

From the COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

October 13, 2020

The Committee on Preparation met on October 6, 2020 and brings the following motion to the Presbytery:

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry moves that the Presbytery of Detroit examine Kelsey Sorge for ordination to the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

If this motion is approved, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry provides the following documents to the Presbytery to assist in its examination of Ms. Sorge:

Autobiographical Statement
Statement of Faith

Kelsey Sorge is a Candidate under care of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley, finally assessed as ready to be examined for ordination by that presbytery's Commission for Church Professionals on May 4, 2020. She has received a call to serve as Associate Pastor at Kirk in the Hills, Bloomfield Hills, MI.

The Presbytery is invited to ask questions of his/her Statement of Faith or in relation to her preparedness for ordained ministry.

Ordination to ordered ministry of teaching elder is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call.
(G2.0701)

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Edward Dunn

Co-Moderator, Committee on Preparation for Ministry

I believe in one God, the Holy Trinity; God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit the Sustainer. God forever was, is, and forever will be. Humans cannot fully comprehend or explain God's being, nor is God bound by time, space, gender, or language. God is love.

Out of God's great love God brought a perfect creation into existence. Sin entered the world, and the perfect relationship between God and humanity was broken. All of creation, land, animals, and humans, were affected by this brokenness and no human works could rectify it. Out of love for creation, though, God sent God's only son in human form by way of a miraculous birth into the world. After Jesus performed many miracles, Jesus was convicted a criminal, and blameless, he suffered and died on a cross in order to bear the sins of the world.

Jesus conquered death, and rose from the dead three days later. Jesus appeared to many and then ascended into Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Creator. While sin remains in creation, Jesus's death and resurrection was an atoning sacrifice for sin. Through Jesus, humans can again be in perfect relationship with God.

Jesus ascended into Heaven, and in the absence of his physical presence God provided the gift of the Holy Spirit out of continued love. The Holy Spirit remains with humanity always to guide and protect. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that God works through humanity to bring God's light into the world.

In response to God's amazing grace, the church is free to serve faithfully in the world by proclaiming God's love with word, service, relationships and sacraments. Through sacraments, the Church declares and affirms its faith. In baptism God claims us as God's own and renews us through cleansing with water. As a church we declare our own faith and promise to live as a community who loves and believes in the grace and love of God. The sacrament of communion is a reminder of God's unfailing love and atonement of our sins for all of eternity, in which we can partake with gladness. By partaking in communion we can grasp God's very real presence in our lives today.

Through word, service and relationship in the world the church continues in the work set forth by Jesus. The church is called to love one another as Jesus demonstrated, so that all people may know grace, forgiveness and belonging in its fullness.

Through Scripture, the Word of God is proclaimed to humanity and God's being is revealed through the inspired words written by humans. These holy words teach of God's grace and mercy, and encourage us to live by its teachings while reminding us that failure is met with love and forgiveness. We are assured of God's desire to be in relationship with us and all of creation.

Through confessions and creeds, we can know how the Reformed tradition has been shaped by past men and women, and we can look to those doctrines for guidance in the church, as well as for hope in the ever evolving nature of our tradition.

Kelsey Sorge
Autobiography

My family is not what some may call a “religious” family; however, when I was young, it was a requirement for us all to go to church on Sundays. We attended a non-traditional Presbyterian church in Ohio, and though I resisted church as a child, I enthusiastically got involved in youth group, service, and leadership in various ways as a teenager and young adult.

Faith was an important part of my life, but I never considered parish ministry as my calling. I attended The Ohio State University for undergraduate and graduate degrees in Middle Childhood Education. At the time, I believed my calling was to teach in a school, but by the time I graduated I recognized God’s call on my life to serve people in a different way. My freshman year I joined a college ministry group, and my faith was challenged immensely through this experience. I was indirectly taught to doubt my ability to lead in the church because of my gender, but I also learned the importance of vulnerability and healing both from friends and family and from God’s grace. It was not an aspect of my faith that I had addressed much beforehand. Being a part of this theologically conservative group I started to question my faith for the first time; however, I felt unable to work through those questions and struggles with friends and leaders serving in this ministry.

During my sophomore year of college I began serving as a Youth Assistant at my home church. I worked closely with the Youth Pastor there to help organize Bible studies, outings, retreats, mission trips, and Sunday school curriculums. He challenged me to think theologically, pushed me in my leadership abilities, and encouraged me to experience the love of God in real, tangible ways. Not only did I grow in my own faith through this position, but I developed my own sense of call for youth ministry as well. For a short time I assumed I would simply continue on in this role, even as I began my teaching career, but God had different plans for me. When I finally voiced the call I had heard from God for my life, I was met with support and encouragement from friends, family, and mentors.

The next step was seminary. I attended Princeton Theological Seminary, and the first year of my seminary experience challenged me in ways I had never been challenged before. On one hand, I was learning new and exciting interpretations of the Bible and of theological concepts, but on the other hand, the work was difficult and I seemed to lose God’s place in my life. It took a significant amount of time and effort to learn how to incorporate a personal, meaningful faith with the academic theological thinking that was new and demanding. The combination resulted in a deeper, more authentic faith than I had ever experienced in my life. I learned how to articulate my faith better in classes, but I also learned how to value and interact with God’s people in the world better through student organizations, field education placements, and conversations with friends and colleagues.

Throughout my life, my experiences with God and other people have awoken a deep desire in me to love others in liberating and meaningful ways. I know that God is calling me to be a leader in the church; to help guide, love, empower, and nurture faith in and with God’s people. I am prepared to do the work necessary to follow that call well.