

APPENDIX F

New Castle Presbytery's Policy on Examinations

F.1001 - Examinations of candidates for membership in New Castle Presbytery shall be conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the individual, faithful to Reformed theology, useful as a practice for spiritual formation, that demonstrates a spirit of graciousness toward one another, and, when there is a specific call, seeks to discern the ways that the candidate's gifts and skills are a good match for the congregation. The examination process (as set forth in F-1002 and F-1003 below) shall apply both to Ministers of Word and Sacrament and to Ruling Elders seeking commissioning to a particular pastoral service.

F.1002 - The examination shall take the form of a conversation around the following areas of discussion:

1. Personal faith journey
2. Discernment concerning this particular call (how does the candidate sense God's call to this particular ministry? What gifts/skills seem to match the congregation? etc.)
3. Personal strengths and growing edges in ministry
4. Compensation/Terms of Call (review of Terms of Call form; what questions need to be addressed or discussions still needed about salary, benefits, etc.)
5. Connecting with Presbytery (what gifts & interests the candidate might share with the presbytery; where might the candidate engage or connect? etc.)
6. General questions of all candidates for membership in NCP:
 - a. Are you able to answer in the affirmative the Constitutional Questions for Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning set forth in W-4.0404?
 - b. Are you willing to affirm/re-affirm your commitment to "be governed by our church's polity and abide by its discipline?" (W-4.0404e)

F.1003 - In the interest of affirming suitability of a candidate for a particular position, the Examinations and Credentials Team of COMC (as defined in F.1004)

will verify that the candidate and the pastor nominating committee (PNC) (or other search body involved) have both discussed the particular church's tone, tenor, and theological leanings.

F.1004 - The Examinations and Credentials Team of three (3) to five (5) members shall include persons of theological diversity and persons knowledgeable of the theological position of the church involved. The Examinations and Credentials Team shall include, but not be limited to, COMC members. In the case of a Minister of Word and Sacrament seeking a position within the Presbytery, the team shall conduct the examination prior to announcement of the candidate to the congregation involved and the calling of a congregational meeting at which the Minister of Word and Sacrament is to be a candidate (or calling of a session meeting in the case of an interim pastoral candidate). If the team has concerns as a result of the examination, it will immediately report these concerns to the PNC (or session) of the church involved and to the COMC. The COMC will then stop the process so that the concerns can be addressed. Any scruple declared by a candidate will be brought before a meeting of the Presbytery for review.

F.1005 - The Presbytery specifically delegates the responsibility to examine and approve pastoral relationships to the COMC. This includes actions to:

- 1) Examine and Receive Ministers of Word and Sacrament into New Castle Presbytery;
- 2) Dismiss Ministers of Word and Sacrament to other presbyteries;
- 3) Dissolve a pastoral relationship (including approval of the dissolution agreement) in cases in which the pastor and congregation concur;
- 4) Authorize Ministers of Word and Sacrament to labor within the bounds of New Castle Presbytery;
- 5) Authorize Ministers of Word and Sacrament members to labor outside the bounds of New Castle Presbytery;
- 6) Approve validated ministries;
- 7) Approve membership-at-large and inactive membership in the Presbytery

These actions by the COMC shall be reported to the Presbytery at the next stated meeting.

F.1006 - Following examination and approval by the COMC, the Minister of Word and Sacrament will be introduced and welcomed into the Presbytery at the earliest possible Presbytery meeting. The introduction and welcome shall include:

- 1) The pastor's Statement of Faith and Faith Journey which will be included in the Presbytery Docket Packet
- 2) The pastor's brief (two minute or less) description of their faith journey and how it has led them to New Castle Presbytery,
- 3) One question from the Chair of the Committee on Ministers and Congregations, or designee.

F.1007 – Candidates for the ministry who are Certified Ready to Receive a Call and have received a valid call shall go before the full Presbytery to be introduced, examined and approved. The examination on the floor of the Presbytery shall be limited to:

- 1) An introduction by the COMC and the calling congregation
- 2) The candidate's brief (two minute or less) presentation of their Statement of Faith and Faith Journey – included in the Docket Packet.
- 3) An initial question from the Chair of the COMC or their designee.
- 4) Questions from the floor of the Presbytery regarding the candidate's Statement of Faith and Faith Journey.

*As approved by Presbytery
11/14/2020*