

**PREPATORY MANUAL FOR
THOSE CALLED TO SHEPHERD
THE FLOCK OF GOD**



**THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE
RIVERS & LAKES PRESBYTERY**

*“Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.”*

- Psalm 111:2

*“A minister must be both learned and religious.
It is not a matter of choosing between the two...the two must combine
if the servant of God is to give a pure, clear, and strong message.”*

- Benjamin B. Warfield

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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of this Manual

The Lord Jesus Christ, when He instituted His Church on earth, also provided the human agency by which His Church is to be built up and perfected. To this end, He ordained the office of Minister of the Word, to rule and teach and shepherd the people of God.

Since the Church's well-being depends, under Christ, on a ministry that is godly, gifted, and sound in the faith, the Church must seek out and test those who aspire to the ministry of the Gospel in order to assure herself of their qualifications for the sacred office.

This Manual is an attempt to set forth the guidelines that the Rivers & Lakes Presbytery follows in receiving Candidates for the Gospel ministry and receiving transfers of Candidates and ordained ministers from other Presbyteries or Denominations. Its intent is to answer the practical questions relating to the various steps toward ordination.

Nothing in the life of the Church is more critical than the piety, sound teaching, and competence of her ministers. The Church must, therefore, examine and test the qualifications and service of her Candidates. It is noteworthy that the biblical qualifications do not focus entirely, or even primarily, on academics or knowledge, but on the sincerity of genuine faith, love for the Lord and His Church, and zeal to see His Kingdom advanced according to the gracious means He provides (1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Pt 5:1-3).

The Role of the Candidate

Scripture teaches that a Minister of the Word is called by God to the sacred office. A man may set his heart on such a calling (1 Timothy 3:1), but this is not to say that anyone may take this office upon himself. The exercise of the office is within the life and calling of the Church.

A Candidate for the Gospel ministry must emerge from the fellowship of the Church. They must come under the care of a Presbytery. While under its care, they are to report regularly as to their growth in grace, progress toward meeting the qualifications for ordination, and involvement in the ministry and life of their local congregation.

Candidates who understand the significance of being entrusted with the preaching of the Gospel will pursue a course study that will help them accurately divide the word of truth.

The Candidate should seek a bachelor's degree, or its academic equivalent, from a college or university of reputable academic standing. They should also undertake a course of training consistent with the recommended curriculum for ministerial preparation in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church

including theological training in a seminary that will adequately prepare them for ministry in a Reformed and Presbyterian Denomination.

Candidates must report changes in address, biographical information or Church membership status to both the Stated Clerk and the Ministerial Committee through its chairperson. Candidates who become members of Churches outside the bounds of Rivers & Lakes Presbytery should carefully consider moving their candidacy to the new Presbytery, or provide substantial reasons for not doing so.

While the Committee is sincerely interested in your growth toward the Gospel ministry, the primary responsibility for your progress toward ordination belongs to you, the Candidate. Your Session and the Ministerial Committee are available to offer oversight, encouragement, and support; but generally you should take the initiative and actively seek out the support, guidance, and counsel you need to successfully complete these requirements. It is your responsibility to see that all the requirements are met and your preparations are completed in a timely manner.

The Role of the Session

Ministerial Candidates are under the pastoral oversight of their own Sessions. It is primarily the responsibility of the Session to oversee the general spiritual, physical, and material well-being of the Candidate and their family. This general oversight continues during the time the Candidate is under care of the Presbytery. Sessions should notify the Stated Clerk and Ministerial Committee chairperson of any changes or anticipated changes in the membership status of those under care at their earliest convenience.

The local Session should discern within the congregation those gifted for the Gospel ministry and lend confirmation to their sense of God's call. As an exercise of pastoral oversight, the Session commends those discerning a call to ministry to be taken under care of the Presbytery since the Session best knows the Candidate and their potential for the ministry. A written recommendation, therefore, from the Candidate's Session is required to be taken under care of the Presbytery. Example questions for the discernment of this call are available in this manual along with the necessary form to be submitted upon confirmation of the Candidates call by the local Session.

The Session of each local church should provide a copy of the Constitution of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church vol. I & II to those discerning a sense of call to the ministry. These standards include the specific requirements for candidacy and ordination that this manual is designed to reflect.

The Role of the Presbytery

The Presbytery is granted authority and responsibility to oversee the examination, ordination, and installation of Teaching Elders (G. 19-4.B.2,3). The Presbytery, therefore, is responsible to closely supervise the Candidates under its

care and carry out all necessary examinations through its established Ministerial Committee (G. 21-2).

It is primarily the responsibility of Presbytery to examine the Candidates understanding of God's Word and those disciplines related to the ministry of the Word, to guide and counsel them in pursuit of a course of theological education and practical training in preparing themselves for the ministry, and to seek evaluations of their gifts for the ministry.

The Role of the Ministerial Committee

Chapter VI of the Bylaws of Rivers & Lakes Presbytery establishes the formation of a Ministerial Committee in accordance with the constitution of the EPC (G. 19-4.B.1). The primary task of the Ministerial Committee (hereinafter "MC") is to make recommendations to the Presbytery, which alone has authority to take Candidates under care, to ordain them to the Gospel ministry, or to receive their transfer from another Presbytery or Denomination. The MC reviews requests for application to come under care of the Presbytery and then commits to shepherd Candidates and Transfers through to their ordination and installation in the Gospel ministry according to the Lord's calling. The MC also coordinates the examinations required for each step toward ministry and for transfer of credentials. It regularly reviews the status and progress of Candidates toward the ministry, and offers specific encouragement and advice to assist the Candidate in their preparation for ministry and in seeking a call to ministry.

In its regular review of the status and progress of the Candidates, the MC, through its designated contact person, shall communicate with the Candidate and make regular reports at the stated meetings of the Presbytery.

Since the areas of responsibility of both Presbytery and the Session tend to overlap, and since Presbytery, through its MC, may need advice and evaluation concerning the Candidate from a Session, and; likewise, the Session from the MC, the MC may correspond with the Candidates Session as necessary. Nevertheless, neither Presbytery, nor its MC, may normally serve as a substitute for the pastoral care provided by the local Session.

COMING UNDER CARE

The sequential steps in preparing a person for candidacy and then ordination involves many different parties. The individual applicant who senses God's call to the ministry is central to the process, but the applicant's church and Presbytery are also involved.

The Call to Ministry

In the Reformed tradition, a call to ministry is understood as a three-fold call. First, there is the inward call to the individual where the person bears

testimony of God's call. Second, there is a confirming call of a particular church, church court, or other appropriate agency to that person to fill the office, and third, the approval of that call by an appropriate court of the church (G.10-1).

Requirement of Membership

A Candidate must be a communicant member of a local congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church for at least six months prior to making application (G.11-2.A). Ordinarily this membership would be in a church within the Presbytery to which the Candidate is applying to be taken under care.

Those under care of the Presbytery are expected to maintain membership in good standing within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church throughout their candidacy. Generally this will be under the oversight of a local Session within Rivers & Lakes Presbytery. If a Candidate relocates their church membership, they must notify the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and the MC through its chairperson. Candidates who move their church membership to a church outside of the bounds of the Presbytery must provide compelling reason why their name should not be removed from the roll of Candidates under care.

Coming Under Care of Presbytery

The first formal step toward candidacy and ordination is that the Candidate shall apply to come under care of the Presbytery (G.11-1).

Session Recommendation

The Pastor, or any member of the Session, upon learning that a person in the congregation has a sense of call to the ministry, should discuss with the person the particulars of their sense of call. If, after prayer and discussion, the applicant truly wants to pursue the candidacy process, the Pastor or other Session member should notify the MC.

A representative of the MC should meet with the Session before they formally interview an applicant or endorse them for candidacy. This requirement allows for instruction on the qualities needed in Teaching Elders, and the obligation that falls upon any endorsing church. Session should be encouraged to seriously evaluate the applicant as to their sense of call, and as to their qualifications to pursue ordination. Session should do all it can to encourage suitably gifted members to consider pursuing ministry in the EPC. Local Sessions should view it as a great privilege to encourage and mentor Candidates for the ministry from their own congregations. In the evaluation of an applicant, Session should assure itself that it can endorse the applicant in good conscience to pursue ordination to the Gospel ministry within the EPC.

