

**Policy for Receiving Non-Presbyterian Ministers  
Into the Presbytery of Lake Erie**

Adopted 1997

Approved with new Book of Order references 11/17/12

1. In all ways this policy shall conform with the most current requirements of the Book of Order.
2. Pastor Nominating Committees (PNCs) are to be made aware of this policy. When PNCs are considering candidates who are not ministers in the Presbyterian Church (USA) this policy shall govern the manner in which they conduct their process. Before a person will be extended a call, it will be necessary for the Committee on Ministry to accomplish the steps described below. A delay in the Pastor Nominating Committee process may be necessary in order to fulfill all these requirements.
3. A non-Presbyterian minister seeking membership in the Presbytery must be called to appropriate work within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Lake Erie. (G-2.0505)
4. Ministers from other Reformed churches holding the Presbyterian Order in correspondence with General Assembly are accepted as already ordained by the PC(USA). They must be able to furnish credentials of ordination and a statement from their denomination that they are currently in good standing as ministers. (G-2.0505a) As required by the Book of Order, advice and assistance will be sought from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly. (Committee on Ministry, along with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, will do this.)  
Ministers of denominations which are not Reformed churches may be accepted as already ordained if the presbytery judges their church to 'hold the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity.' They also must be able to furnish credentials of ordination and a statement from their denomination that they are currently in good standing as ministers. (G-2.0505a)
5. Book of Order requirements state that all minister of non-Presbyterian denominations (both Reformed and non-Reformed) seeking membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA) must answer satisfactorily the questions on the examinations required of candidates for ordination. Committee on Ministry will assist the candidate to find dates and locations at which exams will be given, or in making alternative arrangements to satisfy this requirement. The costs involved will be the responsibility of the candidate.  
The Book of Order allows a presbytery, by a two-thirds vote, to exempt ministers of other Reformed church bodies who have been ordained for five or more years from some or all of this requirement. In any particular case, making such a recommendation will be at the discretion of the Committee on Ministry. The Committee on Ministry will not automatically recommend waiver of this requirement.
6. As one part of the standard reference checking procedure done by the Committee on Ministry, particular care will be taken to ascertain that the candidate in question is, in fact, a minister in good standing of the denomination which he/she cites as that to which he/she belongs. Credentials of ordination, a statement from the denomination that the minister is in good standing, and dismissal to the Presbytery of Lake Erie shall be required. (G-2.0505(2)b)
7. Also required is a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university and a theological degree from an institution acceptable to the Presbytery and requiring not less than three years residence. (G-2.0607 and G-2.0610)
8. The Committee on Ministry (or special committee appointed by the COM for this purpose) will examine each minister seeking membership on his/her Christian faith, theology, the sacraments, and the government of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Candidates must be able to articulate their Christian faith while showing an acceptable knowledge of theology and understanding and

acceptance of the Presbyterian system of church government. (G-2.0505) This preliminary examination does not replace the examination before Presbytery required for all candidates (see #11 below).

9. The Book of Order states (G-2.0505) and it is our policy, that the Presbytery shall not waive any of the foregoing requirements except in extraordinary cases in which the Presbytery shall follow the same procedure required in G-2.0610.
10. Upon approval by the Committee on Ministry, the Pastor Nominating Committee may proceed with normal steps in issuing a call, arranging for candidating and congregational meeting, etc.
11. Minister must present to the Presbytery a Statement of Faith, be examined by the Presbytery, and answer in the affirmative, before the Presbytery, all the Presbyterian ordination questions.
12. Before being enrolled as a member of the Presbytery of Lake Erie, satisfactory evidence must be presented that the minister has been removed from the roll of ministers of any and all other denominations with which he or she has been previously associated. (G-2.0505(2)b) (e.g. letter of dismissal from judicatory)