

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF YOUR STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Committee on Preparation for Ministry – North Puget Sound Presbytery

As a candidate for ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA), you are required to prepare and present a written Statement of Faith for examination to both the Committee on Preparation for Ministry the presbytery when you have received a call. You are required to prepare and present. It should be a one-page, single-spaced, statement with an easily readable font no smaller than 10 point. Please include line numbers as well.

Your Statement of Faith should first of all be YOUR statement. It is very easy to copy a Statement of Faith from the hundreds which are available, or simply to paraphrase what the church has developed in its historic creeds. It should be representative of your own language style and reflect something of your personal response to the truths presented. It should reflect your theological education while at the same time being grounded in real life.

Among the topic about which we want to know your own personal commitments and beliefs are the following:

- The Trinity
- The Sovereignty of God
- Creation and Fall
- Sin
- The Incarnation
- The Atonement
- Justification
- The Authority of Scripture
- Prevenient Grace
- Ecclesiology
- The Sacraments
- The Confessions
- The Stewardship of Life
- Eschatology

If you do not include them in your Statement of Faith, we will most likely ask you about them in your interview with the committee.

It may seem unreasonable to ask a candidate to summarize his or her faith in a one-page document. How can the wealth of our Christian heritage, the convolutions of our historical creeds, the breadth of the biblical witness, and the complexities of leading the church into the 21st century be expressed in one page?

Our response is simple. It can't and it must! One fundamental aspect of the pastoral vocation is to be a clear communicator and a knowledgeable leader. Therefore, candidates for ordination must know with confidence what we believe as a church, where God is leading us as a church, and how we are to serve God faithfully in the process. Furthermore, they must know how to communicate this clearly, concisely, and passionately. Unless one can express one's own ideas with clarity, accuracy, and creativity, then one is not yet equipped for pastoral ministry.

A pastor is also a public communicator. Therefore, observance of socially accepted forms of communication is essential. Grammar, sentence structure, and use of words are all tools of the trade. Words carry meaning. They must be carefully and properly used.

God be with you in your preparation of your Statement of Faith.