

The Presbytery of the Coastlands

Empowering congregations and people of faith to transform the world.

TRANSFERRING A MINISTER OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION AS A PC(USA) PASTOR

Book of Order Excerpts

G-2.0505 Transfer of Ministers of Other Denominations

a. When a minister of another Christian church is called to a work properly under the jurisdiction of a presbytery, the presbytery, after the constitutional conditions have been met, shall recognize the minister's previous ordination to ministry. Such ministers shall furnish credentials and evidence of good standing acceptable to the presbytery, and shall submit satisfactory evidence of possessing the qualifications of character and scholarship required of candidates of this church. (G-2.0607 and G-2.0610). In exceptional circumstances the following provisions will apply:

(1) In the case of ministers for immigrant fellowships and congregations, a presbytery may, if it determines that its strategy for mission with that group requires it, recognize the ordination and receive as a member of presbytery a new immigrant minister who furnishes evidence of good standing in a denomination, even though at the time of enrollment that minister lacks the educational history required of candidates, and provide such educational opportunities as seem necessary and prudent for that minister's successful ministry in the presbytery.

(2) A minister of another Reformed church who has been ordained for five or more years may be granted an exemption for some or all of the examinations required of candidates for ordination by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery.

b. Upon enrollment, the minister shall furnish the presbytery with evidence of having surrendered membership in any and all other Christian churches with which the minister has previously been associated.

G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a minister of the Word and Sacrament shall include:

a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;

b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;

c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of

Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and

d. examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

G-2.0610 Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an individual seeking ordination, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-fourths vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.

Committee on Ministry Process

1. The stated clerk verifies with the candidate's current denomination that the candidate is a member in good standing.
2. Request the candidate have his/her/their transcript, with satisfactory grades from an accredited college or university, sent to the stated clerk.
3. Request the candidate have his/her/their transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and acceptable to the presbytery sent to the stated clerk. The transcript should show a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, and satisfactory grades in all areas of study. The COM may also require the candidate to provide evidence of satisfactory completion of one or more of the following courses: Reformed theology, Reformed worship and sacraments, and Presbyterian polity.
4. Request the candidate submit his/her/their statement of faith.
5. If the candidate is transferring in from a denomination with which we are NOT in full communion and has been ordained less than five years, request the candidate provide his/her/their examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.
6. A Committee on Ministry team interviews the candidate to ascertain the reason for requesting ordination as a PC(USA) minister and recommend an appropriate course of action to the full committee.

NOTE: If any of the above requirements need to be waived, a three-fourths vote of presbytery is required. For a Reformed minister who has been ordained for five or more years, COM can choose to have the presbytery grant an exemption for (5) above by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery.