

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) fills the function of Presbytery described in the Book of Order G-1 1.0103 (1): “to enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament by enrolling them as inquirers, to receive inquirers as candidates, and to certify candidates as ready for examination for ordination.” The responsibilities of CPM can be described in two ways: 1) Handling the documentation that is required to track an individual through the process of becoming an Inquirer, moving to Candidacy, and accepting a call for ordination. The denomination requires that the CPM follows very specific guidelines to ensure that our new Ministers of the Word and Sacrament are prepared in the best way possible for work in our churches. There are forms for every step, which must be coordinated and reported on the Presbyterian PROMPT system. We do take the documentation responsibilities seriously and keep close, up-to-date records. 2) Elevating the discernment process, which is truly the heart of the CPM’s calling. Each committee member is liaison for two or more Inquirers/Candidates (I/C). We are to keep in very close contact with them, supporting, guiding, and praying for them. At every contact, we work to help the I/C refine his/her call to the ministry. Our retreats focus on that critical part of our work. The specific process by which this is accomplished is described in the Book of Order G-14.0300.



Skills and Expertise Needed: The need to be able to comfortably care for and communicate with I/C is essential. It is also important to be well grounded theologically, to possess the ability to assess people’s gifts and calling, and to have the gift of discernment. Being familiar with or willing to learn the intricacies of Book of Order G-14.0300 is also a part of the committee responsibilities.

Time Requirements: The CPM meets 11 months each year, usually on Saturday and usually at Geneva Center. Two special exceptions are the February meeting used as a 3-day training retreat for CPM members (team building, refining our ways of work, planning) and the June meeting used as a 3-day retreat for Inquirers and Candidates. During the latter retreat we hold individual consultation times with each I/C and invite their home church liaison to meet with us. We also provide workshops in topics of importance for them. During the year, we meet with I/Cs as necessary, work with seminaries, prepare Candidates for examination on the floor of Presbytery, and continue to communicate with those under our care. Several of us serve as ordination examination graders in the Chicago region.

Committee members serve as liaison to one or more candidates. Terms are for three years, with a



second three year term possible. People are busy, but we have come to appreciate how much communication is necessary to keep those under care feeling cared for and progressing. It is hard to have someone leave the committee before his/her I/Cs are finished – they feel abandoned! CPM members need a special commitment to helping individuals through a difficult and stressful time of life as well as protecting and promoting the church.