

From Under Care to Ordination

In the Presbytery of the West, the process for seeking ordination as a minister of the Gospel in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church is under the supervision of the Care of Candidates Committee. Our committee seeks to encourage those who are called by God in fulfilling the requirements for ordination. Our greatest desire is to help candidates understand both how they can fulfill our Lord's calling and how to use the gifts they have been blessed with to serve the church.

Candidates who are accepted under care by the Presbytery are assigned an advisor. The advisor meets regularly with the candidate to pray and talk through issues and to mentor the candidate while under care. The process of being under care and preparing for ordination normally takes one year. During this time, candidates are encouraged to seek a formal call to a particular place of service. An identifiable call is critical, because the Presbytery will only ordain an individual who has a formal call to ministry.

While under care, candidates are expected to attend meetings of the Presbytery of the West. In addition, they are required to prepare three written documents. The first two are personal Statements of Faith. The final document required is an exegetical paper from either the Old or New Testament, demonstrating the ability to work with the Bible's original languages. Candidates may also be assigned recommended readings.

As the time of candidacy draws to a close, candidates are requested to submit in writing any exceptions they take to the Westminster Standards.

Also, a written one page summary of ministry experience, including any publications is asked for prior to taking exams.

The examination of candidates begins with three written tests: English Bible, Theology and Sacraments, and Church Polity. After successful completion of these tests, candidates who have a written call meet with the Care of Candidates Committee for an interview prior to appearing before the Presbytery. The Ministerial Committee may also participate in the evaluation of candidates and their calls.

At the meeting of Presbytery, candidates are expected to preach. They are questioned regarding their exceptions to the Westminster Standards, their beliefs, character and practices. Their call to ministry is examined. At the successful completion of the oral exam, the assembly votes to approve the tests and the call. A commission is established to ordain and install the candidate as a minister of the Gospel within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

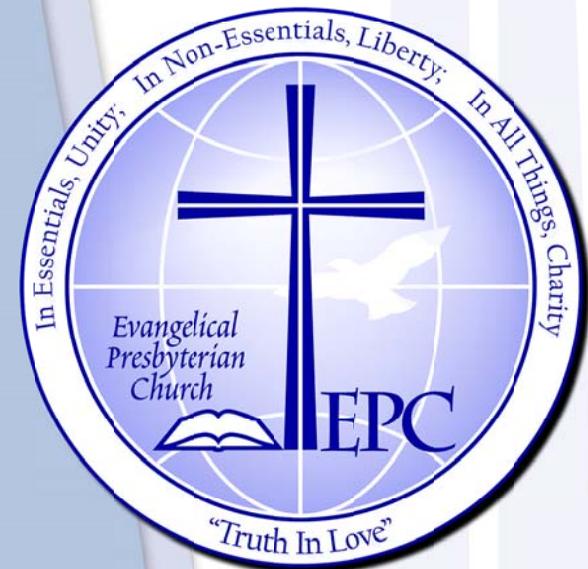
We recognize that candidates approach their consideration of ordination and future ministry with different individual concerns and needs. With that in mind, the Care of Candidates Committee wants to be a resource for the consideration of practical issues of theology and the evaluation of candidates' spiritual gifts as they consider God's call for their lives.

Contact the Care of Candidates Committee:

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Coming Under Care of the Presbytery of the West, Evangelical Presbyterian Church



Requirements to Come Under Care of the Presbytery of the West, Evangelical Presbyterian Church

The following are normally required of an individual seeking to come under care:

1. Membership of at least six months in an EPC church in the Presbytery of West.
2. Endorsement by the session of that church.
3. Completion of all official paperwork including:
 - Application to Come Under Care (page 121)*
 - Session Endorsement Form (page 120)*
 - Personal Information Form (page 149)*
 - Preliminary Questionnaire (page 125)*

- Physical Examination - a letter from a physician stating the physical well-being of the individual for ministry
 - Background check - the CoCC supplies the form
 - Psychological Examination - usually an MMPI2 or similar test
 - Transcripts of college credits and seminary courses taken
 - Recommendations from the references submitted in the Personal Information Form
4. Examination by the Care of Candidates Committee, which may be done by conference call, covering the following three areas.
 - Conversion to Christ and growth in the Christian life
 - Motive for seeking ordination
 - Call to Christian ministry



5. Candidates are expected to either have or, be working toward, an M.Div. degree, with proficiency in the original languages.

The POW offers two symposiums that prepare men and women to take written and oral EPC ordination exams or to transfer their ordination from non-Reformed denominations. The symposiums address EPC Polity and the Westminster Standards (Westminster Confession of Faith—the Smaller and Larger Catechisms), and the Reformed Theology tradition. The two-day Polity Symposium is required for all candidates seeking ordination and pastors transferring ordination from non-Reformed denominations. The one-day Reformed Theology Symposium is required for candidates seeking EPC ordination who have not taken a Reformed theology seminary course and all pastors transferring ordination from non-Reformed denominations. The Ministerial Committee may also refer applicants.

More information can be found at: www.epcwest.org. Click on *EPC West Important Information*.

*The page numbers in this pamphlet refer to the Fifth Edition of the Procedure Manual for Ministerial Candidates and Committees. The manual details the requirements listed here.