *Book of Order*.

Financial Aid and Scholarship Assistance

The CPM grants loans from its limited funds to all students under its care provided that they are currently enrolled in an approved course of study AND HAVE COMPLETED THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR SYNOD OF SOUTH ATLANTIC. The form is available from the synod's website at:

<http://synodofsouthatlantic.org/synodprograms.html>. Submission of the form makes

you eligible for a grant from synod and a "loan" from presbytery. Presbytery's loans vary according to the number of students under care. They are distributed twice a year and are repayable by one year of service to the PCUSA for each year of seminary scholarship aid. We make "loans" because they do not count as income when you apply for other financial aid. Other resources are available through synod for Racial/Ethnic students and the denomination at:

<http://www.pcusa.org/financialaid/scholarships.htm>. We suggest you check the websites of all the seminaries as well as other sources. We are aware of Higgins Scholarships available through the Presbytery of Chicago and the Apollos Program administered by the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation. There may be others.

Deadlines: Presbytery – February 1 Synod-March 1 (One form satisfies both)

Other scholarships may have other deadlines.

We know that CPE and ordination exams have fees associated with them, but our budget does not allow assistance beyond the semi-annual "loans."

CPM Meeting Dates:

Currently in January, April, August, and December, but that may change. Check with Rev. Mark Hunt (islandpreacha@yahoo.com) for up to the minute information.

Ordination Exam Dates and Deadlines:

2007 EXAM SCHEDULE

January 26th –27th Winter Ordination Exams

February 1st Biblical Exegesis Exams Due 9:00 A.M.

**February 2nd Bible Content Examination 10:00 A.M.
(T.B.A.) (Date change pending)**

March 5th –8th Spring Reading Groups (Atlanta & Chicago)

March 26th Grades Released

April 2nd Bible Content Exam Grades Released (Date change pending)

June 15th Early Registration DEADLINE August Exams

JULY 16th FINAL DEADLINE to Register for August Exams

July 27th Books for Bible Exegesis Exams Announced

August 24-25 Summer Ordination Exams

August 30th Biblical Exegesis Exam due back 9:00 A.M.

October 1st -4th Fall Reading Groups

October 22nd Grades Released (Via Fax)

November 16th EARLY Registration Deadline \$70 each exam, Ordination Exams & Bible Content

DECEMBER 7th DEADLINE to Submit: Ordination Exam & Bible Content Applications for 2008

December 27th Biblical Exegesis Books (January '08) Announced

2008 EXAM SCHEDULE

January 18th Bible Content Exams Mailed to Proctors

January 25-26 Spring Ordination Exams (Theology, Worship, Polity)

February 1st Bible Content Examination 10:00 A.M.

January 31st Biblical Exegesis Exam due back by 9:00 A.M.

March 2-6 Reading Groups

March 24th **GRADES RELEASED**

June 16th EARLY Registration Deadline \$70 each exam.

JULY 15th FINAL DEADLINE to Register for August Exams

July 25th Books for Bible Exegesis Exams Announced

August 22-23 Summer Ordination Exams

August 28th Biblical Exegesis Exams due back 9:00 A.M.

October 5-9 Reading Groups

October 27th **GRADES RELEASED**

November 17th EARLY Registration Deadline \$70 each exam, Ordination Exams & Bible Content

DECEMBER 15th FINAL DEADLINE to Submit: Ordination Exam & Bible Content Applications for 2009

December 23rd Biblical Exegesis Books (January '09) Announced