A written recommendation from the Session of the local congregation of which the Candidate is a member should be submitted to the MC (FORM A). This recommendation should certify that, in the judgment of the Session, their

Christian faith and potential gifts qualify them to be taken under the care of the Presbytery with a view toward ordination to the Gospel ministry. A list of questions designed to help Sessions in their evaluation and recommendation of a potential Candidate is provided in Appendix 5 of this Manual.

Application for Candidacy

The Candidate shall complete the application to come under care (FORM B) and submit it with the additional preliminary questionnaire (FORM C). Additionally, the endorsing Session shall complete the required paperwork (FORM A) and submit it to the MC.

Ministerial Pre-Screening

The MC, once notified, shall make whatever tests of gifts and abilities, as well as of sincerity of purpose, it deems necessary. Ordinarily, once all the required paperwork is submitted, the full MC will meet with the prospective Candidate six weeks prior to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. If the Candidate is approved, the Committee shall recommend to Presbytery the approval of candidacy at the next stated meeting (G.11-2.B).

Candidate's Examination

The Presbytery shall make public examination of the Candidate as to Christian experience and growth, the motive for seeking ordination, and a statement regarding the person's call to the ministry. The Candidate's Session should help the applicant to prepare for these examinations. Candidates seeking to come under care of Presbytery should be particularly prepared to answer the following questions:

- How do you know you are a Christian?
- What is your interest in Reformed Theology?
- What is your sense of call to ministry?
- What steps have you taken to prepare yourself for future ministry?
- Why do you desire to minister within the EPC?
- In as far as you are aware of them, what are your motives for seeking to become a Minister of the Gospel?

Following this examination, the Candidate shall respond affirmatively to the following questions to be put by the Moderator of the Presbytery:

- As you understand God's working in your heart and life, do you continue to believe yourself called to the office of Teaching Elder?
- Do you now submit yourself to the care and supervision of this Presbytery as you prepare yourself for this office?
- Do you renew your commitment as a Christian, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, to live as becomes a follower of Jesus?

Receiving Candidates

Following affirmative answers to the Candidate's vows on the floor of Presbytery, a prayer of blessing and appropriate charge should be given to the new Candidate. The Moderator shall then declare the person received as a Candidate, the person's name shall be placed on the Candidate roll of the Presbytery, and welcomed in an appropriate manner. It is appropriate for the home church of the Candidate to have a service of recognition.

When Should A Candidate Come Under Care?

A person may be taken under care of Presbytery at any time in their preparation for the ministry. Generally, the MC encourages those preparing for the ministry to consider coming under care of Presbytery sometime prior to the mid-point of their seminary training.

Oversight of Candidates

The Candidate continues to be a member of the local church and under the shepherding of the Session. But with regard to the Candidate's training for the ministry, the Candidate is under the oversight of the Presbytery. The Presbytery shall assign a Teaching Elder in the Presbytery (ordinarily not the Candidate's Pastor) to serve as advisor to the Candidate. The advisor and the Candidate's Pastor shall submit regular reports to the MC on the progress of the Candidate.

The MC shall oversee the training of the Candidate, giving encouragement and pastoral attention, and making an annual report to the Presbytery of the progress of the Candidate. Ordinarily, a Candidate must be under care for a minimum of one year prior to ordination.

Transferring Credentials

A Candidate from another Reformed Denomination who has been under care for at least one year in that Denomination, has met EPC educational requirements for ordination, and is pursuing a call from an EPC congregation shall be examined in the manner prescribed in this Manual pursuant with the direction of the Book of Government (G.12-3.A). Any Candidates from outside the Reformed Tradition should follow the full procedures outlined in this manual according to the Book of Government (G.11-2).

Termination of Candidacy

The MC should conduct an annual review of the Candidate roll. The normal process of candidacy is to shepherd the Candidate through the appropriate steps that will lead them to ordination. Sometimes; however, a candidacy must be terminated.

Reasons for Termination

1. The Candidate decides they no longer wish to pursue ordination.
2. The Candidate decides they no longer wish to pursue ordination within the EPC.
3. The Candidate engages in behavior or embraces beliefs that would not be acceptable to the EPC.
4. The Candidate is making no progress over an extended period of time in pursuing ordination.

Steps in Termination

1. If it is the intent of the Candidate to terminate their candidacy, they should express that desire in writing and submit it to the MC.
2. If it is the intent of the MC to terminate a Candidate who has not requested termination, the MC should put in writing its intent to the Candidate with a listing of its reasons for seeking termination.
3. The MC or one of its representatives should seek to meet with the Candidate and discuss with them the intent to terminate candidacy.
4. The MC should bring to Presbytery a motion to terminate candidacy.
5. If the Candidate was accepted under care with extraordinary status the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery should inform the Ministerial Vocation Committee of the decision of Presbytery to terminate candidacy.

Reinstatement of Candidacy

A person's candidacy may be reinstated through the following procedure:

1. If the person seeking reinstatement is a member of an EPC church other than the original sponsoring church, the person should be a member for a time sufficient for the Session to give a credible endorsement. The person's previous EPC membership may be considered adequate to fulfill the requirements of the Presbytery for purposes of reinstatement (G.11-2.A).
2. The Session of the church at which the former Candidate is currently a member, having satisfied itself that the potential Candidate shows evidence of a call to ministry and a commitment to pursue that call, endorses the member according to the procedures outlined above (FORM A).
3. The MC proceeds according to the procedures outlined above, requiring updated forms as necessary, and may recommend the Candidate's reinstatement to the Presbytery.
4. The potential Candidate is examined by the Presbytery according to the provisions of the constitution (G.11-2).

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION

In order for the Candidate to move toward ordination certain pre-requisites must be met. First, the prospective Ordinand must be a Candidate under the care of their Presbytery. Second, during the year of candidacy, the following steps should be completed:

- All undergraduate and graduate transcripts sent to the MC.
- Present a completed PIF with a written statement of personal Christian experience and events that have led to a sense of call to the MC (Form D).
- Appropriate paperwork regarding subscription to, or exceptions taken from, the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms should be submitted (Form E).
- Submit a physician's report on their physical examination to the MC.
- The Candidate should participate with a career counselor or counseling center approved by Presbytery in an evaluation of emotional, intellectual, and vocational aptitudes for ministry.
- The applicant shall agree to a background check.

These items may be completed at any point during the year of candidacy. However, expediency with regard to these responsibilities will ensure that the MC will have sufficient time to review all paperwork prior to meeting in person with the Candidate for oral examinations. Finally, a valid call to an approved particular church of the EPC must be extended to the Candidate.

Examinations For Ordination

The formal examination process includes both written and oral phases administered sequentially by the Ministerial Vocations Committee of the General Assembly and the MC of the Presbytery. This step toward ordination involves the greatest amount of time, effort, and dedication that is not only for the purpose of passing examinations, but should be seen as their faithful stewardship of God's call as He leads them toward the high calling of Gospel ministry. Therefore, receive Paul's admonition to "do your best to present yourself to God as one approved...rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15).

Written Examinations

There are two phases of written exams that the Candidate must sustain before moving on to the oral exams. Appropriate aides and study materials are enclosed in this manual in addition to the body of learning that has been gained through seminary education.

Written Examinations Administered by the Office of the General Assembly

The Candidate must sustain written examinations administered by the Ministerial Vocation Committee of the Office of the General Assembly in the following areas (G.12-2.C):

- Theology
- English Bible
- The Sacraments
- The Constitution of the EPC
- The Reformed Tradition & Church History
- The Nature of the Office of Minister of the Word

The permanent Ministerial Vocation Committee has authorized three examinations which cover the areas above: (1) English Bible; (2) Theology, Sacraments and Reformed tradition; (3) Polity (*Book of Order* and Nature of the Office of Minister of the Word). There are several versions of each examination that are rotated annually.

Candidates may not request tests for themselves. When both the Candidate and Advisor have agreed that sufficient preparation has taken place, request for the written exams may be made through the Chairperson of the MC, who will order and arrange a schedule for the completion of the written exams. Proctors of ordination examinations must be approved by the Presbytery, MC, or the Office of the Stated Clerk (General Assembly). Examinations will be forwarded to the Proctor no sooner than 20 days prior to the date of testing. The Candidate may not review or study the tests prior to time of testing. Blank tests may not be duplicated by any means outside the General Assembly Office so that the integrity of the testing process may be preserved. If the Candidate decides not to take the tests at the appointed time, the Proctor shall return the blank tests to the Office of the General Assembly immediately.

