

The Committee on Ministerial Standing

CHAIR Phil Hakanson - wolfspastor@comcast.net

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Dear Candidate -

The Committee on Ministerial Standing (COMS) of the East Coast Conference is looking forward to interviewing you and reading your theological paper in our upcoming meetings. We consider God's call to ministry and our discernment of it within the Evangelical Covenant Church to be a deep privilege and a high calling where diligent stewardship is required of us. The committee is elected from among our ministerial community, and is intentionally reflective of both Commissioned and Ordained Ministers with years of pastoral experience.

To help you prepare successfully for your upcoming interview and to help the COMS to prepare fully, please embrace these guidelines as you prepare to meet with us.

- **Our interview is dependent on two lenses –both are essential in our discernment.**
 - **The first “lens” is your written paper.** We suggest pacing your writing so that you have sufficient time to do your best work in research, reflection and in editing. For those preparing for Ordination, *we recommend you begin writing it at least two months in advance of the due date, writing on one or two questions per week.* We expect your paper to reflect your best work, and to be written at a graduate level. Spelling, grammar and punctuation matter. You are writing as a minister in a professional setting. As a minister, your ability to communicate succinctly in writing is a basic competency. Referencing a Manual of Style (MLA, APA, or Chicago style) may be helpful to you. Have someone else who is conversant with theology and grammar proofread your paper before you submit it. It is important that you pay attention to the ECC guidelines for composing the paper. Details do matter.
 - **The second “lens” is your oral interview.** You will be expected to expand on or clarify aspects of your paper with the committee. Please re-read your paper just prior to your interview, and bring a copy with you. Questions will cover a variety of personal, theological and pastoral dimensions of your faith and practice. We want to know that you can articulate with comprehension BOTH what the ECC's historic understanding is on various issues AND what your own convictions are – and we don't expect or require them to be identical. Plan to provide brief answers – 2 or 3 minutes to each question.
- **Dress for the interviews is business casual (men: dress pants, button down collared shirt, tie or jacket; women: dress pants or skirt, collared shirt, or business dress).** We will do the same. This will prepare you for future interviews with the Board of the Ordered Ministry.
- **Bring a copy of your own paper with you to the meeting, and a Bible if you wish to reference it in discussion.**
- **Please also review the Guidelines for the Licensing Paper document, as it does indicate items that are needed for your interview (i.e. copy of your job description, and a 10 minute devotional prepared)**
- **Please plan to arrive at least 20 minutes early for your interview;** this will allow you to be refreshed, oriented and ready to go. We will also plan to take a photo of you for our records. We work hard to stay on schedule; tardiness affects not only you but also everyone after you for the rest of the day. Please plan accordingly.

Finally, remember to pray! Ask God to prepare the COMS for your interview & enable you to speak authentically, freely and with clarity. Remember, this is all for God's glory – and you are already beloved!

If you have any questions regarding specifics for your interview, please do not hesitate to email us back.

Thank you!

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