

**THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA  
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND DWIGHT CHRISTENBURY, CHAIR  
JULY 30, 2021**

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

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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| <p><b>I. RECOMMEND</b> to Presbytery that it waive the one-year requirement for inquiry for Brandon Davis, an inquirer from Arbor Dale Presbyterian Church.</p> |
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The *Book of Order* requires inquirers and candidates to fulfill a year of inquiry and a year of candidacy. Brandon will finish seminary in May of 2022. Arbor Dale Presbyterian Church hired him as their Director of Youth Ministry with the understanding that he could not join the church as an employee. He joined after stepping down from that position to attend seminary (having served six years). After much discussion, it was decided this request was worthy of an exception, since Brandon was with the church several years. The candidacy requirement can't be shortened, but CPM would like to ask Presbytery to waive the full year of inquiry by a 3/4 affirmative vote.

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| <p><b>II. THAT</b> Emily Beaver, a member of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church and a student at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, 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 her sponsoring congregation and Session, that she be enrolled as a Candidate in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. We recommend her to you today for your approval.

**Emily Beaver** comes with the support of her congregation and the recommendation of the Session of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church. Her written call to ministry/faith statement is contained in this packet (see CPM Attachment 1).

**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.
- Complete Seminary.

### **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.

# CPM ATTACHMENT 1

Emily Beaver  
Statement of Call

Dear Members of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina,

I am pleased to share my call to ministry with you. I am immensely grateful for each of you and the valuable role you play in my call story. Thank you.

I do not have a specific moment when I knew that I was being called to ministry, but instead, I believe that my call is deeply intertwined with many aspects of my life. I was born and raised in Black Mountain, NC, as an active Black Mountain Presbyterian Church member. My grandfather is a retired Presbyterian minister. Throughout high school, I loved reading liturgy in services and engaging in church life. These were the first moments when I began to hear my call, but at the time, I did not realize it.

I went to college and found my place on campus in Presbyterian Campus Ministry- Raleigh. That was where I felt at home. Those were the people who made a campus of 35,000 people feel like a close-knit family. Presbyterian Campus Ministry was where I could ask questions and explore my faith on my terms. During my freshman year, I received the opportunity to be on the Pastor Nominating Committee and help select the new campus minister. That experience gave me my first glimpse into life as a clergy member, and I wondered if God might call me to something in the Church.

As a Religious Studies student at North Carolina State University, I was a member of a small, personable department made up of faculty who knew me. I built relationships with the faculty, who encouraged my curiosity and pushed me to pursue my interests. I enjoyed a variety of courses across a wide range of faith practices and areas of study. I enjoyed the interfaith aspect of my studies and began to think that I might want to attend graduate school and consider a career in academia or research.

During this same time, my involvement in Presbyterian Campus Ministry- Raleigh was increasing. In my sophomore year, I joined the leadership team and was the chair of the Outreach Committee. I was engaged in coordinating events with other campus ministry groups and partner churches in the Raleigh area. Each time I would reach out to someone about an event, I was reminded why I love the connectional church. My sophomore year, I became more involved with West Raleigh Presbyterian Church, the host church for Presbyterian Campus Ministry. Building relationships with the people of that church was a gift. Their hospitality humbled me. In my junior year, I served as the Moderator of the leadership team. That year was a year of tremendous personal growth and discernment. I would pin this year as to when I listened and took the time to discern my call. The grace of West Raleigh Presbyterian and the community of Presbyterian Campus ministry helped me recognize a greater call I had to serve the Church.

# CPM ATTACHMENT 1

I have wrestled with what it means to have a call since I said “yes” to Columbia Theological Seminary during the end of my final year of undergrad. I said “yes” to Columbia at the very beginning of the pandemic. I think back to that moment and reflect on all the ways life has changed since. Engaging in my first year of seminary completely virtually has been a challenge and created space for me to consider my call deeply. I still do not know what my call will look like in a practical sense, but I want to pursue Ordination, and I want to serve the Church. Relationships are essential, and when you build relationships with people through faith, you open yourself up to deeper connections. I want to connect with people. I want to be able to walk alongside people through the seasons of life. I believe that we are called to live in community together, and when we live in community together, I believe we are modeling God’s kingdom here on Earth. I believe that we are all Children of God, and we are all called to be ministers of the faith, speaking the truth and love.

I believe much of my call will be shaped around the work of pastoral care. As a current Clinical Pastoral Education student, I am thriving in spaces where I can sit with a person as they work through challenging emotions and have conversations around their faith and pain. I come alive in spaces where I can lift up others and support them in their own spiritual journeys. I am hesitant to name any specific context that I believe I am being called to because I believe there are many different ways we, as pastoral caregivers, can care for others. I have been shaped into the person I am today by the support of many people. I attribute my call to the ways many pastors, campus ministers, and professors have nurtured me and pushed me to pursue my passions. I wanted to be able to serve others in the same ways those people served me. I believe that God has laid a path before me, and I am thrilled to continue the journey, discovering all the beautiful twists and turns along the way.

Blessings,

Emily Beaver