**JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY**

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

**Manual of Policies and Procedures**

**PEOPLE**

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER (CRE)

**Purpose and Goals**

The purpose of this program is to provide competent, informed, and consistent lay ministry for churches unable to have full or part-time ordained pastors, as well as to outline procedures for the preparation, examination, and continuing education of Commissioned Ruling Elders in John Calvin Presbytery.

For a definition of a Commissioned Ruling Elder, refer to Book of Order G-2.1001.

**Requirements for Entering the CRE Program**:  
1. Applicant must be an ordained Elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA).  
2. Applicant must submit a written statement of their personal faith journey and

sense of call.  
3. Applicant must have the endorsement of the Session of their church.  
4. Applicant must have a college education (or equivalent, as determined by the

Committee on Ministry).  
5. Applicant must meet with and obtain the approval of the Committee on Ministry

or its sub-committee for Commissioned Ruling Elders.

**Program Description:**

Training for those who have met the requirements outlined at an approved Presbyterian theological seminary (for example, the “Christian Leadership” (CLP/CRE) program of the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, [*https://moodle.dbq.edu*](https://moodle.dbq.edu) *).* Participants benefit from a theological education, including interaction with faculty and other students, via the Internet.

Eight core courses are required of CREs in the Presbyterian Church (USA). These are: Introduction to Old Testament  
Introduction to New Testament  
Pastoral Care

Presbyterian Polity  
Reformed Theology  
Introduction to Preaching  
Foundations of Christian Education  
Reformed Worship and Sacraments

An Online Learning Certification is also required. Taking two courses at a time, a student can complete the basic courses in approximately 18 months.

Courses for advanced studies and continuing education opportunities for lay pastors and lay leaders are being slowly implemented into the basic curriculum.

The cost of the program is approximately $75 for the Online Learning Certification and approximately $375 for each core course and elective, plus books and supplies. (Prices effective as of January 2021.)

**Requirements During CRE Training:**

1. Meet at least annually with the Committee on Ministry or its CRE subcommittee.

2. Meet quarterly or more--monthly is highly recommended--with a liaison from the Committee on Ministry.  
3. Undergo a psychological/career assessment with those costs to be shared

between the CRE, the Session and the Presbytery.

**Requirements for Commissioning:**

1. Successful completion of the CRE Training program through an approved Presbyterian theological seminary.
2. Preparation of a written Statement of Faith to the Committee on Ministry.
3. Preside at the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper and preach for representatives of

the Committee on Ministry.

1. Preparation of a Personal Information Form.
2. Examination by the Committee on Ministry.
3. Appointment by the Committee on Ministry to a congregational setting.
4. Approval of call by the Presbytery.

**Requirements for Renewal of Commission of CREs:**

1. Participate in at least two continuing education experiences/events plus Boundaries Training per year.

2. Actively participate in the life of John Calvin Presbytery (Examples: attend at least two presbytery meetings, serve on a presbytery committee, attend presbytery educational events, and/or facilitate participation in the presbytery by ruling elder(s) from your congregation).

3. In an annual visit with the COM liaison and Session being served, determine ministry needs for renewal.

4. Arrange and participate in quarterly meetings with a mentor assigned by the COM.

**BECOMING A COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER (CRE) --CHECKLIST**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirement** | **Date completed** | **Documenta-tion provided?** |
| **Step One -- Requirements for Entering the CRE Program**: |  |  |
| 1. Ordained Elder in PC(USA) |  |  |
| 2. Written statement of faith journey and sense of call |  |  |
| 3. Endorsement by Session of church |  |  |
| 4. College education (or equivalent as determined by COM) |  |  |
| 5. Meet with and obtain approval of COM or its CRE subcommittee |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Step Two – Training through approved Presbyterian Theological Seminary** |  |  |
| 1. Online Learning Certification |  |  |
| 2. Eight Core Courses: |  |  |
| Introduction to Old Testament |  |  |
| Introduction to New Testament |  |  |
| Pastoral Care |  |  |
| Presbyterian Polity |  |  |
| Reformed Theology |  |  |
| Introduction to Preaching |  |  |
| Foundations of Christian Education |  |  |
| Reformed Worship and Sacraments |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Step Three -- Requirements During CRE Training** |  |  |
| 1. Meet at least annually with the Committee on Ministry or its CRE subcommittee |  |  |
| 2. Meet quarterly or more--monthly is highly recommended--with a liaison from the Committee on Ministry. |  |  |
| 3. Undergo a psychological/career assessment with those costs to be shared  between the CRE, the Session and the Presbytery. |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Step Four -- Requirements for Commissioning:** |  |  |
| 1. Successful completion of the CRE Training program through an approved Presbyterian theological seminary (above). |  |  |
| 1. Preparation of an updated written Statement of Faith submitted to the Committee on Ministry. |  |  |
| 1. Preside at the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper and preach for representatives of the Committee on Ministry. |  |  |
| 1. Preparation of a Personal Information Form. |  |  |
| 5. Examination by the Committee on Ministry “as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by presbytery” (BOO G-2.1002. |  |  |
| 6. Appointment by the Committee on Ministry to a congregational setting. |  |  |
| 7. Examination and approval of call by the Presbytery, “employing the questions contained in W-4.04” (G-2.1003) |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Step Five -- Requirements for Renewal of Commission of CREs:** |  |  |
| 1. Participate in at least two continuing education experiences/events plus Boundaries Training per year. |  |  |
| 2. Actively participate in the life of John Calvin Presbytery (Examples: attend at least two presbytery meetings, serve on a presbytery committee, attend presbytery educational events, and/or facilitate participation in the presbytery by ruling elder(s) from your congregation). |  |  |
| 3. In an annual visit with the COM liaison and Session being served, determine ministry needs for renewal. |  |  |
| 4. Arrange and participate in quarterly meetings with a “mentor and supervisor” assigned by the COM. (G-2.1004) |  |  |