

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA  
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND ROBERT J. TUTTLE, CHAIR  
JANUARY 30, 2016**

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommends the following to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina:

**RECOMMENDATION:**

<p><b>I. THAT</b> David Brandon Smith, a member of Montreat Presbyterian Church, and a student at Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, NJ, be enrolled as a Candidate following the required examination by Presbytery.</p>
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Recently, your Committee on Preparation for Ministry conducted an interview with an Inquirer who asked, with the support of his sponsoring congregation and Session, that he be enrolled as a Candidate in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. We recommend him to you today for your approval.

**David Brandon Smith** comes with the support of his congregation and the recommendation of the Session of Montreat Presbyterian Church. His written call to ministry/faith statement is contained in this packet (see CPM Attachment 1).

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION:**

- Jason Myers, a candidate from the Fairview Presbyterian Church in Lenoir, was certified ready to receive a call on January 20, 2016.

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is hoping that you will help to identify and encourage people whom you feel that God is calling into the ministry to be a Teaching Elder. Care for people who are feeling a call to the ministry of Teaching Elder is a shared responsibility of the Session and the Presbytery. The process is described below.

**The Process of Becoming a Candidate and Beginning to Receive a Call**

“It is important that those who are to be ordained as teaching elders receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into a covenant relationship with those preparing to become teaching elders and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.” (*Book of Order G-2.0601*)

**Inquiry Phase:**

In order to begin the inquiry phase, an applicant must be a member of the sponsoring congregation, shall have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months, and shall have received the endorsement of their session. This person is then examined by CPM, and if approved, is enrolled as an Inquirer.

“The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together so that the

presbytery can make an informed decision about the Inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry." (G-2.0603) A person must be an Inquirer for at least one year.

### **Candidacy Stage:**

When an Inquirer believes, through their discernment, that they are called to the position of Teaching Elder, they can request that they become a Candidate. The Inquirer will meet with their Session and explain their sense of call. The Session can endorse them and recommend them to the CPM. The CPM, through its discernment, can decide to recommend them to the Presbytery. At the recommendation of the CPM, the Inquirer comes before the Presbytery to share part of their faith journey and their sense of call. The Presbytery can then ask them questions in respect to their sense of call, not questions of content of an ordination exam. They can ask about "their Christian faith, forms of Christian service, and motives for seeking the ministry." (Adopted from a previous *Book of Order*.)

"The purpose of the candidacy phase, then, is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as teaching elders." (G-2.0604)

### **Preparation for a Call:**

Before a person may take a call in our Presbytery, they must have completed the following:

- Pass the Bible Content Exam.
- Pass the four Senior Ordination Exams (Biblical Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship and Sacraments, and Church Polity).
- Complete a two-day battery of assessments administered by a Career & Personal Counseling Center.
- Complete one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education training (CPE).
- Normally, complete at least one year at a PCUSA seminary.
- Meet annually with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
- Have been an Inquirer at least one year and have been a Candidate at least one year.
- Take a course in Reformed Theology and Polity.

### **Must be Approved by CPM to Receive a Call:**

A Candidate may not begin to enter negotiations about a call as a Teaching Elder without the approval of the CPM, which has been delegated this task. When a Candidate has completed the above, the CPM will examine the Candidate and determine if he/she is ready to begin looking for a call, and if so, will "certify the person ready to receive a call." The Candidate will also have their Personal Information Form (PIF) reviewed and approved by CPM. When the person receives a call, the Candidate will be examined by the receiving presbytery.

If a Candidate who is under care of this Presbytery receives a call within our bounds, that candidate will preach before the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and their sermon will be included in the Presbytery report.