Completed examinations shall be sent by certified mail or other means requiring a signature to the Office of the General Assembly for grading. Telephone and letter of exam results will notify the Chairperson who requested the tests on behalf of the Candidate. The Office of the Stated Clerk does not apprise the Candidate of the scores. This is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the MC. A score of 75% is required to sustain written examinations. The Ministerial Vocation Committee shall resolve any questions arising from examination grading. Written examinations are held on file in the Office of the Stated Clerk and are not released to the Candidate or MC.

Written Examinations Administered by the Ministerial Committee

The Candidate must sustain written examinations administered by the MC of the Presbytery in the following areas: competency in the original languages of

Scripture, and exegesis on an assigned portion of Scripture. It is possible to supply evidence of competency through submission of appropriate exegetical classroom work, or by a separate exam administered by the MC.

The exegesis paper should focus on a single text from the Old or New Testament, which is of sufficient length to demonstrate the Candidate's competence in exegeting a Hebrew or Greek Text. The paper should include the following:

1. A careful translation of the text from the original language including notes on major textual variants and, where appropriate, comparison with various English translations.
2. A thorough exposition of the text in a style similar to a modern commentary, including explanation of the grammatical structure and style of the text, a discussion of the context of the text (historical, cultural, social, religious, etc.), a discussion of the key words and themes of the text from a biblical-theological perspective, interaction with other exegetical treatments of the passage, both from the Reformed and non-Reformed perspectives.
3. A clear statement of the central teaching of the text and a discussion of this central theme and its implications for theology, ministry, faith and life, and/or ethics.
4. A homiletical outline and discussion of any issues which might be important in preaching this text of scripture is also appropriate.
5. A works cited page including a complete range of exegetical tools (e.g. edition of the Hebrew or Greek text with critical apparatus, textual commentary, lexicon and/or other lexical aids, Dictionary(ies) of Old or New Testament Theology, Biblical Dictionaries or Encyclopedias, Old or New Testament Histories, Biblical Introductions, commentaries (include interaction with at least one commentary which focuses upon the Hebrew or Greek text), Systematic Theologies or other theological writings, etc.).

Oral Examinations

There are three phases of the oral examination process. Two that are done privately with the MC, and a final two-part public examination on the floor of Presbytery. The first two oral examinations of the Candidate by the MC will take place no less than six weeks prior to the upcoming stated meeting of the Presbytery. In order for these examinations to take place, all paperwork must be submitted no less than two weeks prior to the scheduled oral examinations.

Oral Examinations Administered by the Ministerial Committee

The first phase of the oral examination, ordinarily takes place by phone, but may be completed in person at one of the MC's regular meetings at least six weeks prior to the upcoming stated meeting of the Presbytery. This examination

focuses on the Candidate's Christian experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth during the year of candidacy (G.12-2.B). Special attention will also be given to the sense of call and continued motivation to pursue the Gospel ministry. Candidates should expect that this exam will last at least one hour.

The second phase of the oral examination takes place at one of the MC's regular meetings at least six weeks prior to the upcoming stated meeting of the Presbytery. Candidates will be examined on content in the same areas as the written examinations, with special emphasis on the application to pastoral ministry. Candidates should expect that this exam will last at least two hours. A study guide of questions is included in this manual .

Oral Examinations Administered on the Floor of Presbytery

On the weekend of the stated meeting of the Presbytery, the Candidate should preach a sermon on an assigned text in order to demonstrate the ability to expound the Word of God effectively (G.12-2.D). Following the sermon, a floor examination will commence focusing on a brief summary of the Candidate's testimony and sense of call, and content material in the same areas as the written examination and MC oral exam, with special emphasis toward application to pastoral ministry. After the oral examination is arrested, the Candidate will address themselves as to subscription to the Essentials of the Faith without reservation, and to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, articulating any existing exceptions with grounds (G.12-4). The examination must be approved by a vote of the Presbytery. The Presbytery must also approve any exceptions to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. Any future exceptions should be submitted to the Presbytery for review and approval (G.12-4).

The Ordination and/or Installation of Teaching Elders

Ordinarily, the ordaining/installing Presbytery will appoint an administrative commission to conduct a worship service at a date and time approved by the Court. A sermon suitable to the occasion shall be preached. The person presiding shall recount the conditions necessary for ordination and/or installation, the solemnity of the event, and its importance in the life of the Church. The person presiding shall administer the following ordination vows for those being ordained:

- Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?
- Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

- Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
- Do you promise that if, at any time, you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
- Do you affirm and adopt the “Essentials of Our Faith” without exception?
- Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?
- Do you promise subjection to your fellow Presbyters in the Lord?
- Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?
- Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

For full instruction concerning the details of this service, please refer to chapter 13 of the *Book of Government*.

APPENDIX 1: STUDY GUIDE FOR ORAL EXAMS

Testimony and Call to Ministry

Christian Discipleship

- Your experience of the saving grace of God?
- The details of your discipleship/continuing walk with the Lord?
- What are some of your personal devotional practices?
- Please share your favorite (1 or 2) Scriptures.
- Have you read the entire Bible and how do you continue to cultivate your understanding of Scripture on a daily basis?

Call to Ministry

- When did you first sense God's call to ministry?
- What promoted you to answer this call?
- How was that call affirmed by others?
- What do you believe your gifts and weaknesses are relative to the requirements of the ministry?
- How would you evaluate your qualification for eldership in terms of the biblical requirements?
- Why are you interested in pursuing ministry in the EPC?

Bible

Answers should be given, as much as is possible, citing Book and Chapter

General

- What are some words you would use to describe Scripture's authority in the life of the Christian and the Body of Christ?
- What are some passages of Scripture that speak to the Bible's authority?
- Why is it important for a person to read, study and interpret the OT in order to understand the NT?
- What is the role of the Pastor in helping God's people understand Scripture?

Creation and the Adamic Covenant

- Where do we find the narrative of Creation in the Bible?
- Where do we find the 'Cultural Mandate'?
- What is significant about the 'Cultural Mandate'?
- What is the Adamic Covenant and where is it found?

The Fall

- Where do we find the narrative of the Fall of man in the Bible?
- What are the immediate results of the Fall?
- What are the far-reaching results of the Fall?
- Where do we find the Gospel presented in the Fall narrative?

The Flood, Noah and the Noahic Covenant

- Where do we find the Flood narrative in the Bible?
- What is the Noahic Covenant and where is it found?
- What is the language God uses in the Noahic Covenant?
- How is this language similar to the 'cultural mandate'?

The Call of Abram and the Abrahamic Covenant

- Where do we find the call of Abraham in the Bible?
- What language does God use in His calling of Abram?
- Where do we find the Abrahamic Covenant?
- What is the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant?

Jacob, Joseph and the Twelve Tribes of Israel

- Where do we find the narrative of Joseph in the Bible?
- Where does Joseph declare to his brothers, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today"?
- How does the narrative of Joseph demonstrate God's covenantal faithfulness to His people?

Redemption of Israel from Egypt, Moses and the Mosaic Covenant

- Where do we find the narrative of God's people enslaved in Egypt?
- What do you make of God 'hardening Pharaoh's heart'? How would you explain that to a person in your church struggling with the idea that God would harden the heart of someone?
- Where do we find the Passover narrative in the Bible?
- How does the Passover feast point us to Christ?
- Where do we find the Mosaic Covenant in the Bible?
- In what two places of Scripture do we find the 10 Commandments?
- Please name the 10 Commandments in order.
- Are the Commandments relevant today? Why or why not?
- Where do we find the *Shema* in the Bible, "Hear, O Israel..."

The Davidic Kingdom and Covenant

- Where do we find the narrative of King David in the Bible?
- How does David succeed in his kingship where Saul fails?
- Where do we find the Davidic Covenant in the Bible?
- What is significant about the God's covenant with David?
- How does the Davidic Covenant point us to Christ?
- Where do we find the split of the Davidic monarchy in the Bible?
- Under whose kingship is Israel divided?

The New Covenant

- In what book of the Bible do we find the New Covenant promised?
- What are some of the promises within the New Covenant?

- In what book of the Bible does God declare: "I will put my Spirit within you."?

Key Passages and Books

- What prophet addresses the 'Suffering Servant' and where is it found?
- How does the Suffering Servant passage point us to Christ?
- What is the longest Psalm?
- How are the Psalms Christian Scripture?
- What is wisdom literature? Examples?
- Explain the difference between major and minor prophets? Give examples.

Views

- What is your view of the Creation days?
- What is your view on the Historical Adam?
- Where do we see Adam referred to in the NT?
- Was Jonah an historical person or just a lesson with some timeless truths?
- How would you summarize the message of Jonah to God's people?

