

Commissioned Lay Pastors Committee Manual

The Presbytery of the Twin-Cities Area

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A. BECOMING A COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR

I. THE INITIAL MEETING

After reading Sections I-VI in the Commissioned Lay Pastor Manual online, the inquirer should contact the CLPC chair to set up an Initial Meeting with the Commissioned Lay Pastor Committee. To prepare for this meeting, the inquirer is requested to assemble the following documents and e-mail them to the committee chair.

The documents are:

- A. A completed application form.
- B. A one page written or orally delivered Statement of Motivation to CLP ministry.
- C. A one page written or orally delivered statement about your Faith Journey.
- D. Three references* from the following people.
 1. Pastor (**Letter should include the date of your ordination as a PC (USA) elder**).
 2. A Presbyterian Elder.
 3. A Co-worker.

*The reference letters should speak to your faith journey, theological views, service to the church, gifts for CLP ministry, areas of growth and development needed to become an effective CLP.
- E. The committee will review the documents and interview inquirer at the Initial Meeting.
- F. After the Initial Meeting, the committee will review all the information. The CLPC chair will inform inquirer by phone if he/she will be invited to gather the materials needed for the Assessment Meeting.

II. THE ASSESSMENT MEETING

The inquirer is invited by the Commissioned Lay Pastor Committee to prepare for an Assessment Meeting. Inquirer is requested to assemble and carry out the following requirements. All documents should be sent to the CLP Committee Chair.

- A. **Transcripts sent from** all post-secondary schools even if a degree was not earned; or, the equivalent education achieved by a multi-cultural candidate.
- B. **Session Endorsement**, via a letter to the CLP Committee Chair from Session or validated ministry stating the potential candidate's gifts, areas of needed growth, and fitness to become a CLP.
- C. **Assessment by North Central Ministry Development Center**
 1. **Prospective candidate** makes an appointment for an assessment with North Central Ministry Development Center (651-636-5120) for Commissioned Lay Pastor candidacy. **North Central reports to CLPC** and candidate regarding test scores and interview.
 2. **CLPC pays 50% of North Central's fee; your congregation or validated ministry pays the other 50% of the fee.**
- D. Committee decision to/not to enroll the inquirer as a candidate in the CLP program is made. If the decision is yes, the inquirer becomes a candidate and following will occur.
- E. Development of an Individual Educational Formational Plan (IEFP), which includes: Level 1 Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training, Criminal Background check and the Commissioned Lay Pastor Training Program (See III below).

- F. Request candidate's Session/Director of Validated Ministry to appoint an elder/program leader to serve as a liaison between the Session or validated ministry and the CLPC.
- G. Appointment of CLP advisor to work closely with each candidate as they work through various aspects of the training program.

III. COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

A. Overview

The overall goal of the CLP Training Program seeks to prepare each candidate for his/her specific commission in the most effective, economical and judicious manner possible.

Specifically, the CLP Training Program offers a structured learning process that provides, (1) customized training based on past training/experience with future needs related to the specific commissioning of the candidate, (2) qualified instructors with related field experience, (3) one-on-one mentorship with a CLPC member, acting as advisor, (4) 3 months field work before graduation when appropriate and (5) after graduation, one (1) selected continuing education classes during each year of the commission.

The CLP Training Program will consist of up to fourteen – 12-hour modules of learning that include: Introduction to Biblical Interpretation – Hermeneutics; Old Testament Survey & Interpretation; Introduction to Reformed Theology; Presbyterian History and Polity; Sacraments: Theology and Practice; New Testament Survey & Interpretation; Introduction to the New Testament; Church Development and Leadership; Personal Evangelistic Witness; Spiritual Formation and Ministry; Church Based Evangelism and Ministry; Homiletics; Spiritual Gifts and Pastoral Ministry; Introduction to Multi-Cultural Ministry in the 21st Century; Stewardship; and Teaching.

Methods of instruction will vary depending upon the individual learning style and/or cultural challenges each CLP candidate may have.

