

Boundaries in the Church

The Presbytery of Carlisle Commission on Ministry

Rationale

As God exists eternally in community, humanity also exists in community – distinct individuals who share a common purpose and Spirit for the sake of Christ, one another, and the world. As beings who participate in relationships, clergy, church leaders, and members routinely enter each others' physical space, emotional space, and mental space with varying degrees of sensitivity and permission. The Commission on Ministry (COM) recognizes the complexity of navigating human relationships and the difficulties that arise as individuals and groups encounter formal and informal power structures and vulnerable persons within our communities. As followers of Jesus, we are to seek to provide safe spaces for nurturing the faith of people from every background. A regular time set apart for teaching, reflection, and conversation around the issues of boundaries is necessary for continued growth into the persons and communities God intends.

Expectation

To that end, COM expects the following persons to engage in Boundary Training every three years:

- Teaching Elders in active ministry including Validated Ministries and Members at Large
- Certified Ruling Elders
- Certified Christian Educators, Associate Certified Christian Educators and paid staff who serve as Christian Educators

COM also strongly encourages Inquirers, Candidates, those actively in CRE training, retired Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, and other church leaders to participate because the more we live in awareness and practices of healthy relationships, the stronger witness we are to the love of God given to us in Christ Jesus. This training will be offered at a nominal cost to participants and a certificate of completion will be awarded.

The Presbytery of Carlisle will offer this training once per year. If someone is unable to attend the scheduled event, he/she may attend a similar event in another venue and provide the Presbytery with a certificate of completion as well as information about the content.

If a person entering the Presbytery of Carlisle has participated in Boundary Training within the three years prior to becoming part of the Presbytery of Carlisle, that person may submit documentation to the Presbytery Office indicating the date and content of the training event.

COM Process

- Contract with a professional provider; establish training date and location.
- Communicate the event at least 3 months ahead of time to allow people to make it a priority.
- The Stated Clerk will keep attendance records and provide a certification of completion to each participant.

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