

**Commission on Ministry Policy for Examination
of Ministers, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Candidates**

The Commission on Ministry (“COM”) proposes that Charleston Atlantic Presbytery (“CAP”) adopt a procedure for examination of Ministers of Word and Sacrament seeking membership in the presbytery and candidates seeking ordination which will allow a commission of the COM to conduct the examinations and sustain or reject the examination on behalf of the presbytery. The commission shall be known as the Examination Commission.

1. Membership -- The Examination Commission shall be composed of ten persons, at least four of whom shall be current serving members of COM. One of those members shall chair the committee. The remaining six at large members will be former members of COM or retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The at large members will be appointed by the moderator of the COM. To the extent possible, the membership shall be evenly split between teaching and ruling elders. The General Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, and the moderator of COM may serve as *ex officio* members with voice and vote. COM shall be responsible for training all members of the Examination Commission.

2. Quorum – A quorum of the Examination Committee shall be a majority of its membership, including *ex officio* members.

3. Timing of Examination

a. Candidates for Installation or Interim Ministry – The Examination Commission shall coordinate with the Pastor Nominating Committee (“PNC”) of any congregation seeking an installed or interim minister to arrange a convenient time to examine a potential candidate once the PNC begins serious consideration of the candidate. The objective is to allow the COM to provide sufficient guidance to the PNC after it has begun to concentrate on the candidate, yet early enough so that the PNC does not expend significant effort on a candidate that the COM determines is not appropriate.

b. Candidates for Ordination – Once the Committee on Preparation has certified that a candidate is ready for a call and a PNC begins serious consideration of the candidate for a position, the Examination Commission shall arrange for an examination. If the candidate has accepted a call to a congregation in another presbytery and seeks to be ordained by CAP, the Examination Commission shall coordinate with the presbytery from which the call is extended and shall schedule the examination.

c. Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament – When a retired minister seeks membership in CAP, the Examination Commission shall schedule the examination at a mutually convenient time.

d. **Commissioned Pastors** – Upon completion of preparation and instruction required by CAP, ruling elders seeking to serve as commissioned pastors shall request to be examined. The Examination Commission shall examine the candidate in accordance with G-2.1002 and G-3.0306.

4. **Substance of the Examination** – The Examination Commission shall examine candidates on issues of theology, worship and sacraments, and polity in accordance with G-3.0306. Prior to the examination, the Examination Commission shall review the candidate's Personal Information Form, Statement of Faith, and Faith Journey, as well as a criminal background check conducted by CAP personnel, and any input from the General Presbyter of CAP.

5. **Report of the Examination**

a. **Examination is Sustained** – If the Examination Commission votes to sustain the examination, it shall report its actions to the minister, the PNC, the COM or the CPM. The COM shall coordinate with the pastor nominating committee further steps in the call process. The COM shall introduce all new members at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

b. **Examination is Not Sustained** – If the examination is not sustained, the Examination Commission shall explain to the individual examined the reasons for its decision and shall counsel the individual as to what steps could be taken to prepare more effectively in the future. It shall report its action to the COM and CPM.