

# **Examining Candidates for Ordination and Installation in the New Environment Created by the PUP Report**

September 22 , 2006

In the midst of the busy-ness of Fall is the concern about examination of candidates for ordination and installation in the Post-General Assembly environment. Sessions and presbyteries have begun to respond. I have seen statements declaring presbyteries' intent to hold the Book of Order requirements for ordination as requirements for candidates in their presbyteries. Sacramento, Mississippi, Central Florida, New Covenant, and Nevada are examples of presbyteries that have taken action so far, and more are in the works..

Many sessions are adopting resolutions of intent for themselves and bringing resolutions to their presbyteries. We want to post examples of these actions on our website. Please help me by sending me the wording your session or presbytery has adopted. Don't overlook the importance of what your own session does in going on record and in putting proper questions to candidates for office in your church.

The renewal groups issued suggested wording for these resolutions after the General Assembly. We commend the wording to you. It avoids several pitfalls, one of which is the necessary and important distinction between asking candidates to believe or approve the requirements rather than asking them to obey or live in conformance to them. On constitutional requirements for ordination, our polity permits dissent; it does not permit disobedience.

The wording is:

*In its discernment of the essentials of Reformed polity and for the sake of the peace, unity, and purity of the church, this governing body adopts the principle that compliance with the standards for ordination adopted by the whole church in the Book of Order is an essential of Reformed polity. Therefore, any departure from the standards for ordination expressed in the Book of Order will bar a candidate from ordination and/or installation by this governing body. Provisions of the Book of Order are signified as being standards by use of the term "shall," "is/are to be," "requirement," or equivalent expression.*

The Lord be with you as you seek to be faithful in these times.