

The Rev. Laurie Whitwell Hogge

At its meeting on March 19, 2025, the Commission on Preparation for Ministry voted unanimously to request the presbytery to transfer her ordination to the PCUSA and receive her as a member of our presbytery through ordination exam waiver per G-2.0505(2) and to request Presbytery to validate her ministry as chaplain at Hospice of the Chesapeake.

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) has been in conversation with the Rev. Laurie Whitwell Hogge since January 2025. Rev. Hogge was ordained clergy in the Christian Reformed Church in North America on December 2, 2009. Laurie's ministerial career has been in hospital chaplaincy and hospice chaplaincy. She is currently serving as chaplain at Hospice of the Chesapeake.

The Heidelberg Catechism is one of the confessional standards of the CRCNA. After a long process of debate over several years and several Synods (Synod is analogous to General Assembly), the Synod of the CRCNA of June 2024 ratified a connection between a "traditional" understanding of Scripture regarding whether homosexuality is unchastity and statements in the Catechism. This understanding is now held to be confessional for all ordained office bearers and is now part of CRCNA dogma. Those who are in other than heterosexual relationships or marriages may not be ordained as clergy or office bearers, nor may those who are "affirming" of those relationships. Also, clergy and office bearers are not to be associated with organizations affirming those relationships (which is obviously a conundrum for most chaplains).

All clergy and office bearers in the CRCNA must sign the CRCNA Form of Subscription confirming individual acceptance of this action. Clergy, office bearers, and churches have until June 2025 to disaffiliate with the CRCNA.

Laurie is unwilling to sign such a statement and, after prayerful consideration, desires to transfer her ordination to the PCUSA and become a member of the Presbytery of Baltimore.

Our CPM has carefully reviewed Laurie's educational background. She is a graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary and has met all of the educational requirements of the CRCNA and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-2.0607). It should be noted that the CRCNA ordination process and exams are more closely aligned with ours, even more so than our Formula of Agreement denominations. Recently, Denver Presbytery voted unanimously to welcome a CRCNA pastor in through ordination exam waiver and COM-validated ministry.

Laurie met with the Credentials Team of COM on April 28, which voted unanimously to recommend validation of her ministry with Hospice of Chesapeake. If approved for transfer, CPM will require Laurie to complete a class in Presbyterian polity in the next 18 months and complete the presbytery's required Boundary and Dismantling Racism Training.