

Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of New Covenant

Manual of Operation and Policies

Part 2

Commissioned Ruling Elders

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GENERAL FORMS & DOCUMENTS

Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-Doc 0 (CPM approved 8/22/20) (revised 8/10/20)

Pre-Qualifications

Normally, before a ruling elder may apply to enter Presbytery of New Covenant CRE program they need to meet these pre-qualifications:

- Senses that he or she has a call* to ministry.
- Is a member in good standing of a congregation in the Presbytery of New Covenant
- Has been an ordained elder for at least two years.
- Has been a member of their local church for at least 6 months.
- Holds a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, except in certain cases approved by the CPM. The CPM shall determine appropriate credit for post-high school course work and life experience.
- Possesses recognized leadership ability

Standards for Commissioned Ruling Elders

Those under consideration as CREs shall follow these standards of faith and Christian life:

- Belief in Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, and acceptance, understanding of, and faithfulness to the questions and vows of a CRE (Book of Order, W-4.04).
- Membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and faithful, regular participation in its worship and service.
- Demonstrated leadership in the congregation as a ruling elder.
- Demonstrated pastoral ability.
- Commitment to personal spiritual growth through prayer, Bible reading, and devotions.
- Acceptance and understanding of, and faithfulness to, the ethical standards of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

***Note: The difference between calling and commissioning**

Both ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders are called by God. Ordained ministers accept a call from a setting such as a church. Ordained ministers have a terms-of-call. A local church says we have called our Minister of Word and Sacrament. However, CRE's are not called by a church or Presbytery; instead CRE's are contracted and commissioned by their local church and Presbytery. A local church says we have contracted our Commissioned Ruling Elder.

History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-DOC 1 (CPM approved 8/22/20) (Revised 8/10/20)

Present	Committee Preparation for Ministry (CPM)
2010	Committee on Lay Pastors
1998-2009	The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD, Director of Lay Academy and Dean The Institute for Pastoral Studies (TIPS)
1997	The Rev. Tim Phillips, Academia Laica Presbyteriana (Hispanic Lay Academy) Director of Lay Academy
1995-1998	The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie* Director of Lay Academy
1994	The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD, chair of the task force to examine lay preachers
1993-1994	John Sweeney, Director of Lay Academy, Ruling Elder at Heritage Presbyterian church
1992	The. Rev. Dr. Michael Jenkins, Director of Lay Academy
1990-1992	The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie* Director of Lay Academy

2020-Present

“All developmental and administrative aspects of the education of Commissioned Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service (CRE’S) shall be the responsibility of the CPM” (See: Book of Order, PC(USA); Form G-Form 3 Check List Steps - Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service).

Committee Preparation for Ministry (CPM) accepts an applicant to become a CRE to Particular Service. The ruling elder enters Phase 1- Applying. Once accepted, CPM assigns a member of CPM to become the CRE student’s Liaison. The student enters Phase 2-Preparing.

When the student has completed preparation, and upon approval from CPM, they enter Phase 3-Assessing as Ready.

Final step -- The student becomes a candidate for commissioning in Presbytery of New Covenant.

“After the CPM has approved the student as ready for commissioning, the student may actively seek a position as a CRE. The Committee on Ministry (COM) must recommend an invitation to serve and the Presbytery must approve it. When seeking a commission, the former student comes under the supervision of the Presbytery through the care of COM”.

2019

2019 Version 2 of CRE Manual revision process began. This next step included: creating a consistent CRE Kit of forms and documents that were revised, up to date, and that removed any prior contradictory instructions. Then the CRE Kit is integrated as part of the updated, simplified, unified manual. Likewise, the manual would add:

1. any new forms and documents.
2. the creation of written assessed as ready exams and exam process.

This was developed by CPM member The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD. with the help of Sharon Darden, Coordinator for Committees on Ministry and Preparation for Ministry and advise of The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie, Presbytery of New Covenant Volunteer in Mission.

2018

2018 development and approval of CRE Manual with Appendices that included various versions of forms and documents that had been created from 2010 through 2018. This manual was developed by CPM member Kate Burkhart Ruling Elder at St. Phillip Presbyterian church, CPM member William (Bill) Parker Ruling Elder at Clear Lake Presbyterian Church, and CPM member The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie, with help from Sharon Darden, Coordinator for Committees on Ministry and Preparation for Ministry. Many different people between 2010-2018 created the appendices of forms.

Before 2018 CPM assigned the care and training of CRE's to their own lay pastor sub-committee. Currently (2020) CPM does not have a sub-committee and makes decisions as a whole committee.

Note: PC(USA) 2011-2017

(From excerpt June 2017 Constitutional Musings: Note 28 Ruling Elders Commissioned to Limited Pastoral Service)

2017 "On the occasion of the amendments to the Book of Order formally recognizing the use of "commissioned ruling elder" and adding the option "commissioned pastor" as terms for referring to "ruling elders ... commissioned to limited pastoral service" (G-2.1001),

1. Note: it seems warranted to update two earlier constitutional musings on this form of service.

2 .The information here draws upon those earlier constitutional musings and a report received by the 222nd General Assembly (**2016**) related to presbyteries' use of persons other than ministers of the Word and Sacraments to provide pastoral ministry in congregations and other settings.

