

PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA
Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Report to Presbytery
July 14, 2009

REPORTS TO THE PRESBYTERY

Annual Consultation

The committee held annual consultation(s) with the following candidates/inquirers, who have filed their annual written report with the Presbytery as required by the Presbytery's manual. The committee **VOTED** to continue on the rolls:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>CHURCH</u>
Bob Lundberg	Candidate	Christ Presbyterian Church, Edina
Jeff Foels	Inquirer	First Pres. Stillwater
Faith Kelly	Candidate	FPC, Red Wing
Michael Gyura	Inquirer	FPC, Rochester
Kathleen Whipple	Inquirer	Church of the Master, Coon Rapids
John Nelson	Inquirer	Church of All Nations, Columbia Heights
Kerri Allen	Inquirer	Dayton Ave PC, St Paul
Anna Kendig	Inquirer	Westminster PC, Minneapolis

Ordination exams

1. The committee **reports** that it has given the following persons permission to take the following ordination exams:
 - a. Kerri Allen to take all four ordination exams.
 - b. Jennifer Miles to take the Worship/Sacrament, Polity, and to re-take Theology ordination exams.
2. The committee **reports** that it has voted to approve a new policy concerning permission to take ordination exams:

M/S/C: That ordination examinations, (not including the Bible Content exam) should ordinarily be taken by candidates who have completed congregationally-based fieldwork, and who are beginning their final year of seminary. CPM may allow an inquirer, who has been approved by his/her subcommittee for candidacy to register to take ordination exams prior to his/her actual examination by CPM and /or Presbytery for candidacy.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESBYTERY

Inquirer

1. Cody Oaks, having fulfilled the constitutional requirements of G-14.0403 (active member of a particular church for at least six months) and the Presbytery's policy (endorsement by the session; interview with the committee of Presbytery to consider the application to be enrolled as an inquirer) is now presented to the Presbytery to be enrolled as an inquirer: Cody Oaks, Church of All Nations. See Attachment A for his statement of what it means to be an inquirer.

The committee **recommends** that he be enrolled as an Inquirer by the Presbytery.

Candidates

1. Steve Tyykila, who is on the roll of Inquirers of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, having satisfactorily demonstrated adequate promise for ministry by presenting the statements specified in the Presbytery's policy (G-14.0402), met with the session of Knox Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, is presented to the Presbytery to be examined "with respect to his Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry," and to be received as a candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. (See Attachment B)

The committee **recommends** that Steve Tyykila be enrolled as a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and that the moderator ask him the questions specified in the Presbytery's policy

2. Jennifer Miles, who is on the roll of Inquirers of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, having satisfactorily demonstrated adequate promise for ministry by presenting the statements specified in the Presbytery's policy (G-14.0402), met with the session of the House of Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, is presented to the Presbytery to be examined "with respect to her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry," and to be received as a candidate for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. (See Attachment C)

The committee **recommends** that Jennifer Miles be enrolled as a candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament and that the moderator ask her the questions specified in the Presbytery's policy.

Attachment A – Cody Oaks

Describe briefly (less than one page) your understanding of what it means to you to be an inquirer. Please include the most important events, experiences, and persons that have prompted you to become an inquirer.

To be an inquirer, for me, is to test a call under the guidance and leadership of the Church. It is recognition of the need to have a call confirmed not individualistically, but within the community of the Church. It is for me, an act of submission, a holding out of empty hands, to see if God might be pleased to use my gifts in this capacity. It is through the mentorship of my Pastor where I have discovered that any work done for the Church must be done for the *people* of the Church and this requires a transparency and vulnerability which comes through the accountability of being an Inquirer in my home church.

Attachment B – Steven Tyykila

Statement of Motivation

When I was eleven, my father died of cancer. One of the last things he told me while in the hospital was that I should read my Bible. It would be many years before I took his advice. I still went to church, although we changed from Lutheran to United Methodist. I participated as an acolyte, went to youth group and was confirmed. I remember one time sitting in church and hearing the pastor talk about people joining the ministry. I remember feeling a sense of God telling me I should consider that path. I shook it off thinking to myself that I was not enough of a religious person for that.

I went to college and didn't have much to do with organized religion. I eventually married and moved back up to the Twin Cities. About a year later we had our first child and purchased our first home and my wife said we had to find a church nearby. We finally found Knox Presbyterian Church just down the street from our house. I did not plan on doing more than singing in the choir, but after a year I was asked if I would become an Elder in charge of house and grounds. I tried to decline because I am not a mechanically inclined person, but they told me all I would have to do was go to a monthly meeting. Well it turned out to be a lot more than that. I became more and more active in church leadership including acting as a bridge between the Anglo-European members of the church and the new Indonesian members and found that it felt good and somehow "right".