B. The Process

1. Once the candidate receives CLPC approval for training, the candidate will meet with his/her CLPC Advisor to review educational transcripts, previous training and experiences related to proposed commissioning.
2. CLPC advisor will recommend to the CLPC how many of the 12-hour modules the candidate should take. An agreed action plan is created: curriculum, instructor(s) identified and scheduling mapped out.
3. The candidate meets with the CLPC to review the action plan. If agreed, the candidate signs a letter of agreement (see section E), contacts the instructors to secure assignments and coordinate logistics.
4. The candidate may begin, suspend, delay or end his/her training schedule at any time with the understanding that commissioning will not be available until the training program is successfully completed.
5. The CLPC advisor will be in contact with both the candidate and instructor throughout this process and report to the CLPC when appropriate.

6. The candidate will not be allowed to take more than 2 modules in any one 30-day period of time.

C. Fees

1. The cost of the CLP Training Program for each candidate will vary; depending on the number of modules he/she will need to take.
2. Each module taken locally will cost \$350*, paid in advance at the beginning of each module and will not be reimbursed for any portions of this cost once the training module has begun. This cost does not include the cost of books, materials, travel expenses (room, board, transportation, gas, meals, etc.), if applicable. Candidates may be invited to take advantage of training outside the Twin-Cities area (see "J" in this section). If so, the cost of the training may change as well as incurred travel expenses.
3. Sources of income to defray training expenses may come from: personal funds, individual gifts, churches or presbytery / Synod / General Assembly sources, if available.
4. This cost will be equally shared (1/3, 1/3, 1/3) between the candidate, supervising entity (if there is one) and the Presbytery via CLPC, if Presbytery money is available.

D. Instructor Letter of Agreement includes:

1. Providing syllabus / outline of training module in advance of training.
2. Contacting advisor regarding progress, concerns, etc. of candidate.
3. Customizing training to meet the learning style and cultural challenges of the candidate, if applicable.
4. Giving an evaluation of the candidate on a pass/fail basis, highlighting strengths and weaknesses.
5. Offer suggestions for future trainings.
6. Length of agreement shall be limited to per module, per candidate.

E. Candidate Letter of Agreement includes:

1. Attending all modules in his/her training plan when scheduled.
2. Exercise open communication with both instructor and CLPC advisor.
3. Contacting instructor in advance to request necessary changes in schedule.
4. Successfully completing all readings, papers, examinations (oral or written) and fieldwork via a pass or fail grade.

F. CLP Committee Agrees to:

1. Work with instructors to develop an effective curriculum for each candidate.
2. Support candidate with information, encouragement and prayers.
3. Keep entity (validated ministry) requesting commissioning (if there is one) informed of candidate's progress.

G. Continuing Education Requirements

1. If candidate has completed the CLP Training Program and has not received a commission, the candidate is required to take one (1) continuing education course

- per year until the commissioning takes place or candidate leaves the CLP Training Program or is removed from it.
2. Such continuing education courses will be chosen with the approval and cooperation of the CLPC and in the candidate's area of potential commissioning. All fees and instructor related issues would apply as in the CLP Training Program.
 3. Commissioned lay pastors will be required to take 1 continuing education class per year of commission. This class will be determined by his/her supervising entity with CLPC approval.

H. Field Work

1. During the CLP Training Program, attempts will be made to place candidate in a field work situation with a supervising entity related or closely related to his/her impending commission or desired area of interest for a period of 3 months and no more than 2 hours/week.
2. The fieldwork will be in cooperation with area churches, schools or hospitals or, in fact, with the entity requesting the candidate's commissioning. The three-month program will be developed by the supervising entity and approved by the CLPC. Payment to the candidate for such work will be by the supervising entity, with CLPC approval.

I. Criteria and Process For Selecting Instructors

1. Instructors will be selected from pastors, teachers, missionaries and or laypersons based on the qualifications and experience of each instructor in the area(s) of any one of the 12 teaching modules.
2. Any current member of the CLPC is excluded from this process.
3. Instructors are to meet all of the requirements stipulated in Section D of this document.
4. Any one instructor may not be allowed to teach more than two modules during the 12-module cycle of a CLP candidate.
5. A contract for each instructor is limited to each module taught.
6. The application process:
 - a) Advertisements for instructors will appear in official PTCA publications.
 - b) Persons inquiring about the instructor position will be required to fill out an application.
 - c) Deadline for applications will be published and adhered to.
 - d) CLPC will review all applications received and choose which candidates will be invited to the interview process.
 - e) Applicant meets with the CLPC.
 - f) After a thorough review, The CLPC accepts or rejects the applicant.
 - g) If accepted, applicant signs instructor letter of agreement.

