

## 1 **The role of cpm in an ever-changing World**

- Synod of the Trinity com/cpm Gathering

## 2 **A Case Study**

- Casey grew up in an large suburban congregation
- She identified a sense of call to ministry in high school
- She was mentored between high school and college with various leadership roles in her home church
- She attended a Christian college, choosing to major in Religion and Psychology
- She volunteered at a nearby church during her college years
- Casey took an internship at a PC(USA) congregation between graduation and starting seminary.
- She graduated in May and began seminary the following fall, enrolling as an Inquirer during her Senior year of college.
- Casey completed a year of field ed in medium-sized congregation, and returned to her home congregation to serve during her third year.
- Casey is open to accepting an Associate call anywhere in the country.

## 3 **Observable trends among I/Cs**

- Less “formed”
  - Less “Presbyterian”
  - Ecclesiastical Refugees
  - “Spiritual but not religious”-type seekers
- Less geographically flexible
- Less oriented toward congregational ministry

## 4 **Observable trends among I/Cs**

- “Discerning” rather than “discerned”
- Mental health, interpersonal, emotional concerns are more prevalent.
- Vocational skepticism greater / Leadership potential lower
- Please keep in mind that this is the “average”: there is still a broad spectrum of seminary students.

## 5 **Observable trends in the world of Presbyteries/cPM**

- The number of inquirers and candidates (I/Cs) as well as seminary enrollment is lower
- Fewer I/Cs mean that fewer Presbyteries have dedicated CPMs anymore.
- There are fewer churches, fewer full-time calls, and seemingly fewer candidates willing to move to semi-rural or rural areas.
- I/Cs disproportionately emerge from larger congregations, while most I/Cs will find themselves called to smaller congregations.

- Our Seminaries and less Presbyterian than they used to be.
- Seminaries are accepting a higher percentage of students than in the past.

## 6 **Closing Comments:**

- None of this is new among seminarians/seminaries - but the percentages have shifted.
- While on it's surface this appears almost completely negative, it's more a statement of what is.
- There are always exceptions, of course.
- But, the mythical seminary graduate: Handsome, young, charming, charismatic, married male with 2 young kids, no undergraduate or seminary debt who is ready to go anywhere in the country he can find a call is a seriously endangered species.
- We have no idea what the short term or long term impact of COVID-19 will have, but we can make some educated guesses.

## 7 **Breakout Room discussions**

- Appoint a "reporter" who will share from your breakout room.
- React:
  - What's your gut/instinct reaction to Brian's observations?
  - Are there some trends you're not sure you agree with 100%?
  - What's your emotional reaction to what was shared?
- Observe: What observations do you have about the changing world of CPMs/Presbyteries/Seminaries/Inquirers and Candidates?
- Define: What is the core mission of Presbyteries when it comes to working with I/Cs?
- Strategize: How do you think Presbyteries' need to shift their approach to working with I/C's in light of the observations shared?
- Explore Further: What questions emerged for you from what was shared?
- Imagine: What are your expectations for how COVID-19 will impact the world of CPM?


## 8 **Breakout Sharing**

## 9 **Questions to be addressed In the Afternoon**

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11  **Hypothesis: The changing face of seminaries and seminaries require a greater level of engagement by Presbyteries**

12  **The Task of CPM**

- G-2.06 of the Book of Order defines the roles and responsibilities as to the preparation of those who are called to serve as Ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- “It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy” (G-2.0601)
- “In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of their covenant relationship.” (G-2.0605)

13  **Inquirer Phase**

- Requirements
  - “Shall” be a member of the sponsoring congregation, shall have been active in the work and worship of that congregation for at least six months, and shall have received the endorsement of the session of the sponsoring congregation
- Definition and Purpose
  - The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer’s suitability for ordered ministry.

14  **Candidacy Phase**

- Requirements
  - “The Inquiry and candidacy phase shall continue for a period of no less than two years, with at least one year as a candidate”
- Definition and Purpose
  - “The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery’s support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate’s fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination.

15  **What are we looking for?**

- Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a minister of the Word and Sacrament shall include
    - “a candidate’s wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment”
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- College/University degree
- Accredited Seminary degree including Greek and Hebrew Exegesis
- Successful completion of required examinations

**16**  **What are we evaluating for?**

- Suitability is the task of the Inquiry phase. Suitability asks the question “Does this person have the core traits and characteristics needed for someone to serve in ordained ministry?”
- House Analogy: Is the foundation there to build on?

**17**  **Things that cannot be taught:**

- Wisdom - ability to discern inner qualities and relationships
- Maturity of faith - of or relating to a condition of full development
- Leadership skills - to direct on a course or in a direction / the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance

**18**  **Things that cannot be taught:**

- Compassionate spirit - sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it / the activating or essential principle influencing a person
- Honest repute - genuine, real / the character or status commonly ascribed to one
- Sound judgment - exhibiting or based on thorough knowledge and experience / the process of forming an opinion, evaluation, and or/course of action by discerning and comparing

**19**  **What are we evaluating for?**

- Fitness and Readiness relates to an individual who we believe is suitable for ordained ministry (traits/characteristics) as to whether they have the knowledge and experience to enter into ordained ministry.
- This mainly relates to concepts that can be taught - including necessary skills (soft and hard skills), academic areas, theological depth and comprehension, understanding of the nature of ministry, etc.
- House Analogy: Are all the essential pieces in place and has it passed inspection?

**20**  **Summary of the Task of Presbyteries**

- Support and Nurture - Discerning a call to ministry can be personally and spiritually challenging, and part of our job is to be guides along the journey for those who sense a call to ministry.
- Evaluate fitness and readiness - We do not evaluate what is called “the inner sense of call”. We are called to evaluate when a person is ready to take on the role of Minister and Word and Sacrament. In short: “You may be called, but we evaluate when you’re ready for the responsibility”

## 21 **Breakout Room discussions**

- Appoint a “reporter” who will share from your breakout room.
- React: How have you seen the role of Presbyteries change over time when it comes to working with I/Cs? (Where have we come from?)
- Observe: What challenges have you found in working with I/Cs?
- Define: Write 3-5 sentences defining one of the six “unteachable” traits
- Strategize: How can Presbyteries being more engaged with the I/Cs?
- Explore Further: What questions emerged for you from what was discussed?

## 22 **Breakout Sharing**

## 23 **2020 and Beyond: Presbytery Strategies for I/Cs**

- Understand and clarify what constitutes “evidence”
- Greater engagement in the process / less reliance on Seminaries to ensure appropriate preparation.
- Greater emphasis on “experiences of ministry” as those provide the “formation” that is so critical for ministry.
- A “long-haul” commitment to ministry preparation - formation takes time and we can’t rush the process.
- Less emphasis on “theological evaluation” and more on the “suitability, fitness, and readiness” pieces.
- First-call placement and on-going support is critical for successful transition into ministry.