

PRESBYTERY OF THE TWIN CITIES AREA
Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Report to Presbytery
March 13, 2010

REPORTS

Annual Consultation:

The committee held an annual consultation as specified in the Form of Government (G-14.0421) with the following inquirer, who has filed his annual written report with the Presbytery as required by the Presbytery's manual. The committee **VOTED** to continue him on the rolls pending his own exploration into switching to a Commission Lay Pastor call:

NAME	STATUS	CHURCH NAME, CITY & STATE
Steve Piper	Inquirer	First Presbyterian, Albert Lea, MN

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enroll as a Candidate: Sara Berry

Sara Berry, 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 Hope Presbyterian Church, Richfield, 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 A)

The committee **recommends** that Sara Berry 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.

Enroll as a Candidate: Risley Prakasim

Risley Prakasim, 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 Church of All Nations Presbyterian Church, Columbia Heights, 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 Risley Prakasim 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.

Enroll as a Candidate: Anna Kendig

Anna Kendig, 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 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, 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 Anna Kendig 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

Statement of Motivation

Sara Berry

God's call on my life to serve in the ministry began with a deep sense of passion for spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. As a child, my sense of God's call emerged as I took friends of mine to church and to church camp. During my teenage years, it led me to start a Bible Study at my public high school. In college, my sense of God's call on my life to spread the Gospel matured to an even deeper level.

Throughout my late teenage years and early college years, I began to develop the sense that God had called me to do more than take my friends to church, or to start a Bible Study. Rather, I began to sense that God had called me to become a "spiritual friend" to others. In other words, I began to see how God had given me the gift of acting as a safe space for people both inside, outside, and "somewhere in between" the faith to explore their spiritual questions about life, meaning, and faith. People at different points on their spiritual journeys saw me as a safe person with whom to discuss their deeper questions. Around my sophomore year of college, I began to recognize God's call on my life for which God had been preparing me all along: to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Now, as I am finishing my third year at Princeton Seminary and have completed two summer field educations, as well as a yearlong unit of CPE, I have grown even more fully into this call.

In my first field education during the summer of 2008, my job consisted mainly of contacting parishioners and then hearing (and later writing up) their stories of where they had seen Christ's transformation and leading in their lives. There, God taught me the art and importance of listening in ministry, and how listening helps people in their spiritual journeys.

During my CPE experience of the 2008-2009 school year, God taught me even more about listening to people in times of crisis. As I sat with people experiencing horrific tragedies, God helped me learn how to show God's love in times of confusion and fear as I learned to repeat back to them the feelings they conveyed to me. God also taught me about how allowing people to express their feelings allowed them to explore their deeper thoughts about God. In all this, God has better shaped me into the role of a minister as God has continued to teach me to listen and to show God's love in times of suffering.

When I did my field education of the summer of 2009, I designed worship services, preached several times, and helped start a Sunday school program that would begin in the fall. There, God shaped me as God helped me to realize and hone my gift for preaching, as I had the privilege of preaching four times. As I received positive feedback on my sermons from people

on all sides of the political and theological spectrum, God helped me to better see my gift for preaching the Good News to a variety of people.

Throughout all of these experiences, I have gained a better sense of God's call on my life to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). As God has helped me to become a better listener, more adept at discerning the Spirit's prompting in my own life as well as the lives of others, a better preacher, and a better worship designer, God has truly been molding me into the role of a minister who leads people closer to Christ. And I expect and trust that God will continue this molding in the upcoming years.

ATTACHMENT B

Statement of Motivation Risley Prakasim

The one true God calls on all God's people to witness to the reconciling work of Jesus Christ in the world. As God freely shared with us the gift of reconciliation it is our duty to share the good news that is the Gospel with all of creation. We must not only share the Gospel in word but also in deed as did Christ our Lord who used parables but also exhibited the Kingdom of Heaven by example. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as ransom for our lives must be a motivation for all who seek to follow our Lord and Savior in discipleship.

The youngest of four children to the first South African Indian Presbyterian minister, I was raised in the church. The seeds of the kingdom were planted early in my life and my mother who was active in the church and known for her prophetic visions once proclaimed that I would one day follow the call of my father. Many in our larger family were involved in ministry and the work of social justice in the face of oppression known as apartheid. We moved to Princeton when I was six, it was a new world for us but the body of Christ, the church was still present in our lives.

