

Licensure and Ordination Procedures for ordained men transferring from another denomination

On behalf of the Theological Examinations Committee of the North Texas Presbytery, thank you for expressing your interest in pursuing ordination in the PCA. Please read the information below regarding transfers. It will also be helpful to read the “procedures” link above for additional information.

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13-6:

If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by BCO 21-4 (NB: see below) and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.

Questions for Ordination (For an assistant minister, only questions 1-7 shall be used)

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* and the *Catechisms* of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, 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?
3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of Biblical polity?
4. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
5. 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?
6. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace and unity of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?
7. Do you engage to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relational, private or public; and to 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 the flock of which God shall make you overseer?

8. Are you now willing to take the charge of this church, agreeable to your declaration when accepting their call? And do you, relying upon God for strength, promise to discharge to it the duties of a pastor?

21-4. Ordination Requirements and Procedures

a. An intern applying for ordination shall be required to present a diploma of Bachelor or Master from some approved college or university, and also a diploma of Bachelor or Master from some approved theological seminary or authentic testimonials of having completed a regular course of theological studies, or a certificate of completion of and endorsement from a theological study program as approved by the General Assembly and one of the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America. No Presbytery shall omit any of these educational requirements except in extraordinary cases, and then only with a three-fourths (3/4) approval of the Presbytery.

Whenever a Presbytery shall omit any of these educational requirements, it shall always make a record of the reasons for such omission and the parts omitted. The intern shall also present satisfactory testimonials as to the completion and approval of his internship in the practice of the ministry.

b. Every candidate for ordination shall ordinarily have met the requirements of the Assembly's approved curriculum. Ordinarily, the intern shall have been examined in most of the following trials when he was licensed. If the Presbytery previously approved all parts of the licensure examination, it need not re-examine the intern in those areas at this time. If there were areas of weakness, which the Presbytery noted, or if any member of the Presbytery desires to do so, the intern may be examined on particular points again. Additionally, the intern shall be examined on any parts required for ordination which were not covered in his examination for licensure. In all cases, he should be asked to indicate whether he has changed his previous views concerning any points in the *Confession of Faith*, *Catechisms*, and *Book of Church Order* of the Presbyterian Church in America.

c. Trials for ordination shall consist of:

(1) A careful examination as to:

- (a) his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management (based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:6-9),
- (b) his knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages,
- (c) Bible content,
- (d) theology,
- (e) the Sacraments,
- (f) Church history,
- (g) the history of the Presbyterian Church in America, and
- (h) the principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church.

A Presbytery may accept a seminary degree which includes study in the original languages in lieu of an oral examination in the original languages.

(2) He shall prepare a thesis on some theological topic assigned by Presbytery.

(3) The candidate shall prepare an exegesis on an assigned portion of Scripture, requiring the use of the original language or languages.

(4) He shall further be required to preach a sermon before the Presbytery or committee thereof, upon three-fourths (3/4) vote. No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial for ordination

except in extraordinary cases, and then only with three-fourths (3/4) approval of Presbytery.

d. Whenever a Presbytery shall omit any of these parts, it shall always make a record of the reasons for such omissions and of the trial parts omitted.

e. While our Constitution does not require the candidate's affirmation of every statement and/or proposition of doctrine in our *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms*, it is the right and responsibility of the Presbytery to determine if the candidate is out of accord with any of the fundamentals of these doctrinal standards and, as a consequence, may not be able in good faith sincerely to receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* of this Church as containing the system of doctrine

taught in the Holy Scriptures (cf. BCO 21-5, Q.2; 24-6, Q.2).

f. Therefore, in examining a candidate for ordination, the Presbytery shall inquire not only into the candidate's knowledge and views in the areas specified above, but also shall require the candidate to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions. The court may grant an exception to any difference of doctrine only if in the court's judgment the candidate's declared difference is not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine because the difference is neither hostile to the system nor strikes at the vitals of religion.

g. The Presbytery, being fully satisfied of his qualifications for the sacred office, shall appoint a day for his ordination, which ought, if practicable, to be in that church of which he is to be the pastor.

h. The extraordinary clauses should be limited to extraordinary circumstances of the church or proven extraordinary gifts of the man. Presbyteries should exercise diligence and care in the use of these provisions in order that they not prevent the ordination of a candidate for whom there are truly exceptional circumstances, nor ordain (nor receive from other denominations (BCO 13-6) a person who is inadequately prepared for the ministry.