Gospels

- Name, locate, and briefly discuss three of Jesus' parables.
- Name, locate, and briefly discuss three of Jesus' miracles/signs.
- Why is the genealogy in Matthew important for our understanding of the continuity between the OT and the NT?
- Name the Synoptic Gospels.
- Name some of the distinctive features of each of the four Gospel accounts.
- How might we account for the differences in similar accounts between the Synoptic Gospels (i.e. Jesus calming the storm)?
- In other words, if someone asks why we need 3 Synoptic Gospels and 4 Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus, how would you answer?
- What is the significance of the "I AM" statements in John and where are they found?

Acts

- In Acts, Jesus gives instruction to the disciples regarding the building of His Church. How is this instruction a continuation of the Abrahamic covenant and where is the instruction found?
- How is Pentecost a reversal of the event at the Tower of Babel?
- How does Peter use the OT in his Pentecost sermon? What prophet does he quote specifically and what is the quote?
- How might you explain the death of Ananias and Sapphira?

Pauline Epistles

- Locate some of the Pauline Epistles in the life and ministry of Paul.
- Locate and discuss at least two passages that deal with law and grace.
- Where is Paul's understanding of the Gospel found in Romans?

- What is his understanding of the power of the Gospel?
- Where in Romans do we find the issue of being “in Adam” and “in Christ”?
- Where do we find the “Ordo Salutis” in Romans?
- What is the key issue in the book of Galatians that Paul addresses?
- In Ephesians, where is the sovereignty of God laid out most explicitly?

General Epistles

- Name one OT quote in Hebrews?
- Why is it important that the author of Hebrews relies heavily on the OT?
- Where do we find the restoration of all things in the NT?

Key People

Briefly discuss the significance of the following. Include book and chapter.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| • Herod the Great | • Cornelius |
| • Herod Antipas | • Barnabas |
| • Pharisees | • Stephen |
| • Sadducees | • Paul |
| • The Disciples (name 3) | • Timothy |
| • Peter | • James |

Key Passages

List book and chapter for the following passages.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • 2 birth narratives | • Vine and Branches |
| • Baptism of Jesus | • Good Shepherd |
| • Temptation of Jesus | • High Priestly Prayer |
| • Sermon on the Mount | • Triumphal Entry |
| • The Lord’s Prayer | • Last Supper |
| • “Take my yoke” | • Death of Christ |
| • Kingdom Parables | • Resurrection of Christ |
| • Prodigal Son | • Ascension of Christ |
| • “I will build my Church” | • Great Commission |
| • Transfiguration | • Pentecost |
| • Mary and Martha | • Paul’s Conversion |
| • Correcting a brother | • Jerusalem Council |
| • Keys to the Kingdom | • Philippian Jailer |
| • Moral Law summary | • Body as Temple of the Spirit |
| • The Comforter | • Law as schoolmaster |
| • “Born again” | • Fruit of the Spirit |
| • True Worship | • Armor of God |
| • Way, Truth, Life | • Grieving with hope |
| • Good Samaritan | • “Man of Lawlessness” |
| • Feeding the 5,000 | • Melchizedek |

Key Topics

Identify passages someone could read about the following.

- Atonement
- Repentance
- Deity of Christ
- Our Resurrection
- Return of Christ
- Speaking in Tongues
- Spiritual Gifts
- Civil Government
- Vocation
- Pastoral Ministry
- The Church
- Elder Qualifications
- Church Discipline
- Stewardship
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Family
- Heaven
- Hell
- Reconciliation
- Suffering
- Bodily Resurrection
- Infant Baptism
- Predestination
- The Sabbath
- Worship
- Christian Liberty
- Financial Stewardship

Theology

General Questions

- What is the Gospel?
- Distinguish between Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology.
- How would explain what “Reformed” means to a new believer?
- What are some distinctives of Reformed theology?

Theology Proper (Doctrine of God)

- What is God?
- Briefly explain and defend the doctrine of the Trinity?
- What are the attributes of God?
- Evaluate: Darwinian Evolution / Theistic Evolution / Intelligent Design
- What is God’s providence?
- Is God responsible for sin?
 - What is theodicy?
 - Critique: Libertarian Free-Will as a Theodicy
- Define: predestination / election / reprobation.
- What are some of the practical implications of the doctrine of election for pastoral ministry?
- How does the doctrine of election impact your view of evangelism?

Anthropology (Doctrine of Man)

- What is the chief end of man?
- What does the *Imago Dei* mean?
- What is sin?
- Distinguish between original sin and actual sin.

- Is the will of man free?
 - o Was Adam's will free before he sinned?
 - o Can a sinner do anything good?
 - o Is a sinner's will free to believe?
 - o Does a believer have free will?
- What are the consequences of sin?

Christology (Doctrine of Christ)

- Explain and defend the orthodox doctrine of the person of Christ.
- Define: Hypostatic Union.
- What is the significance of the Virgin Birth?
- Explain the following names:
 - o Jesus
 - o Son of Man
 - o Son of God
 - o Christ
 - o Lord
 - o Lamb of God
- Distinguish between the active and passive obedience of Christ?
- What are the three office of Christ? How does He fulfill each?
- What is the atonement? Why is it necessary?
- Define:
 - o Expiation
 - o Propitiation
 - o Reconciliation
 - o Redemption
 - o Imputation
- What is the extent of the atonement? Discuss: limited atonement.

Soteriology (Doctrine of Salvation)

- Distinguish between an Arminian and a Reformed view of salvation.
- Define the doctrine of regeneration.
- What is repentance?
- How does Union with Christ function in the *Ordo Salutis*?
- Define and defend the doctrine of justification.
- What is the basis of justification?
- Define and defend the doctrine of adoption.
- Define and defend the doctrine of sanctification.
- How do justification and sanctification relate?
- What is the relationship between good works and faith?
- Define and defend the doctrine of perseverance.

The Christian Life

- What are the three divisions of the Mosaic Law?
- What is the Moral Law? What are the three uses of the Moral Law?
- How is the Moral Law summarized by Jesus?
- Define: the means of grace.
- What is Christian liberty?
- What is Antinomianism? Critique it.
- What is Theonomy? Critique it.

- What is the relationship between Church and State?

Ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church)

- What is the difference between the visible and invisible Church?
- What are the marks of the Church?
- Who is the Head of the Church?
- Define three basic forms of church government.
- Define and explain: Church discipline.
- Explain your view of the Lord's Day as it relates to the 4th commandment.
- What is your view of the Regulative Principle?

Pneumatology (Doctrine of the Spirit)

- What happened at Pentecost?
- What is the Spirit's ministry today?
- Distinguish between the gifts and the fruit of the Spirit?
- What are spiritual gifts?

Eschatology (Doctrine of Last Things)

- What is important for you to teach about the Second Coming?
- What is hell?
- What is your view of the Millennium in Revelation 20?
- Distinguish: Historic Premillennial, Postmillennial, Amillennial
- Distinguish between Dispensationalism and Covenantalism.

Sacraments

- What is a sacrament? Explain in layman's terms. Defend with Scripture.
- How many sacraments are there? Identify them in Scripture.
- What happens in the administration of a sacrament?
- Cite at least three NT references showing continuity between the sacraments of the Old and New Covenant.

Baptism

- Of what is baptism a sign and a seal?
- How is baptism correctly administered?
- Would you ever baptize someone by immersion? In what scenarios?
- Who is to be baptized?
- How would you minister to a family in your church that did not want their child baptized?
- Would you ever, under any circumstances perform an infant dedication?
- Can a person be baptized more than once?
- How would you handle a request for baptism from a former Roman Catholic?
- How would you handle a request for baptism from a former Mormon?

The Lord's Supper

- What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper?
- Distinguish between Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Reformed view of the Lord's Supper.
- How is Christ present in the Lord's Supper?
- How should believers celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- What does it mean to 'fence the table'?

