Considering transition to the candidacy phase

- Check your presbytery’s preparation for ministry processes to determine whether you will be expected to initiate an application for candidacy or whether its committee will invite you to a review for candidacy.

- Review and prepare any specific materials your presbytery may require as “outcomes of inquiry,” including whether you will need to obtain an endorsement from your session specific to being enrolled as a candidate.

- Consult with the presbytery’s committee regarding whether you should continue into the candidacy phase or conclude the inquiry phase with a discernment that your gifts and callings are to service in an area other than as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. Depending on the presbytery’s procedures, the committee may have “delegated authority” to act on the presbytery’s behalf in this decision, or it may formulate a recommendation that will receive action by the presbytery in plenary session.

- Your presbytery may require that you appear before a plenary session of the presbytery to be examined prior to its action to transition you to candidacy. Traditionally such examinations have included questions about the individual’s Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken, and motives for seeking the ministry.

- The presbytery may conduct a brief service marking the transition to candidacy either as part of one of its gatherings for worship or during a service of your home congregation. It may also be possible for the candidate and her or his session to request that a commission of presbytery conduct such a service of reception in the presence of the candidate’s congregation even if it is not a usual practice within the presbytery.

**FAQ**

*If the presbytery’s committee decides to conclude my inquiry rather than recommend that I continue on to the candidacy phase, is it possible for me to appeal that decision?*

The *Book of Order* directs that “prior to taking such action” presbyteries are to “make a reasonable attempt to give the ... inquirer an opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed removal” (G-2.0609). Each presbytery establishes its own
procedures for such hearings, including who may be heard during the meeting and who is charged with determining whether the hearing brings to light information that might suggest a different recommendation. Inquirers may not, however, forestall such actions by failing or refusing to participate in consultations or hearings; such failures of cooperation could themselves be “sufficient reasons” for removing a person from the roll of inquirers.