J. Training Location(s)

1. The local location for training will be a public facility i.e. church, school, library conference room, to be determined by the instructor. Out of town training will be pre-determined by the training entity. (See "L" in this section)
2. If needed, the CLPC will assist the instructor in securing an appropriate place to meet.

K. Course Summary

There are fourteen areas of competency, eight of which are required by the Presbyterian **Book of Order**. Successful completion of each competency will allow the candidate to:

1. Introduction to Biblical Interpretation-Hermeneutics*

- a. Understand the historical, social and political context of the Biblical texts.
- b. Interpret biblical texts in their original context and understand the concerns they raise and their relevance to contemporary life.
- c. Tell if an interpretation adheres to core Christian beliefs, how it affects human lives when people try to live out the text's meaning to achieve God's purposes.
- d. Become aware of various types of literature in the Bible.

2. Old Testament Survey and Interpretation*

- a. Know the basic content of the Old Testament.
- b. Understand the place of the Old Testament with regard to the literary biblical story.
- c. Identify major literary features of the Old Testament documents.
- d. Identify key theological themes in the Old Testament.
- e. Demonstrate ability to apply New Testament biblical truths to life situations.

3. Introduction to Reformed Theology*

- a. Complete a survey of Church history and understand the theological issues of each time/context.
- b. Develop ability to locate his/her personal theology in a spectrum of theological models.
- c. Know the essential creeds and confessions as found in the **Book of Confessions, The Directory of Worship and The Book of Order**.
- d. Know the distinctive characteristics of Reformed Theology.

4. Presbyterian History and Polity*

- a. Know PC (USA) polity well enough to provide effective pastoral leadership and participation in higher governing bodies.
- b. Understand the reasons Presbyterians have a Book of Order.
- c. Thoroughly understand chapters 1-4 of the Book of Order.
- d. Understand the primary tasks of ministry: practices that bring God's grace in Jesus Christ into human communities and actions, both within the Church and – through the Church's mission – within the world.

5. Sacraments: Theology and Practice*

- a. Know the basic vocabulary of Christian worship.
- b. Become familiar with the **Directory of Worship, The Book of Common Worship and of Occasional Services**.
- e. Articulate a Reformed theology of worship.

- f. Prepare and lead worship services grounded in the Reformed tradition, appropriate to various circumstances and contexts.
- g. Know the Reformed understandings of the sacraments, and how that is demonstrated in liturgical practice in the PC (USA).

6. New Testament Survey and Interpretation*

- a. Know the basic content of the New Testament
- b. Understand the place of the New Testament with regard to the literary biblical story.
- c. Identify major literary features of the New Testament documents.
- d. Identify key theological themes in the New Testament.
- e. Demonstrate ability to apply New Testament biblical truths to life situations.

7. Introduction to New Church Development and Leadership*

- a. Know contemporary non-Presbyterian resources as well as PC (USA) resources for new church development.
- b. Effectively use personal and organizational evaluation and planning.
- c. Engage in ethical discernment regarding leadership and organizational life; lead others in such discernment.
- d. Create, facilitate and sustain small groups.
- e. Possess conflict management skills; have the ability to address conflict creatively in a congregation.
- f. Understand the biblical foundations for establishing a church.

8. Spiritual Formation and Ministry

- a. Know a variety of spiritual disciplines.
- b. “Look and listen” to discover what God is doing in his/her life; in one’s community.
- c. Learn to help others look for and listen to God in their own lives.
- d. Find a spiritual director/mentor to assist in this process.
- e. Be open to the leading of God’s Spirit in his/her life and ministry.

9. Church Based Evangelism and Mission

- a. Know of PC (USA) resources for evangelism.
- b. Articulate his/her personal transformation in the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior.
- c. Know evangelistic strategies for reaching the un-churched with the Good News.
- d. Know types of congregations and/or fellowships – worship attendance size and ministry development.

10. Homiletics*

- a. Understand the nature and role of preaching in Reformed Christian worship.
- b. Develop preaching skills, including:
 - (1) Bring the results of the Biblical interpretation into a sermon that addresses particular needs of the congregation.

