

CAUTION SIGNS

Some things of concern in interviews with ministers

While most ministers and candidates with whom you will talk are committed to the Presbyterian Church (USA) and well-educated in Reformed Theology, there are some who are not as well prepared to be your pastor. Here are some things to listen for in what ministers and candidates say that may indicate matters of concern. If you hear things that concern you, please don't hesitate to contact the presbytery staff and ask us to investigate the matter further.

1. Theology
 - a. Does the minister seem to hold beliefs that seem out of character with your experience of what Presbyterians believe, or that seem to contradict our confessions?
 - b. Does the minister express distrust or disrespect for the Presbyterian Church (USA) as a denomination? Does he/she advocate division in the church, or withholding contributions to the work of the larger church?
 - c. Does the minister seem reluctant to ordain and serve with women elders and ministers?
 - d. Does the minister participate in groups that advocate or encourage divisiveness in the church?
2. Professional conduct
 - a. Does the minister have a history of rapid movement from call to call (less than 3 years per call, on average)?
 - b. Is there an unexplained interruption in the minister's service history?
 - c. Did the minister (or candidate) attend a Presbyterian seminary (or one that reflects the Reformed tradition)? If you have questions about a particular seminary, please contact the presbytery staff.
 - d. Does the minister seem to approach the role and life of the minister in a cavalier or irresponsible fashion? Does he/she seem to take the responsibility of congregational leadership seriously?
3. Personal life
 - a. Is there any question in your mind about the minister's character or morals?
 - b. Does the minister's family seem stable?
 - c. Are there major health problems of either physical or emotional origin?
 - d. Are there financial problems?