Church History & Reformed Tradition

- Name the first four ecumenical church councils with dates and major resolutions.
- What was Arianism and why did the Church object to this view?
- Name the major contribution of the Council of Chalcedon.
- Compare and contrast Pelagianism with Augustinianism.
- Do semi-pelagian attitudes still affect the 21st Century Church? If so explain.
- Why did Luther write his Ninety-five Theses?
- Who was John Calvin and what did he contribute to the Reformation?
- Who was Ulrich Zwingli and how did he contribute to the Reformation?
- What are the 5 *Solas* of the Reformation? What do they mean?
- Where did the '5 Points' of Calvinism come from?
- Will there be a rapture of the Church?
- What is Pentecostalism?
- Is there a second work of grace? (a post conversion baptism of the Holy Spirit)

EPC Polity

Book of Government

- Name the Courts of the EPC.
- What is the primary mission of the local church?
- If a local church elects Trustees, what is the relationship of the Trustees to the Session and the Board of Deacons?
- Who is eligible to vote at a congregational meeting?
- What is the first duty of a Ruling Elder and can you discuss the practical implications of this duty?

Book of Discipline

- What are the grounds for ecclesiastical judicial procedures?
- What is the purpose of discipline within the church?
- Please explain the Matthew 18:15-16 model for admonition.

Book of Worship

- Why is it important for Christians to gather for corporate worship?
- What responsibilities and authority does the Pastor have in determining the corporate worship of the congregation?
- What does the EPC teach about tithing and what are your views, if different?

Westminster Standards

- Have you read all of WCF, WLC, WSC?
- Are you aware of any of its teachings about which you have reservations, or to which you take exception? Explain.
- What is subscription?
- What would you do if your view changed on a particular area of the Confession?
- What role will WCF play in your ministry? Personal study?

APPENDIX 2: CHECKLISTS

NEW CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	EPC Church Member: Church Name	
	Formal Session Interview	
	Session Endorsement [FORM A]	
	Application To Come Under Care [FORM B]	
	Statement of Faith [FORM C]	
	Preliminary Questionnaire [FORM L]	
	Ministerial Interview	
	Candidates Floor Exam	
Candidates Vows		
Advisor Assigned:		
CANDIDATE	Under Care for One Year	
	Undergraduate Transcripts:	
	Seminary Transcripts:	
	Exegetical Assignment / Paper	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Physical Evaluation	
	Psychological Evaluation	
	Background Check	
	References Submitted & Checked	
	Written Exam Request Form [FORM K]	
	Written Exams: Bible: Theology: Polity:	
	Ministerial Phone Exam	
	Ministerial Committee Exam	
	Preach at Presbytery –	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
	Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]	
Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]		
MINISTER- ELECT	Terms of Call Approved:	
	Commission to Ordain & Install – Chairman:	
	Service of Ordination & Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

TRANSFER CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	Candidacy Transfer Form: Presbytery Name [FORM G]	
	Certificate of Reception Sent	
	EPC Church Member: Church Name	
	Session Endorsement [FORM A]	
	Application To Come Under Care [FORM B]	
	Statement of Faith [FORM C]	
	Preliminary Questionnaire [FORM L]	
	Ministerial Phone Interview	
	Candidates Floor Exam	
	Candidates Vows	
Advisor Assigned: Advisor's Name		
CANDIDATE	Under Care for One Year	
	Undergraduate Transcripts: School Name	
	Seminary Transcripts: School Name	
	Exegetical Assignment / Paper	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Physical Evaluation	
	Psychological Evaluation	
	Background Check	
	References Submitted & Checked	
	Written Exam Request Form [FORM K]	
	Written Exams: Bible: Score Theology: Score Polity: Score	
	Ministerial Phone Exam	
	Ministerial Committee Exam	
	Preach at Presbytery – Passage Assigned	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
	Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]	
Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]		
MINISTER-ELECT	Terms of Call Approved: Church Name	
	Commission to Ordain & Install – Chairman: Name	
	Service of Ordination & Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

EPC TRANSFER CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	Certificate of Dismissal: Presbytery Name	
	Advisor Assigned: Advisor Name	
	Views Questions for Transfers [FORM H]	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Undergraduate Transcripts: School Name	
	Seminary Transcripts: School Name	
	Background Check	
	Phone Exam	
	Committee Exam Supplement	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
	Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]	
MINISTER-ELECT	Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]	
	Minister Enrolled in River & Lakes	
	Certificate of Reception Sent	
	Terms of Call Approved: Church Name	
	Record of Official Change Sent [FORM I]	
	Commission to Install – Chairman: Name	
	Service of Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

REFORMED TRANSFER CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	Advisor Assigned: Advisor Name	
	Views Questions for Transfers [FORM H]	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Undergraduate Transcripts: School Name	
	Seminary Transcripts: School Name	
	Ordination Credentials Submitted: Ordaining Body	
	Phone Exam	
	Background Check	
	Committee Exam Supplement	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
	Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]	
MINISTER-ELECT	Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]	
	Minister Enrolled in River & Lakes	
	Terms of Call Approved: Church Name	
	Record of Official Change Sent [FORM I]	
	Commission to Install – Chairman: Name	
	Service of Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

NON-REFORMED TRANSFER CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	Advisor Assigned: Advisor Name	
	Views Questions for Transfers [FORM H]	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Undergraduate Transcripts: School Name	
	Seminary Transcripts: School Name	
	Written Exam Request Form [FORM K]	
	Written Exams: Bible: Score Theology: Score Polity: Score	
	References Submitted & Checked	
	Background Check	
	Phone Exam	
	Committee Exam	
	Preach at Presbytery: Passage Assigned	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]		
MINISTER-ELECT	Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]	
	Minister Enrolled in River & Lakes	
	Terms of Call Approved: Church Name	
	Record of Official Change Sent [FORM I]	
	Commission to Install – Chairman: Name	
	Service of Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

C.E.E.P. CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT	EPC Church Member: Church Name	
	Session Endorsement [FORM A]	
	Application To Come Under Care [FORM B]	
	Statement of Faith [FORM C]	
	Preliminary Questionnaire [FORM L]	
	Ministerial Phone Interview	
	Candidates Floor Exam	
	Candidates Vows	
CANDIDATE	Candidate Received With Extraordinary Status	
	Advisor Assigned:	
	Under Care for One Year	
	Undergraduate Transcripts:	
	Graduate Transcripts:	
	Exegetical Assignment / Paper	
	Personal Information Form (PIF) [FORM D]	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Physical Evaluation	
	Psychological Evaluation	
	Background Check	
	References Submitted & Checked	
	Referred to the Ministerial Vocations Committee of the EPC	
	Written Exam Request Form [FORM K]	
	Written Exams: Bible: Theology: Polity:	
	Ministerial Phone Exam	
	Ministerial Committee Exam	
	Preach at Presbytery –	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Approved	
Ministerial Obligation Form [FORM F]		
Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]		
MINISTER-ELECT	Terms of Call Approved:	
	Commission to Ordain & Install – Chairman:	
	Service of Ordination & Installation	
	Commission Dismissed	

NEW CP FOR COMMISSIONING CHECKLIST: Name
 Ministerial Committee
 Rivers & Lakes Presbytery

PHASE	DOCUMENTATION/ACTION	DATE
APPLICANT / CANDIDATE	EPC Ruling Elder: Church Name	
	Initial Ministerial Phone Interview	
	Advisor Assigned: Advisor Name	
	WCF Subscription/Exceptions [FORM E]	
	Background Check	
	References Submitted & Checked [FORM M]	
	Sermon Material Submitted: Passage Assigned	
	Reading Requirements Completed	
	Ministerial Committee Exam	
	Floor Exam Sustained	
	WCF Subscription / Exceptions Allowed or Disallowed	
	Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders [FORM J]	
COMMISSIONED PASTOR-ELECT	Terms of Call Approved: Church Name	
	Presbytery Administers Commissioning Vows	

APPENDIX 3: FORMS

R&LP MC: Form A

SESSION ENDORSEMENT FORM

The normal process in which an EPC member moves toward becoming a candidate for the Gospel ministry includes the following initial steps:

1. A member senses God's leading to pursue the Gospel Ministry. This member talks to his/her pastor about his/her sense of call.
2. This member shares his/her convictions with his/her Session.
3. The Session encourages and interviews the member.
4. The member who is approved by Session is recommended to the Ministerial Committee to be taken under care of the Presbytery. **This form should be used to communicate Session's endorsement of the applicant to the Ministerial Committee.**

Name of Member: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Name of Church: _____ Length of membership: _____

Name & phone of Elder completing this form: _____

1. What evidence/testimony does this person give of his salvation through death in Christ?
2. What evidence does this person give/demonstrate of his call to the Gospel Ministry?
3. Please mention in specific detail your observations regarding this person's potential fulfillment of the qualifications mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Mention specific strengths and weaknesses.
4. How do you evaluate this person's potential giftedness for the Gospel Ministry? Does the Session recommend this applicant for candidacy? Does this recommendation have any qualifications? If so, what?
5. Does the person seem to sincerely desire to pursue God's will relative to the Gospel Ministry?

STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION: We, the Session of _____,
certify that the above applicant has been a member of this church since _____
and we commend this member to the Presbytery as an applicant for candidacy in the Gospel Ministry.

Moderator of Session

Clerk of Session

Date: _____

**APPLICATION TO COME UNDER CARE OF PRESBYTERY'S
MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE**

Name of Applicant:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Date of Birth:

Name of Pastor:

Name of Ruling Elder who knows you well:

Name of Presbytery to which you are applying:

Name of School/College/Seminary:

Year of anticipated graduation:

Anticipated Degree:

Please check: Male Female

Session endorsement: (date)

Seeking to be received as a candidate with extraordinary circumstances (G.11 - 2I)

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

<p>This is to certify that _____ has been taken under care of the Ministerial Committee of the Presbytery of _____.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Position: _____</p> <p>Address: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

**CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF FAITH
Part 1**

CANDIDATE'S NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Please attach a typed statement of your own beliefs in your own words about the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. The Bible (Bibliology) | 9. Angels and Demons |
| 2. God the Father (Theology Proper) | 10. The Church (Ecclesiology) |
| 3. Jesus Christ (Christology) | 11. The Sacraments |
| 4. The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology) | 12. The Spiritual Life of the Believer |
| 5. Mankind (Anthropology) | 13. Future Things (Eschatology) |
| 6. Sin (Hamartiology) | 14. Evangelism |
| 7. Salvation (Soteriology) | 15. Spiritual Gifts |
| 8. Satan | |

Part 2

Please attach your typed answers to these questions and return it to the chairman of the Ministerial Committee before you are scheduled to meet with that committee for your preliminary phone interview.

1. State in your own words your view of the Scriptures and the place the Scriptures will have in your ministry.
2. What distinctions of the Reformed faith appeal to you?
3. What/Who is the Holy Spirit and how important is His ministry?
4. What is your position on women in leadership roles in the church?
5. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the Presbyterian form of government?
6. Explain your philosophy of ministry.
7. Describe your approach personally and as a pastor in a local church to evangelism.
8. As you reflect on your life, explain your sense of call to ministry.
9. Elaborate on your convictions about personal accountability in your life and in the lives of Christians to whom you might minister.

Westminster Subscription

The Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) is a confessional statement of orthodox Presbyterianism. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church subscribes to the WCF and its associated Larger (WLC) and Shorter (WSC) Catechisms as our sole subordinate standard of doctrine according to Scripture. The WCF constitutes a system of biblical truth that an officer of the EPC is required to subscribe to. By subscription, the Teaching Elder affirms not only general approbation, but also vows to teach in accord with the doctrinal positions of the WCF (G.13-2A.3; 25-2). Individual Courts of the Church have freedom to allow exceptions that do not infringe upon the system of doctrine in the WCF.

The Candidate or transferring Teaching Elder shall provide a written statement of any exceptions to Westminster (G.12-4). The Presbytery shall act to acknowledge subscription, and allow or disallow any exceptions submitted. Following ordination, should the Teaching Elder develop exceptions to Westminster, they shall report those exceptions to the Ministerial Committee, and the Presbytery shall act to allow or disallow these exceptions (G.12-4; 13-2A.4).

If the Candidate or Teaching Elder wishes to take an exception to Westminster, they should first consult with their Ministerial Committee Advisor to determine if the concern is truly an exception or a misunderstanding. Particular concern over something in WCF may be the result of a lack of knowledge, content, context, or usage, and should be pursued to the Teaching Elders satisfaction. If concern remains, they should record an exception. An exception requires both a statement of disagreement and an alternative biblical position. The exception should reference relevant portions of the Confessions and associated Catechism questions.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Please **initial** one of the following statements:

_____ I subscribe to Westminster without exception.

_____ I subscribe to Westminster with the following exception(s).

If you have an exception please attach a written record using the following form for each instance.

WCF, WLC, WSC Citations:

Statement of Disagreement:

Alternative Biblical Position:

MINISTERIAL OBLIGATION

As an ordained minister, it is my desire to become a minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. As evidence of my desire and commitment, I subscribe to the Ministerial Obligation below and thereafter inscribe my name.

I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ as my own personal Lord and Savior.

I believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

I sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.

I promise that, if at any time I find myself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church I will, on my own initiative, make known to my Presbytery the change which has taken place in my views since the assumption of these vows.

I affirm and adopt the “Essentials of Our Faith” without exception.

I subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

I promise subjection to my fellow presbyters in the Lord.

I have been induced, as far as I know my own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love of God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son.

I promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto me on that account.

I will seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all my duties as a Christian and a Minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in my manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God shall make me overseer.

I do receive and adopt these vows as a true statement of my faith, commitment, and obligation and I do resolve and promise to exercise my calling to the Gospel ministry in obedience to these vows.

Whereof I, an ordained minister, do hereby inscribe my name this ____ day of _____,
20 _____.

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

**PRESBYTERY TRANSFER OF A CANDIDATE FOR THE MINISTRY
EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

To be completed by the Transferring Presbytery:

This is to certify that _____, since _____
Candidate's name *Date received*

a candidate under the care of _____ Presbytery was dismissed on
the ____ day of _____, 20____ by this Presbytery to the care of _____
_____ Presbytery.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Stated Clerk

To be completed by the Receiving Presbytery:

This is to certify that _____ was received by transfer as a Candidate
for the Gospel Ministry under care of the _____, Presbytery,
meeting on the ____ day of _____ 20____ .

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Stated Clerk

*Send a copy of the completed form to the Office of the Stated Clerk, Evangelical Presbyterian Church,
17197 N. Laurel Park Drive, Livonia MI 48152.*

QUESTIONS FOR TRANSFER CANDIDATES

Please answer each of these questions succinctly and clearly, a few sentences for each is sufficient. Please submit this document to the chair of the Ministerial Committee at least 48 hours before your initial phone interview.

1. Your view of the Nature of Scripture?

2. Your view of Genesis 1-2, especially the Days of Creation?

3. Your view of Total Depravity?

4. Your understanding of Free Will in light of God's sovereignty and election?

5. Your view of Substitutionary Atonement?

6. Your view of Regeneration?

7. Describe your view of the *Ordo Salutis* in Romans 8?

8. Describe your view on the difference between the Moral Law and the Ceremonial Law of God and Jesus' relationship to both?

9. What is your view of the relevance of the Ten Commandments in regards to your personal life?

10. What is your view on the Sabbath?

11. What are your views on the distinctive of Reformed worship?
12. Describe how Scripture leads us in worship.
13. How should the Book of Worship be used?
14. Please explain your view of both infant and believers baptism?
15. Who can receive the Lord's Supper?
16. What does it mean that the sacraments are referred to as "signs and seals?"
17. What is your view of the purpose of church discipline?
18. What is your view of the purpose and application of the Westminster Confession of Faith?
19. How do you understand your role in Presbytery? General Assembly?
20. What is your motivation for seeking to minister in the EPC?

For MC Use Only:
Received _____ Phone Interview Date _____ MC Rep _____

**RECORD OF OFFICIAL CHANGE
FOR MINISTER'S STATUS AND MINISTRY**

Presbytery:

Name of Minister:

Home address:

Home phone:

Email:

Please complete sections pertinent to status changes on minister named above.

Dismissed to: Presbytery, EPC Date:

Received from: Presbytery, EPC Date:

Dismissed to: (other denomination) Date:

Received from: (other denomination) Date: Pending dismissal

Former ministry:
(Position (pastor, chaplain, etc.) Church/Institution City State)

New position:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelist (church planter) | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelist (missionary) | <input type="checkbox"/> Stated Supply |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplain (military) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Supply |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelist | <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplain (institutional) | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside of Boundaries |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

New place of ministry: Church/Employer:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newly Ordained | Date: | Date of Installation: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | Date: | Service of Recognition: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deceased | Date: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moved to Inactive Status | <input type="checkbox"/> At own request | Date: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divested | Specify censure: | Cite Reference: Date: |

Signed, _____ Date: _____

Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

Colossians 3:1-5

As EPC leaders called by God to the gospel ministry, we must recognize the eternal significance and responsibility of that call and understand that we are being watched, our actions are being evaluated, our words are being critiqued, and our attitudes are being assessed by others in the church and in the world.

