

## **Barrett Payne – Ordination Questions**

*Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?*

In Matthew 28:16-20, Jesus sends his disciples to baptize and teach the nations. With this passage in mind, to be obedient to Jesus Christ means that we are called to go and baptize and teach the nations. To me this means that we are to follow the teachings of Jesus – go to the lost, feed the poor, and seek justice for the oppressed. I believe this also means that we are to tell the nations about the love and peace of Christ and teach the nations that through Jesus we are reconciled with God and one another. In addition to being obedient to Jesus I am reminded that I am to serve and teach others but I must humble myself and be served and taught by others (John 13:1-17).

My obedience to Jesus Christ starts with prayer and my readings of scripture. I believe that my ministry must be open to the Holy Spirit while reading scripture and be willing to let the Spirit guide me as I study and reflect on scripture. I also believe that it is through scripture that I learn about the love of God and God's eagerness for all humans to be reconciled to each other and to God. It is also through scripture that I learn about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I am able to utilize the teachings learned in scripture to guide my ministry.

I am also aware that history has proven that we are misguided at times of how we interpreted scripture. The confessions remind me that as much as I try to be open to the guidance of the Spirit and to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, my sin and personal desires prevent me from completely being open. Therefore, the Confessions help me to be open to a continuous life of transformation. I am encouraged that the PCUSA denomination is guided by our confessions and reminded that we all have new life through Jesus Christ.

*Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?*

To serve people within the 21<sup>st</sup> century to me means that we must seek to serve "with" the people and not "to" the people. I believe if we seek to serve with others we remove the barrier of one person over the other and begin to knock down the walls and begin forming relationships. Therefore, as a pastor I will eagerly serve with the members of the congregation and will look forward to getting to know the members through the love of Jesus Christ.

I also believe that we are called to serve the people beyond the church walls and work alongside members of the greater community. Like serving people in our congregation, I think serving people in the greater community requires us to re-evaluate how we serve those on the "margin" and be open to serving with all persons instead of "to" the people. As we move towards serving with others, I believe we become open to seeing each other as children of God, as well as being open to how God is using others to serve us.