

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) Plan for the Presbytery of Carlisle

TRAINING UNDER COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CPM)

1. The requirements for Commissioned Ruling Elders are found in the *Book of Order*, G-2.10. These requirements govern this policy and all guidelines and procedures established under it.
2. A Ruling Elder who is being called to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) must be endorsed by the Session of **the particular church of which he/she is a member**.
REQUIRED: A letter of endorsement from the Session of the congregation of which he/she is a member along with a completed CRE Application form.
3. The Ruling Elder will then be interviewed by the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), which has charge over training. The Ruling Elder's suitability for entrance into CRE training will be determined by the CPM.
REQUIRED: Interview form with candidate's agreement to share all transcripts / feedback with CPM.
4. The presbytery requires that anyone desiring to become a CRE successfully complete training in these areas: Bible (OT & NT), Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. These courses are available in an online format through Dubuque Seminary or other theological institutions as approved by CPM. The specific education completed by Ruling Elders who have been trained in other presbyteries will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
REQUIRED: Transcripts
5. The CPM will assign a minister of the Word and Sacrament as mentor and supervisor, who is available to answer questions and help the Ruling Elder during this training. Supervisors ordinarily will be members of presbytery, though not necessarily current members of the CPM. This supervisor will augment the CRE course work by providing hands-on pastoral experience in the field.
REQUIRED: Biannual feedback from by supervisor
6. Psychological testing acceptable to the CPM is required for all CRE candidates.
REQUIRED: Evaluation results
7. Upon successful completion of the CRE training and psychological counseling, the CPM will examine the prospective CRE and ascertain his or her readiness for commissioning. Upon approval, the CPM will report to the Commission on Ministry (COM) that the CRE is "ready to be considered for commissioning".
REQUIRED: Exam results and CPM Endorsement Form for COM

ASSIGNMENT, COMMISSIONING, SUPERVISION BY THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (COM)

8. The Commission on Ministry (COM) shall act on behalf of the presbytery to determine the suitability of a trained Ruling Elder for commissioning as a CRE of a particular congregation, and will authorize the work of the CRE as outlined in this policy and the *Book of Order*.
9. If the candidate is found acceptable, COM assigns him or her to a congregation that needs and will accept a CRE.
10. A Covenant of Agreement will be negotiated between the Session of the particular congregation, the CRE, and the COM, including a clear understanding of duties of the CRE, number of hours per week to be worked, and financial terms. The CRE **may be authorized** by the COM to perform any or all of the following functions: (G-2.1001) only in the church to which they are commissioned.
 - a. Administer the Lord's Supper
 - b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism
 - c. Moderate the Session of the congregation under the supervision of the Commission on Ministry.
 - d. Have a voice at meetings of presbytery.
 - e. Have a vote at meetings of presbytery (such vote to be counted as a Ruling Elder commissioner for purposes of parity.)
 - f. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.
11. Normally, a commission shall only be valid for a period of up to three years, but shall be renewable. (G-2.1001)
12. The COM shall make it clear to the CRE and the congregation that the CRE is commissioned to function as a Commissioned Ruling Elder in that congregation only, and only in the ways authorized by the COM. (G-2.1001)
13. When the Commission on Ministry is satisfied with the qualifications of a Ruling Elder to serve a congregation providing the services described above, the presbytery shall commission the Ruling Elder to pastoral service as designated, employing the questions contained in W-4.0404.
14. COM shall assign a minister of Word and Sacrament who is a member of Carlisle Presbytery in the geographic vicinity of the congregation the CRE is serving, as supervisor of and mentor for the CRE as required in G-2.1004. It shall provide resources for the CRE as requested and shall review the commission annually as required in G-2.1001.

**PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE
COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER APPLICATION**

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Email _____

Mailing Address _____ City, Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone (if you can receive calls) _____

Cell Phone _____

Occupation/Place of Employment _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

School: _____

Degree: _____ Date of Graduation: _____

CHURCH INFORMATION

Year of Baptism: _____ Year of Confirmation/Public Profession of Faith: _____

Name of Church where you are an active member _____

Date you were received as active member in current local congregation _____

Are you an Elder Yes No Date of Ordination to Office _____

Are you a Deacon Yes No Date of Ordination to Office _____

Other churches where you have been a member _____

List below areas of involvement in the life and mission of the church, as participant and as leader

Area of Involvement	Show Here if you are currently involved	Participant	Leader

Please answer the following questions. Feel free to use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

1. Why are you interested in becoming a Commissioned Ruling Elder?
2. What has led you to understand that God is calling you to this ministry?
3. What are your current spiritual practices and disciplines?
4. What aspects of your present church life do you enjoy the most?
5. What aspects are the most frustrating?
6. What does it mean to you to be a Presbyterian?
7. What talents, gifts and skills do you bring to this ministry?
8. In what areas of your life would you like to grow?
9. What experiences will help you in this program? (Travel, conferences, seminars, etc.)?
10. What are some of your interest(s)/hobbies?
11. In what community or volunteer services have you been involved?

FAITH STATEMENT

Please attach a brief statement of your personal faith. Describe what you believe about God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and your relationship to them as the Trinity. Include a brief summary of your understanding of salvation and eternal life and your understanding of the role of Scripture, the Church, and the Sacraments in your life. (Please attach a separate sheet, suggested length is 500 – 700 words.)

SESSION ENDORSEMENT

After you have met with the pastor/moderator, request a meeting with the Session of your church. They will review your application with you before filling out the endorsement form.

REFERENCES

In addition to the Pastor and Session, please list four additional persons who know you well in a variety of relationships (e.g. another church member, a colleague at work, a teacher, a friend) who will serve as Individual References. Duplicate and pass along with an Individual Reference Form to each, asking that the form be completed and mailed directly to the Presbytery Office. Please list below the persons who will be your Individual References.

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

**PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE
COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER
SESSION ENDORSEMENT FORM**

Attention should be given to evaluating the applicant's natural gifts, commitment, motivation and potential for growth. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) must rely upon the Session and the applicant to exercise good judgment in discerning whether the individual seems called by God to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Name of Applicant _____

1. What personal qualities are evidence of her/his vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?

2. How is his/her faith being expressed in his/her participation in the life of the congregation?

3. The following qualities are especially important for Commissioned Ruling Elders. Please check all that you have seen the applicant demonstrate in the life of your church.

_____ Ability to speak publicly, with a clear voice and in good English.

_____ A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture.

_____ Reliability and personal integrity

_____ Leader in church

_____ Compassion

_____ Skills in interpersonal relationships

_____ Well-developed listening skills

_____ Ability to relate to various age groups

_____ Able to keep confidentiality.

4. Describe any hesitations the session might have in endorsing this candidate.

5. Check one:

The Session of the _____ Church:

_____ Does endorse this application for admission to the Commissioned Ruling Elder program.

_____ Does Not endorse this application for admission to the Commission Ruling Elder program.

_____ Does endorse with QUALIFICATIONS this application for admission to the Commission Ruling Elder Program (List qualifications on a separate sheet of paper)

Clerk of Session _____ Date _____

Moderator of Session _____ Date _____

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER
PERSONAL REFERENCE FORM**

Name of Applicant _____

Your Name/Phone _____

Your Address/City, Zip _____

Your relationship to Applicant:

Family Friend Colleague Teacher Member of Church
 Moderator Other

Please answer all the following questions using the back of this sheet or a separate sheet of paper as necessary.

1. What are the greatest strengths of the applicant?
2. What personal qualities are evidence of her/his vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?
3. How is her/his faith being expressed in the individual's participation in the life of the congregation?
4. Everyone has ways in which they need to grow. Please comment on the application's growth areas.
5. Service as a Commissioned Ruling Elder often involves preaching two Services of Worship on Sunday mornings, with travel required. Are there any factors which would affect the applicant's ability to fulfill these requirements?
6. The following characteristics are important for Commissioned Ruling Elder. Please check all those which you believe apply to this applicant.

Ability to speak publicly, with a clear voice and in good English.

A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture.

Reliability and personal integrity

Compassion

Leader in a church

Skills in interpersonal relationships

Well-developed listening skills

Ability to relate to various age groups

Able to keep confidentiality

Signature: _____

Date: _____