

EXAMINING MINISTERS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Whom are we examining?

- Candidates for first call
- Ministers transferring from another presbytery
- Formula partner ministers under “orderly exchange”
“To be eligible to serve in another of the participating churches, an ordained minister will demonstrate to the appropriate regional body of the inviting church –knowledge of and an appreciation for the history, polity, theology, and liturgical identity, practices of ministry, and discipline of that church.” (p. 2 Orderly Exchange document)
- Ministers transferring from another denomination
- New immigrant ministers from another denomination
- Honorably retired ministers moving in
- Persons who have laid aside ordination and want to resume active ministry

Exactly what are we examining for?

G-3.0306 – The presbytery, through its appropriate committee, shall examine each minister or candidate...on:

- His or her Christian faith
- Views in theology, the Sacraments, government of this church

What are the essentials? What are the boundaries of acceptability?

Any other requirements?

Every minister shall have a call to:

- A pastoral relationship within the presbytery
- A governing body or agency – presbytery, synod, GA or organization related to such bodies
- Organization sponsored by 2 or more denominations one of is PCUSA
- A partner in mission in connection with a church outside the US

Or

- A validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church -a ministerial calling consonant with the mission of the presbytery (G-2.0503a, G-3.0306)
- Be a “minister-at-large” (*See Special Categories of Membership*)
- Be honorably retired

So...There are 2 parts to COM responsibility here –

- 1) Approving the call –
 - a. Is this appropriate ministerial work?
 - b. Is this person called to this work? Is this a match of needs and gifts?
- 2) Examining for membership in the presbytery – faith and views

Approving the Call –

Is this appropriate ministerial work (validated ministry)? [See Validated Ministry]

Read through G-2.0503. Discuss these criteria in relationship to situations with which you have experience or which might come before your COM

Is this person called to this particular ministry? Is it a match of needs and gifts?

Discuss how you can use the MIF, the PIF, and your experience as a PNC liaison to discern a call.

Examining for Membership in This Presbytery –

Faith and Views

List questions that your COM might ask to learn about an individual's:

- Faith

Views on

- Sacraments
- Theology
- Governance

What are the boundaries for your presbytery in those areas? What would cause you to disapprove an examination?