Acclimating to my new environment was not easy for me as I experienced racism in a land that we were told was free from this kind of oppression. My time as a youth was troubled wishing at times that we never left South Africa. My troubled youth turned into a troubled adulthood as I marched through the desert of sin for many years which resulted in a failed marriage. I turned to alcohol and drugs to comfort me as I had abandoned my church community many years ago. I was not alone in this desert however; little did I know that I was walking the path that would lead ultimately to restoration through the work of God.

I met my wife who encouraged us to start attending church again and found a church and a community at Church of All Nations. Through pastoral and community engagement I was nurtured back to spiritual health by the grace of God. The Holy Spirit began to cultivate the seeds in me that were sowed long ago and a call to ministry became clear in my life. A mission trip with the church helped me to explore this call and confirmed what I felt in my soul. I began to fully engage the life of the church through discipleship groups, various church committees, street ministry and subsequent mission trips. My church community affirmed my calling and guided me to enter seminary. With the calling God has given me, God has also imparted to me a heart

for the marginalized of this world. During the mission trips I was a part of I was able to connect with those on the margins that others in the church were not able to connect with. I further explored this affinity to the margins during my CPE unit in which I served at Augustana senior homes and Hennepin County correctional facility in Plymouth. My love for God's people grew as I learned to engage seniors and the sick. The time at the correctional facility further affirmed my call to minister to the margins of society as I was warmly received and eventually offered a job. Those whom I encountered at the two facilities, my CPE supervisor, my seminary and church community affirm that God has called me to be a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The giving of the Eucharist is an outward sign of our faith and promise that God freely gives salvation through no merit of our own. All of these experiences have furthered God's transformation of me, confirmed the call, and strengthened my own sense of vocation to Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

ATTACHMENT C

Statement of Motivation

Anna Kendig

My call to ministry began with a love of stories. As a child, I was captivated by stories in books, stories told at bedtime by my parents, stories I made up in my own mind. I wanted to be a teller of stories. Yet perhaps feeling humbled by this audacious desire, at age 11 I settled for telling people that I wanted to be a book reviewer – to read other's stories, and highlight what I loved.

Still secretly wanting to be an author, a storyteller of the written word, I began to wonder about teaching English as a vocation (more stories!) and later, ministry. Yet as I think back, the pull of stories is what grounds me in every vocational dream I have ever had.

As a child, I wanted to write stories about adventure, about daring, about fulfillment of dreams. I still do. Yet I also want to tell stories about perseverance, about hope, about loss, about the cycles of life chronicled in each of our hearts.

For me, this impetus to tell stories is at the core of a call to Christian ministry. Without a passion for telling the story of our faith, the story of our faithful *lives* of joy and pain, ministry is soulless. The passion for telling comes in many forms: education, preaching, offering prayer or pastoral care, administering the sacraments, ordering and reimagining worship, participating in fellowship and much more. As we re-create the story anew in our various communities, we understand afresh the Word that was spoken at the beginning of time and which continues to speak into each of our lives.

My faith tells me that Jesus is the first story, the first Word of a newborn Creation. Discovering this story afresh in college, I began to comprehend that telling this story in a way that builds up human community, that gives praise to God and that honors Christ's teachings and witness is not only difficult but absolutely vital. I had been a participant in a community of faith for my entire life, but this was the first time that the story became more than "wallpaper" to a life of mission and service. I wondered how I had ever seen it any other way.

Suddenly bursting with desire to tell the story and explain how it had rocked my life to the core, I volunteered for my first “real” ministry experience leading a high school youth mission trip. Reality quickly set in: ministry was more than just passion. It was trial and error. It was *work*. But it was work that fed me despite disappointment, and my passion and conviction that my faith was real, that the story mattered, kept me persevering.

Many ministry experiences later, I continue to be impelled by a desire to tell the story. The witness of faithful communities like my home congregation, like congregations I have had the privilege of serving at attending in other cities and even other countries have encouraged me to continue to believe that the story is alive and breathing with the Spirit. The feedback and guidance of mentors and friends has steered me toward a ministry that grows from the center of who I am. The pushing and prodding of God have led me to new experiences that deepen the shades of meaning that I glean each time I open the Bible, each time I hear the story told in worship, each time I hear someone’s a testimony of faith.

I have not arrived easily at a call to ministry: I resisted the responsibility not because I didn’t care for it, but more so because I cared so *much*. I worried that I would tell the story badly, that I would cause harm with words which would sting all the more because of the role a pastor is asked to play. I still hold these responsibilities seriously, yet I also recognize that God’s power is in the story, and that my trust is ultimately never in *me*, but in the in-dwelling God. Trusting God, therefore, and in the joy of my call, I seek ordained ministry with the people of God.