

The Methodist Church of New Zealand

Te Hāhi Weteriana O Aotearoa

Administration Division

P O Box 931

CHRISTCHURCH

Information Leaflet No. 10

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PRESBYTERS' CRITERIA FOR ORDINATION

A decision to ordain a man or woman to the Presbyterate is of major significance to the life of the individual and of the whole Church. The criteria set out herein are intended to assist the Church in assessing whether, and at what point, a person has the gifts and graces to fulfil a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care.

The criteria are part of a much broader Training/Skills document covering the various stages of selection, training and preparation for ordination. They were prepared in 2001 and encompass the Church's understanding of the place of the Mission Statement, and its commitment to the bi-cultural journey and issues of inclusiveness. A candidate for ordination will be expected to meet most of the listed criteria.

Information regarding the assessment process towards ordination is set out in Information Leaflet No. 11.

CRITERIA FOR ORDINATION AS PRESBYTER

in the Methodist Church of New Zealand

(Note: These are based on criteria as agreed by Methodist Conference 1991)

1. PERSONAL

✧ **Personal Faith**

- Give evidence of a lively faith in Jesus Christ which:
 - is rooted in the scriptures and the tradition of the church,
 - is growing through interaction between theological reflection and current issues, both personal and social,
 - offers hope for the future through a vision of Christian commitment in community.
- Be able to articulate a clear call to ordained ministry and give a clear statement of the meaning of ordination.

✧ **Personal Development**

- Show ongoing personal growth, emotional maturity and moral integrity through:
 - a deepening life of prayer and spiritual reflection encouraged by spiritual direction, journaling, making a retreat or other spiritual discipline,
 - a commitment to ongoing ministry supervision,
 - self-awareness and self-assessment, preferably through an appraisal programme.

✧ **Personal Relationships**

- Show ability to develop relationships of sensitivity and respect which reflect the sacredness of human life.
- Give due priority and time to primary relationships and family responsibilities.
- Show openness and a willingness to relate to and understand those who are different from oneself, remembering that each human being bears the image of God.
- Have developed skills in peer assessment by the sympathetic giving and receiving of feedback.

2. THE TRADITION

✧ **The Scriptures**

Recognise the centrality of the scriptures for Christian living and give evidence of an ability to interpret and expound their message with faithfulness and vision for today's congregations by:

- encountering the Word of God both within and beyond the historical and literary forms of both testaments.
- using the tools and methods of a variety of critical approaches to the Bible.
- recognising the different, and sometimes conflicting, testimonies present in the scriptures and in the various church traditions which have interpreted them.
- being aware that no interpretation is without bias or advocacy.
- relating the biblical themes to life in our world.

✧ **Theology**

- Show an ability to think theologically, using language which is clear and coherent to express understandings of Christian faith in both systematic and contextual terms.
- Have an understanding of and sensitivity towards different theological positions, denominational diversity and other faiths.
- Display an openness to further growth and wrestling with theological issues.

✧ **Methodist Church Ethos and Polity**

- Give reasons for one's membership of the Methodist Church in preference to another denomination.
- Show understanding of and be willing to act under the discipline of the Methodist Church in relation to:
 - its Connexional system
 - its stationing procedures
 - its forms and practices of administering the sacraments
 - its Mission Statement
 - its Laws and Regulations.
- Give evidence of having read and understood the standard sermons and Wesley's notes on the New Testament.

3. MINISTRY

✧ **Ministry Skills**

- Embody and articulate the call to Christian discipleship.
- Have developed the skills needed in leading worship, preaching, pastoral care, administration, group work and meeting facilitation.
- Show willingness and ability to work with others, both lay and ordained, to build an effective ministry team and to maintain healthy team relationships.
- Act professionally and with integrity in all relationships within the church and in the community.
- Have developed a ministry style which is self-directed, responsive to the needs of others and which builds up the body of Christ.
- Show an ability to analyse community, national and international issues from a gospel perspective and demonstrate a commitment to social justice and the reign of God.

✧ **Bicultural Journey**

- Show a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the Church's bicultural journey.
- Demonstrate knowledge of Te Tiriti O Waitangi and its implications for church and society.
- Be familiar with key concepts of tikanga Maori and some basic knowledge of te reo Maori, especially pronunciation.
- Have developed skills for cross-cultural communication and understanding, especially amongst those cultures represented in parish or community.