Because our highest call is to *do all for the glory of God* we must hold ourselves to a high standard of behavior. Therefore, we should:

- **Exalt God as Sovereign Lord of the universe.**

We should always endeavor to honor, glorify, and worship God, representing Him well in every relationship and in every endeavor.

Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.
(Psalm 29:1-2)

- **Emphasize integrity.**

We are called to walk in humility, but with confidence because God is with us. There is no justification for selfishness, self-centeredness, or ego-driven goals.

We will hold ourselves to the same level of accountability that we ask of those whom we are leading.

We desire to be wise stewards of money whether personal funds or ministry funds. Theft, fraud, or the misappropriations of ministry funds or property are inexcusable. We should give an honest accounting of ministry expenses. Gifts of money or other gifts of value should not influence our decisions.

We should not speak critically of other churches, nor should we purposefully recruit believers from other churches to join our fellowship.

Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)

- **Expect excellence.**

We are called to be faithful to the Bible, applying it to our own lives first as we seek God's guidance. We should share the truth of the Scriptures with wisdom, grace, and conviction, speaking the truth in love.

We should model integrity when preaching and teaching, acknowledging outside sources when their words or ideas are used.

We should study diligently to understand and promote doctrinal and theological orthodoxy.

We should lead with holiness, humility, and boldness, *looking to the interests of others.* (Philippians 2:4)

We should strive to be trustworthy, to work well with others, and to work wisely. We should strive to be promise-keepers, not compromising spiritual or personal values.

We should welcome opportunities (workshops, seminars, classes) that will challenge our hearts and minds, stimulating spiritual growth.

We should lead with the authority that Jesus gives, coupled with the sacrificial life and attitude that He lived.

We should read the Scriptures regularly, meditate upon them, listen for the leading of the Holy Spirit, and pray for a moldable heart and a spiritually receptive mind.

We should strive to conform to God's will rather than surrender to human desires and agendas.

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. (Colossians 3:17)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God -- this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. (Romans 12:1-3)

- **Embrace compassion.**

We are called to care for those in our charge with love, grace, and forgiveness. We should listen to understand, speak to heal, lovingly confront, and make decisions that promote reconciliation, peace and unity.

We should remember that those we are speaking with are created in the image of God. We should be kind and accepting towards all, although not accepting of unbiblical behavior or values.

We should ensure confidence in private conversations, acknowledging that it may occasionally be necessary to disclose confidential information, e.g. if that information concerns the immediate danger of bodily harm/loss of life, or when applicable laws mandate reporting.

We should always speak truth in love, recognizing that uncontrolled anger is unacceptable, and that neither gossip nor slander will be tolerated. We should avoid establishing unrealistic expectations for others or ourselves.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:29-32)

We should care for ourselves, as well as others: spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and relationally.

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

- **Excel in holy behavior.**

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do. (1 Peter 1:15)

Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. (1 Peter 2:11)

Do not love the world or anything in the world. (1 John 2:15)

We are called to holy living so we should not place ourselves in compromising situations, either personally or professionally. We should resist the devil and flee from temptation. We should try to identify our vulnerabilities and make specific provisions to safeguard our hearts and minds from these temptations.

We affirm sexuality as a gift from God and seek to honor this gift by conforming to biblical standards.

We should be intentional about regular self-examination.

We should strive towards a life of surrender and a repentant spirit.

- **Engage heart-to-heart.**

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. (Proverbs 27:17)

It is vital to deliberately place ourselves in relationships where mutual accountability occurs, constructive criticism can be shared without being concerned about responding defensively, where encouragement is the heart beat of these gatherings, and where focus and direction can

be shaped in the presence of people who share a similar journey of personal and spiritual growth.

We should welcome accountability from spiritual partners and peers in ministry. We should willingly submit to spiritual discipline should we violate our ordination vows as leaders in the Church.

And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three {strands} is not quickly torn apart. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

- **Empower God's people.**

We should motivate, prepare, and mobilize the people of God to impact the world for Christ. This includes inspiring co-workers and other believers to be missional and to intimately connect with the passions of God's heart.

We should esteem our co-workers as fellow laborers in the gospel ministry. We should not consider our co-workers as better than other believers, nor should we take for granted our co-worker's gifts and abilities, time and treasure.

Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12)

As a leader in Christ's Church, and as one who represents the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, I commit to these Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders.

Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Name _____

--The 35th General Assembly (June 2015) adopted the "Ethical Affirmations for EPC Leaders" for use with Candidates Under Care, and strongly encouraged its use in EPC presbyteries and churches.

REQUEST FOR ORDINATION EXAMINATIONS

For Candidates Under Care or Ordained Ministers Transferring from non-Reformed Traditions

Please complete this request form and send with Personal Information Form to:

Rev. Dr. Ed McCallum, Assistant Stated Clerk

Office of the General Assembly

17197 N Laurel Park Dr. Suite 567

Livonia MI 48152-7912

Phone: 734-742-2020 Fax: 734-742-2033 E-mail: ed.mccallum@epc.org

Name of Candidate/Transferee: _____ Presbytery: _____

If currently ordained: Ordained by: _____ Ordination Date: _____

Candidate: Church membership: _____ Date received as church member: _____

Date received as Candidate: _____ Advisor: _____

If candidate transferred: Former EPC Presbytery: _____

Length of Candidacy: _____ Date of Transfer: _____

Seminary: _____ Graduation date/degree: _____ CEEP Program

Proposed exam date(s): _____ Being considered for a call as: _____

NOTE: The three ordination examinations must be taken as a unit within a three week time period.

To be eligible to sit for ordination exams, required documents must be in candidate's file:

- Copy of college and post-graduate transcripts, Personal Information Form, Medical statement from physician, Psychological evaluation results, Background check, Ethical Affirmations document signed

Send exams to: _____, Proctor

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Proctor's relationship to candidate: _____

I certify that the above named candidate/transferee has completed the required course of study and is now fully prepared in the judgment of the candidate's Advisor and the Candidates Care or Ministerial Committee to take the written examinations. I further certify that the information above is correct and that the candidate's file is complete.

Signed, _____, Chairman, Candidates/Ministerial Committee

Presbytery: _____ Date: _____

If this request is for a retake of any examination not previously sustained, indicate which exam is needed and the date of prior testing. Second and third attempts may be taken no sooner than 30 days following the previous examination. Should a fourth attempt be necessary, six months must elapse to insure adequate preparation and study time.

- 1. English Bible, 2nd attempt, 3rd attempt, 4th attempt, Date of prior test:
2. Theology & Sacraments, 2nd attempt, 3rd attempt, 4th attempt, Date of prior test:
3. Polity, 2nd attempt, 3rd attempt, 4th attempt, Date of prior test:

Commissioned Pastor Reference Check Form

Choose five persons to fill out the written reference form at the end of this document and who are willing to be contacted by phone by a Search Committee and a Presbytery Ministerial Committee member. If possible, on the these references should represent your current/last congregation Session.

1. Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____ Preferred phone: _____
Person's relationship to you: _____
2. Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____ Preferred phone: _____
Person's relationship to you: _____
3. Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____ Preferred phone: _____
Person's relationship to you: _____
4. Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____ Preferred phone: _____
Person's relationship to you: _____
5. Name: _____
Address: _____
E-mail: _____ Preferred phone: _____
Person's relationship to you: _____

APPENDIX 4: THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS

What it Means to “Receive and Adopt” the Westminster Standards

by Dr. S. Donald Fortson, III (EPC TE & RTS Professor)

In the early 18th Century, American Presbyterians determined that it was necessary to adopt a doctrinal statement in order to declare their common faith. The Synod of Philadelphia in 1729 adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as the confession of their faith. In the 1729 “Adopting Act,” Presbyterians declared their “agreement in and approbation of the Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as being, in all the essential and necessary articles, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine.”

The Adopting Act stipulated that ministers may state their “scruples” with the Confession, i.e., describing places where they had disagreements with particular articles. After hearing the Candidates’ scruples, a Presbytery would determine whether or not these reservations were about articles “essential and necessary” in doctrine, worship, or government. If scruples were judged to be over “extraessentials,” the minister was admitted as a member. This established the principle of liberty of conscience.

When the first General Assembly met in 1789, they endorsed the Adopting Act and established a formula for subscribing the Confession that was included in the Form of Government. The subscription formula asked this question of the ministerial candidate: “Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?” The phrase “system of doctrine” was understood to include not only fundamental catholic Christianity and the evangelical doctrines of the Protestant Reformation, but also the unique Reformed or Calvinistic system of doctrine embodied in the Westminster Standards. It was the Reformed system of the Confession that distinguished the Presbyterian theological heritage from Roman Catholic, Lutheran or Arminian systems of doctrine.

