

Possible Questions for Candidates and Those Seeking Membership in the Lehigh Presbytery

The following questions have been prepared by the Committee on Ministry and contributors from throughout the Lehigh Presbytery, with assistance from other presbyteries around the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They are intended as a spark to help in identifying or verbalizing a question to ask.

This list is meant to be foundational, not limiting, meaning that no one is limited to asking these specific questions. If a person's statement of faith or response to another inquiry prompts a question in your mind, you are urged to follow up. These are meant to be a beginning, not an end. But on those occasions when you desire to ask a question but are not sure what, or if you have the hint of a question in mind, but lack the exact words, these questions may help.

This list will be available on the Lehigh Presbytery website, and those to come before the Presbytery will be encouraged to review it beforehand. These are not meant to surprise anyone, but in order to provide a thoughtful answer they do have the opportunity to be prepared beforehand. Not only does this allow the Presbytery to get to know the person better, but it gives that person an opportunity to get to know the Presbytery better.

1. What regular spiritual practices do you follow? Why?
2. What energizes you in your Statement of Faith, and centers your faith journey?
3. What does it mean to you, practically speaking, to "trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?"
4. How specifically and generally has the grace of God impacted your life?
5. Our constitutional questions ask us to "sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do." What distinctive elements of the Reformed faith would you describe as "essential", and how do they impact your life and ministry?
6. Our constitutional questions for ordination describes the Scriptures as "by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ and God's word" to us." What does this mean to you as you think about the place of Scripture in the life of faith? In the life of the Church?
7. Who is Jesus Christ to you?
8. What is sin? How does sin impact believers in Jesus Christ as individuals and as a community? How ought Christians respond to sin in the larger world?
9. Are there favorite themes to which you return most often in your preaching? What are they, and why are they significant to you?
10. How do you understand the Incarnation? How does it affect your ministry?
11. What do the creation accounts in Genesis -3 mean to you? How would you respond to someone who told you they believed that the earth was created by God in seven days out of nothing?
12. Share your understanding of the importance of the sacraments in today's church.
13. How do you understand accountability to the presbytery?
14. What do you see as the mission of the church in the world?
15. What does it mean to affirm that God alone is the Lord of the conscience? How should that affirmation reflect on controversial issues that divide the church?
16. What is your sense of the goals and vision of the church or work to which you are being called?
17. How do you see your skills, gifts, interests, and abilities in light of the goals and needs with this call? Within the Presbytery? What concerns you? What excites and interests you? Why is this new call a good "match" between applicant and position?
18. Tell us of your best experience with a congregation. Recall a time when you felt most alive, most involved, spiritually touched, or most excited about your involvement.

19. What areas of your ministry have been most exciting to you?
20. What is it about being a member of this denomination that you value?
21. How do you balance your personal/family life with your ministry?
22. How do you “recharge your battery,” revitalize your energy level or find the emphasis for regeneration?
23. What is the difference between a connectional church and a congregational church? What are the strengths of our connectional system?
24. How do you conceive of the role of the church in the wider community of which it is a part?
25. What is your favorite passage of Scripture and why? How have you experienced the truth of its message in your life?