

You, the members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, have a sacred calling too. You are called to help guide those under your care who will be the pastoral leaders of the next generation. May God grant wisdom and courage so that your ministry of nurturing and shepherding inquirers and candidates may be fruitful.

Here is a reality checklist for fruitful ministry:

- **Consider the work as worship.**

Committees on Preparation for Ministry (CPMs) learn to practice the presence of God in our work whether we are in meetings or doing paperwork.

- **Practice group discernment.**

A couple of group-discernment models are available. One model is the Presbytery Discernment Team – the process of discovering God’s call for inquirers and candidates (contact Preparation for Ministry Office in Louisville 1-888-728-7228, ext. 5771 for a copy). The other is a discernment model designed by Milwaukee Presbytery CPM. In the setting of a retreat, prospective inquirers and CPM members answer questions for reflection. This experience of sharing one’s faith journey in a deeper way helps to build trust and balance the power the CPM has over those under their care.

- **Seek a holistic, team approach.**
Take time to do group building. Seek collegiality and share information with inquirers and candidates and their home church pastor and session liaison as ministry partners. Stay in touch with seminary contact persons who have more dealings with and knowledge about students. Work closely with presbytery’s Committee on Ministry on the first calls of candidates from other presbyteries.
- **Make education a priority.**
Educate yourself as a committee and the presbytery about the process. Encourage inquiry a year or more in advance of entering seminary. Do not rush the movement from inquiry phase to candidacy. The integrity of the process of true inquiry needs to be maintained. Learn about and be prepared to suggest other ministry opportunities besides the ministry of Word and Sacrament if there are questions about the suitability of an inquirer’s gifts and talents in ordained ministry.

- **Model through your work nurture, journey, covenant, and invitation.**

The goal is to nurture and encourage the growth of those whom God has called. Provide guidance and support to those under your care. Honor the covenant agreement you have made. Encourage attention to the learnings on the journey of preparation. Teach the sanctity of time and demonstrate that spiritual life is as important as schoolwork.

- **Be sensitive to gender, race, and disability issues.**

Remember lifestyle choices, such as the difficulties today's pastors face in juggling home and work responsibilities. Remember also not to judge a candidate's merit based only on a traditional paradigm for minister formation.



Preparation for Ministry Office Leadership and Vocation

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Consider . . .

The Reality of Encouraging Fruitful Ministry

*Consider your own call, sisters and brothers.
(1 Corinthians 1:26)*