The 1789 formula of subscription has served American Presbyterians well for more than 200 years. Amidst significant doctrinal diversity, schism, and reunion, the historic subscription vow has stood the test of time as a median position between the extremes of strict subscription (every word) and a minimal subscription requiring “essentials of Christianity only.” The historic moderate doctrinal position of Presbyterianism has allowed diversity in expressing the Reformed faith while at the same time affirming our distinctives as Reformed people committed to the doctrines of grace.

When a church officer takes the traditional ordination vow in the EPC, he or she is affirming a personal commitment to the doctrines displayed in the Westminster Standards. The subscription vow is understood to be an acknowledgment of the Reformed or Calvinistic “system of doctrine” as expressing one’s own belief of what the Holy Scriptures teach. This vow allows one freedom to express reservations about parts of the Confession provided these “scruples” are not about “essential” components of the Reformed system. It is the duty of Sessions and Presbyteries when examining candidates for church office to determine what constitutes an essential of the “system of doctrine” found in the Confession and Catechisms. The balance of individual liberty and commitment to Reformed theology is a hallmark of Presbyterianism and a value we hold dear.

APPENDIX 5: GUIDELINES FOR ENDORSING SESSIONS

Prior to completing the Session Endorsement Form (Form A), the body should meet with the prospective Candidates for a formal interview where certain examinations should take place to determine if the Session truly wishes to comment this person to the candidacy of the Gospel ministry in Rivers & Lakes Presbytery. To assist in this discernment process, please consider the following:

- The Session should decide whether or not it is prepared to carry out the following obligations of an endorsing church:
 - o Providing possible financial support.
 - o Maintaining communication during the period of training.
 - o Continuing pastoral support, even though Presbytery is responsible for supervision of training.
 - o Making annual reports to the Committee of the degree to which it has fulfilled the recommendations above.
- The Session should complete the Session Endorsement Form (FORM A) if it desires to endorse the applicant.
- The Session should plan to recognize the applicant in a worship service.
- The Session should be well represented at the meeting of Presbytery when one of its home church members is examined for candidacy.
- The Session should record in its minutes when it is notified that a church member is taken under care of Presbytery (Act of the Assembly 98-15).

APPENDIX 6: THE COMMISSIONED PASTOR

(Chapter 8 of the Ministerial Committee Procedural Manual, Dec. 2015 Edition)

CHAPTER 8: COMMISSIONED PASTORS

Ruling Elder as a Commissioned Pastor

Presbyteries may utilize Commissioned Pastors to provide leadership to mission churches, church planting, and church revitalization works. They may also be approved to serve in some institutional (non-military) chaplaincies. Depending on the qualifications of the person and the nature of the ministry, Presbytery may authorize a Commissioned Pastor to preach, evangelize, moderate a Session, administer sacraments, perform marriages, preside at funerals, and/or provide pastoral care. Commissioned Pastors may serve for a term of up to three years, which is renewable (G.9-11; G.9-11A).²⁸ Although commissioned by the Presbytery, a Commissioned Pastor is not a Teaching Elder and therefore is not an ongoing member of the Presbytery.

The Training, Evaluating and Examining a Commissioned Pastor

Although not required by the *Book of Government*, the responsibility for training, evaluating and examining potential Commissioned Pastors typically falls to the Ministerial Committee. A Ruling Elder considered for becoming a Commissioned Pastor should have sufficient knowledge and skills to perform as the only pastor of the church or ministry in need. Minimally, the Ruling Elder should have studied and be well versed with the material in the *EPC Leadership Training Guide*.

Examining a Commissioned Pastor may include interviews and testing from the questions at the end of each section of the Leadership Training Guide. The Presbytery should focus on past experience and specific skills demonstrated relative to how he/she fits with the assignment to be made. Presbyteries are free to develop their own Commissioned Pastor training programs.

Other denominations have similar provisions for “lay ministers.” Such individuals must first become Ruling Elders in the EPC. At that point they are eligible to be examined by the Presbytery for service as a Commissioned Pastor (G.9-11C).

Commissioning of a Commissioned Pastor

Upon the authorization of a Commissioned Pastor, the Presbytery has the responsibility to conduct an appropriate commissioning service, either directly or through an Administrative Commission (G.9-11F). The Presbytery assigns a Teaching Elder to each Commissioned Pastor to serve as a supervisor and mentor and to assist in writing an annual report to the Presbytery (G.9-11D).

²⁸ All **Book of Order** references cited are found at the end of this chapter.

BOOK OF ORDER REFERENCES

Commissioned Pastors

G. 9-11 **The Ruling Elder as a Commissioned Pastor**

A Ruling Elder may be temporarily authorized by Presbytery as a Commissioned Pastor for a congregation without a Pastor to preach the Word, evangelize, moderate a Session, administer the sacraments, perform marriages (if civil law allows), preside at funerals and provide pastoral care. Presbyteries may also approve and give appropriate powers to a Ruling Elder to serve as a Commissioned Pastor in mission churches, church planting and church revitalization works, or in chaplaincy positions in hospitals, hospices, prisons or other institutions.

- A.** Authorization shall be for a term up to three years and may be renewed. Such authorization shall specify those powers granted and shall stipulate in which church(es) or ministry contexts those powers are authorized. Such powers shall be exercised only in those contexts.
- B.** Potential Commissioned Pastors shall be examined by Presbytery and found to have sufficient knowledge in the areas in which they will be serving.
- C.** A Ruling Elder previously commissioned as a lay pastor by another Reformed body may become a Commissioned Pastor as deemed appropriate by the Presbytery and subject to the same requirements of the EPC Commissioned Pastor.
- D.** Presbytery shall assign a Teaching Elder to each Commissioned Pastor as supervisor to act as mentor and to assist the Commissioned Pastor in writing an annual report to Presbytery.
- E.** Presbytery may terminate the authorization to serve as a Commissioned Pastor at any time prior to the expiration of the commission.
- F.** Upon authorization of a Commissioned Pastor, Presbytery shall administer the vows of commissioning below either immediately or through an administrative commission at a designated time.
 - 1. Do you now reaffirm the vows you took upon your ordination as a Ruling Elder and do you recommit yourself to them in the discharge of your obligations as a Commissioned Pastor?
 - 2. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise to you on that account?
 - 3. Will you seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as Commissioned Pastor whether personal or relative, private or public; and endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before this congregation of which God will make you an officer?
 - 4. Are you now willing to take responsibility in the life of this congregation/in this ministry as a Commissioned Pastor, and will you seek to discharge your duties relying upon the grace of God, in such a way that the entire Church of Jesus Christ will be blessed?

Additional Requirements for Commissioned Pastors

Those individuals seeking authorization *to preach the Word, evangelize, moderate a session, administer the sacraments, perform marriages (if civil law allows), and to preside at funerals* as a *Commissioned Pastor* in Rivers and Lakes Presbytery shall:

- A. Complete and document a study of the following resources:
 - a. *The Leadership Training Manual* of the EPC
 - b. *The Constitution of the EPC (The Book of Order and The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms)*.
- B. Read and write a 2-3 page reflection on two topics covered in these books:
 - a. *On Being Presbyterian* by Sean Lucas
 - b. *Putting Amazing Back in Grace: Embracing the Heart of the Gospel* by Michael Horton
- C. Provide a copy (print and, if available, audio) of a sermon or prepare a sermon on a specific topic assigned by the Ministerial Committee.
- D. Provide the Ministerial Committee with the following items before they can be examined:
 - a. Three personal references
 - b. Authorization for a Background Check (verifying name and social security number, address, a full criminal records check, and a full sex offender registry check)
- E. Share the story of their journey of faith and experience of God's grace. This shall be provided in print.

Note: All paperwork must be submitted two weeks prior to the oral exam by Ministerial Committee. The exam will take place at the stated Ministerial Committee meeting no later than six weeks prior to the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

- F. Sustain examinations by the Ministerial Committee and the floor of Presbytery. Candidates shall exhibit competency (the ability to: discuss clearly, provide scriptural foundations, and explain implications for ministry) in the following areas in accordance with the teachings of Scripture, the Essential of the EPC, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the EPC Commissioning Vows:
 - a. The Bible
 - b. Reformed Theology
 - c. The Sacraments
 - d. EPC Polity