

The Presbytery of the Coastlands

Empowering congregations and people of faith to transform the world.

CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR VALIDATION OF MINISTRIES

This rubric is intended for use by COM or a subset of COM in conversation with ministers or candidates seeking validation for a ministry outside of a congregational context. After the minister/candidate submits their request for validation and basic ministry information, COM or a subset of COM shall meet with the minister/candidate to explore and assess whether the ministry in question meets the criteria for validation by the Presbytery of the Coastlands.

The Book of Order (G-2.0503) specifies five criteria for validating ministries. These are listed below with further specifications for assessing each one. COM members engaged in conversation with ministers/candidates seeking validation for a ministry are encouraged to use this rubric as a guide for conversation and documentation, not a quiz or test for the minister/candidate. If, after the initial conversation it is still not clear to the members of COM whether all criteria have been met, COM may request additional information from the minister/candidate in writing.

Documentation regarding the recommended course of action is to be provided on the Request for Validation form.

A validated ministry shall:

(1) demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of this church;

In what way(s) does this ministry further the Great Ends of the Church as affirmed in the Book of Order [F 1.0304]:

- the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
- the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
- the maintenance of divine worship;
- the preservation of the truth;
- the promotion of social righteousness; and
- the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

What other ways do you see this ministry as conforming with the mission of God's people?

Are there any potential conflicts between the values of the ministry/organization and the stated mission of the Presbytery?* If so, how might you resolve the conflict?

(2) serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others;

Who specifically is served or aided by this ministry and in what way?

How will this ministry encourage and enable the ministry of others?

Is there potential for anyone to be harmed (physically, emotionally, spiritually, etc.) by this ministry? If so, what safeguards are in place to prevent and minimize harm?

(3) give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;

How is this ministry faithful to Jesus' commandments to love God and love neighbor?

How does the stated mission/purpose of the ministry align with the basic tenets of Reformed Theology (as expressed in the Book of Confessions)?

(4) be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served;

What (if any) other professional or organizational standards will you be governed by in this ministry?

What (if any) systems of accountability are in place for this ministry beyond that of the Presbytery?

What is your understanding of your accountability to the Presbytery in this ministry?

(5) include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

How do you intend to participate in the life of the Presbytery? Do you have any specific gifts or calling for service to the Presbytery?

How do you intend to participate in the life of a congregation?

How might the Presbytery and/or its congregations support you in your ministry outside the church?

What specific forms of support do you anticipate needing or valuing?

***Note:** Please see the Presbytery's website for the most current mission statement.