- (2) Possess awareness and understanding of:
 - (a) Resources for Sermons.
 - (b) Different styles of preaching.
 - (c) The Christian year.
 - (d) The lectionary.
- c. Reflect on and analyze sermons.
- d. Engage good public speaking and preaching skills.

11. Spiritual Gifts and Pastoral Ministry*

- a. Know the variety of contexts for pastoral care and the knowledge and skills called for by each. These contexts include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) Bereavement and grief.
 - (2) Suicide threats.
 - (3) Domestic violence (including child and elder neglect and abuse).
 - (4) Aging.
 - (5) Chemical dependency.
- b. Understand and maintain a clear set of professional ethics and appropriate boundaries of pastoral care and counseling (and the place of self-awareness and self-care in this area).
- c. Become familiar with **“Standards of Ethical Conduct.”**
- d. Invoke reflective listening and pastoral presence.
- e. Be able to assess referral needs, develop referral procedures, and assess and select good referral services.

12. Introductions to Multi-cultural Ministry in the 21st Century

- a. Understand the distinction between a multicultural church and a multi-ethnic/multi-racial church.
- b. Explore biblical principles related to church culture.
- c. Learn the ground rules for inclusive communication across cultures.
- d. Know how to develop and work with a racially diverse leadership team.
- e. Learn ways to support your congregation in creating a culture of inclusion.
- f. Learn key ingredients for building mutual trust across cultures.
- g. Understand the challenges congregations face in making changes to fully reflect the diversity of its surrounding context.

13. Stewardship

- a. Know PC (USA) mission, and PC (USA) resources for stewardship.
- b. Understand stewardship as a spiritual issue, involving every aspect of his/her community.
- c. Learn to communicate stewardship in a holistic way, emphasizing spiritual gifts for service to the greater community.
- d. Learn the practice of celebrating all of life as a trust to be managed on God’s behalf.

14. Teaching

- a. Understand the role and responsibility of education in the life of a Reformed congregation.
- b. Plan, teach, self-evaluate one's own teaching of adults.
- c. Analyze, evaluate, and choose curricular resources consistent with the Reformed tradition.
- d. Know the varieties of spiritual disciplines and learning models related to various age groups.

*Denotes competencies included in the Presbyterian *Book of Order*.

L. Additional Approved Training Opportunities

In addition to the Commissioned Lay Pastor Training Program, the CLPC approves the following programs for CLP candidates in the disciplines required by the PC (USA) and the local presbytery. They are:

1. *Theological Education Program for New Immigrants in the USA*, Stony Point, NY.
2. *Lay Leader Training Program for English Certificate*, Columbia Theological Center, Decatur, GA.
3. Dubuque Seminary's *Online Course of Study*, Dubuque, IA.

IV. ADVISORY MEETINGS AND UPDATES

The CLPC advisor will contact the CLP candidate at least quarterly, meeting in person at least twice a year to build a trusting relationship, monitor progress toward completion of the IEFP and provide encouragement and guidance.

The CLPC appointed advisor will report to the CLPC on a quarterly basis.

V. COMPLETION OF IEFP REQUIREMENTS

When all the CLP requirements have been completed, the CLP advisor notifies the CLP committee that the CLP candidate has completed the IEFP requirements.

VI. EXAMINATION AND FINALIZATION OF COMMISSION

The CLP candidate is provided with questions for a take home written exam or will receive written questions for CLP candidate to undergo an oral exam.

- A. The CLPC will provide the CLP candidate with a copy of the Terms of Commission form. This form must be approved by the Session or the Validated Ministry and sent to the CLPC chair or designee.
- B. After all requirements are completed and approvals gained, the candidate is commissioned at a stated Presbytery meeting where the constitutional questions from the Book of Order are asked by the presbytery's Moderator or Moderator Elect.

VII. CELEBRATORY WORSHIP SERVICE

- A. The CLP committee advises the congregation to hold a celebratory worship service either at the CLP's setting or, if the CLP is serving in a Validated Ministry, at the CLP's church of choice.
- B. Each congregation shall be encouraged to receive an offering at the worship celebration. This collection will be used to provide scholarship assistance to future CLP candidates through the CLP Scholarship Fund. The local church treasurer shall forward the proceeds of any such offering to the Presbytery within thirty days of their receipt. Labels for congregations in the Presbytery can be requested from the 9v 5e Presbytery office for the purpose of sending invitations to the presbytery's churches regarding the CLP's worship celebration.