One day my pastor asked me if I would be willing to lead the service while he was gone. I had been a member of Toastmasters (an organization that focuses on public speaking), for seven years so I said I would be glad to do it. When I was in the pulpit speaking I got that feeling of rightness again. I felt that God was telling me this was my path. It took a second time substituting in the pulpit for me to believe this was the path God wanted me to follow. I talked to my wife about it and she said, "Maybe you should consider going to seminary". When I said we did not have the money she replied, "If it is meant to be God will provide a way". Through scholarships and financial aid and still working full time I have been able to go to seminary half time. I knew this was the right path, but still had some concerns about my ability to do all the things that a minister needs to do.

I am almost halfway finished with my education at seminary. I have learned a lot more about the Bible and the Church. I have truly begun to understand what it means to say that Jesus Christ is my savior. I have integrated the new knowledge from my seminary experience so far, with the skills I had before coming to seminary. I have found my sense of call to be a minister has been affirmed as I have continued to learn and grow over the last three years. One of the biggest things I have learned is that as a minister I can't have the answer to every question.

I also have learned that the skills I was most concerned about are areas that I have a lot of strength in, specifically regarding my ability to do pastoral care. I have taken a class on Pastoral care and I recently finished doing my clinical pastoral education at UMMC and Fairview Riverside Hospitals. I know I can be a spiritual presence for people in need. I specifically recall the first time I was on-call for 24 hours. I was called in at 10:30 that night to be with a family of a thirty something year old man who had fast growing brain tumors. His father and two brothers were still dealing with the loss of the man's mother who died three weeks earlier from breast cancer, and now they were taking him off life support. As I was there for that family, and did a blessing for the man's journey, I could feel God's presence with me,

and working through me. I know I want to continue to have God working through me. I feel my call is leading me to become a parish minister.

Attachment C – Jennifer Miles

Statement of Motivation for Ordination

I strongly believe that I have been called to be a Minister of Word and Sacrament. But it did take me quite a while to realize this. The call was always there, poking at me, nudging me, but I was oblivious to it until a few years ago. I think that I had to mature more, collect some real life experience and turn my focus outward.

I was working as a Country Club manager when I decided to respond to God's call. I had been very unsatisfied with many aspects of my career. It seemed to lack any real purpose and meaning. My superiors were demanding that I treat employees with such disrespect and callousness. Hypocrisy and injustice seemed to dominate the atmosphere. I had experienced this same reversal of value and ethics before in other work places, but I had reached my limit. I was sad and angry and kept asking why I was being forced to go against what I knew was right in the eyes of God. Why should loving my neighbor go against company policy? It came upon me like a revelation. I was meant to serve God and my neighbor in a much more faithful position, one in which I could love people and work to change oppressive and unjust situations. I could bring hope and meaning into people's lives through the Word of God.

After speaking to my pastor and an admissions director at United seminary, this dream became real. When I committed to the decision to pursue the ministry I felt a huge weight lifted from my soul. I was filled with great joy and excitement. It was almost as if a presence near me laughed and said, "Finally!"

Since that decision, I have put great effort into my seminary education and my spiritual enlightenment. Every semester I have said the same thing, with sincerity, "This is the best semester yet!" I continually discover new gifts which are perfectly suited for the ministry. I reevaluate old gifts as to how they were really given for this vocation. I have never felt so alive and driven.

I am currently a chaplain in an internship setting. This has allowed me to bring to the world some of what I have learned. It is an incredible blessing to do work which focuses on the well-being of others. While pastoral care is a vital part of the ministry, chaplaincy does not offer all that I feel called to do.

Parish ministry has a much more diverse set of responsibilities and opportunities. I have been able to lead and assist with worship in different settings. The experience of designing liturgy, preaching the Word and offering prayers feels at once thrilling and natural. I am at home in the pulpit. The feeling of the Spirit flowing through me during a service is humbling and fulfilling.

I look forward to mission and outreach programs. I aspire to be obedient to God's will by working to stop oppression and strive for the well-being of God's children in all their various forms. I want to lead by example while encouraging and empowering others to follow their calls of mission.

I am excited to use my teaching skills to educate others about God's Word. I believe that I have much to offer all ages, from small children up to adults. People are hungry to learn about

theology and the Bible. I have the creativity and passion to present topics in interesting, vibrant and approachable manners.

I want to serve God and my brothers and sisters in this capacity. I want to give my whole being to the preaching, teaching and proclaiming of God's Word. This is my purpose, my call and my greatest desire.