B. SERVING AS A COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR

I. COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

The CLPC of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area recommends the following guidelines for congregations and validated ministries to use in compensating a CLP:

- A. Minimum salary/housing ordinarily will be 75% of the minimum for pastors serving in the similar geographic area.
- B. Compensation will be pro-rated for CLPs working fewer than 40 hours/week.
- C. Congregations who are unable to pay the 75% pro-rated salary/housing will be advised of these guidelines and CLPC and COM will review their progress toward them annually at the lay pastor's annual review.
- D. The following honoraria are expected to be paid above and beyond the annual salary/housing when a CLP is paid less than the minimum guidelines:
 - 1. Preaching At Presbytery suggested rate
 - 2. Wedding \$150
 - 3. Funeral \$100
 - 4. Moderating a Session meeting \$ 50
- E. The following benefits will be offered to all CLPs, regardless of hours worked:
 - 1. Two weeks of paid continuing education annually, cumulative for up to three years
 - 2. \$500 available for continuing education annually, cumulative for up to three years (and not to be pro-rated)
 - 3. Auto allowance: mileage reimbursed at IRS rate
 - 4. Four weeks of paid vacation
 - 5. 50% of Social Security and Medicare (SECA) = 7.65% of base salary
- F. Health and pension benefits will be negotiated with the CLP on a case-by-case basis.
- G. Professional expenses and/or book allowances will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

The Commissioned Lay Pastor Committee understands that immigrant communities and new church developments may not be able to remunerate CLP's per these guidelines. We do expect CLP's to receive fair remuneration and preset annual goals to increase the CLP's remuneration toward these suggested guidelines.

II. CLP ACCOUNTABILITY

The CLP is accountable to the Presbytery through their supervisor (appointed by the Session), to the Commissioned Lay Pastor Committee, to his/her CLPC advisor.

III. SESSION OR VALIDATED MINISTRY MENTOR

The Session or director of a validated ministry must approve the request of an elder to become a CLP. If permission is granted, the Session will assign a mentor from its ranks who will serve as the liaison link between the Session and the CLPC.

IV. SUPERVISOR

The CLPC will assign a supervisor (with recommendation from the CLP), who will most often be the pastor of the CLP congregational setting or director of the ministry in which the CLP will work. It is expected that the CLP will meet at least monthly with his/her supervisor. The supervisor will be a part of the annual review process for each CLP. If the CLP will be working in a validated ministry beyond the local congregation, the CLPC will appoint the supervisor.

V. ADVISOR

Each CLP will be assigned by the CLPC, one of its members to serve as advisor. The role of an advisor is to be a trusted guide, and advocate for the Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP). It is expected that the CLP will meet quarterly with his/her advisor. The advisor will be a part of the annual review process for his/her CLP.

VI. CONTINUING EDUCATION

The CLP is required to engage in study and reflection that will further his or her spiritual and intellectual development and report this activity to CLPC. (See Page 5, section G.1.)

VII. CLP ANNUAL EVALUATION

A review of the work of the CLP shall be conducted annually. (G-14-0801b) Written evaluations will be requested from the CLP, supervisor, advisor, and key members of the congregation, immigrant fellowship or emerging ministry. The CLP, his/her supervisor, his/her advisor, and the congregation, immigrant fellowship or emerging ministry's advisor will meet with the CLPC to discuss the evaluations and to set goals for work as well as spiritual and intellectual development. The final evaluation will be signed by the CLP with copies given to the CLPC.

VIII. ANNUAL RENEWAL OF CLP COMMISSION

At least two months prior to the expiration of the commission, the Session or appointed supervising entity will contact the CLPC to communicate whether they wish to continue with another commission or not. If they wish to continue, the CLPC will send a Terms of Commission Form to the session, which will determine the elements of the commission. The CLPC will bring recommendations for renewal of commissions and their terms directly

to the Presbytery for approval unless there is a change in the person serving as CLP (in which case the commission would go as a package from CLPC to the Presbytery with commissioning arrangements).

- A. Health and pension benefits will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the CLP.
- B. Professional expenses and/or book allowances will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.