The origins of the current practice within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of commissioning ruling elders to limited pastoral service lie in presbyteries expressed need within their strategy for mission to create a role for providing congregational leadership in geographically isolated communities with limited financial resources. Such presbyteries were soon joined by more urban presbyteries seeking to provide leadership for new immigrant fellowships and congregations. Initially an individual who served in this role was referred to as a "Commissioned Lay Preacher," and while open to any "person granted a local commission by the presbytery" (and so not requiring previous ordination as a ruling elder) it permitted that person only "to lead worship and preach the gospel" and to "administer the Lord's Supper if authorized by the presbytery and when invited by the session" (1985-86 Book of Order, G-14.0516).

After roughly a decade of this model, the mid-1990s saw a series of amendments to the Book of Order that first changed the designation for such service to "Commissioned Lay Pastor" (1996- 97 BOO, G-14.0516) and subsequently added the requirement that such persons must be "an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" and expanded the possible functions to include administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, moderating the session, having voice and vote in presbytery meetings (as a ruling elder commissioner for purposes of parity), and performing marriages when invited by the session and permitted under civil law (1997-98 BOO, G-14.0800).

Beginning with the **2011** revision of the Form of Government, the Book of Order replaced the use of the term "Commissioned Lay Pastor" with a descriptive phrase, "ruling elder ... commissioned to limited pastoral service," and the functions that could be included were set as "to moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted

by state law” (2011-13 BOO, G2.1001). The fact that references to authorization “to lead worship and preach the gospel” and to have voice and vote in presbytery meetings were no longer specifically designated was not a new restriction prohibiting ruling elders serving such commissions from those functions. Rather, it is a recognition that other sections of the constitution already provided for them.”

2010 Transition

The Presbytery of New Covenant decided to not have Lay Directors or outsource the CRE training to any other 501-C3 educational schools such as TIPS. They started the CRE process anew. We had come full circle.

1998-2009

1998-2009 The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD served as lay director, then as Dean of TIPS

1998 the Lay Academy and the Hispanic Academy were placed under the oversight of The Institute for Pastoral Studies (TIPS). (At that time TIPS was in the process of organizing and developing). The Dean of The Institute for Pastoral Studies is a member of and makes reports to the Presbytery of New covenant Ministries Steering Division, as well as the Board of Directors of The Institute for Pastoral Studied (TIPS). Upon graduation from the Lay Academy the graduate works with COM and is examined by the Committee on Examinations at the time of a contract with a local congregation.

1998 The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie* Director of Lay Academy

The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie published:

Edited by PC(USA) Evangelism/New Church development staff, and retitled: *Commissioned Lay Pastors Resource Manual* in 2003

Written as a research fellow at Union, Richmond: *Behold, We Are Doing a New Thing* in 2001

The Institute for Pastoral Studies (TIPS) History

In 1998, The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD. Lay Director transitioned to Dean of TIPS

The Ministries Steering Division is the coordinating body for TIPS.

The Dean of TIPS will meet regularly with the Ministries Steering Division.

The Presbytery of New Covenant, Inc. (hereinafter "The Presbytery") and The Institute for Pastoral Studies, Inc. (hereafter "TIPS") affirm and establish a Covenant relationship by which TIPS will equip leaders for the real work of ministry. (Note: A Leader is any person who actively participates in the life and ministry of the church.)

Details:

In response to the Design of New Covenant Presbytery, people were asked to dream dreams and look at new and improving ways to fulfill our mission statement (New Covenant Mission Statement, June 1995).

Presbytery Committees, Staff, and individuals responsible for the education, oversight and care of Commissioned lay pastors began a dialogue, subsequent meetings, and committee meetings. This followed with other Presbytery Committees responsible for Pastors, Educators, Staff and Laity joining in the dialogue.

1995 Pam Morgan was asked to help reorganize and provide the development process for re-looking at how we equip not only our lay pastors, but also our congregation members and their pastors. Pam responded and The Institute for Pastoral Studies (TIPS) evolved. Prior to this evolution, New Covenant Presbytery had a Lay Academy and the hope of instituting a Hispanic Lay Academy. Now, we have The Institute for Pastoral Studies with five Academies under its auspices: Cross-Cultural Academy; Pastor Academy; Lay Academy; Academia Laica Presbyteriana (Hispanic Lay Academy); and the Research, Grants and Publications Academy. The Rev. Pamela Morgan, PhD was the organizing administrator, much like someone would be an organizing pastor in a new church development project.

General Council approved the request from the Ministries Division to move forward with the formation of TIPS at its October 15, **1998** meeting.

The General Council at its April 22, **1999** meeting clarified that TIPS is a "recognized ministry that may raise money and continue in development." Presbytery approved council's actions at the next Presbytery meeting (May 1999). TIPS was advised through the Dean to request status as a subordinate unit of the PC(USA). This was reported at the Ministries Steering Division meeting (1999).

An organizing Board of Directors was created, and retreat held on January 22, 2000. This included the recruitment of Presbyterian members with special skills, the election of their officers and the initial assignment of Board responsibilities. In the meeting a mission statement, Board bylaws and Member position description, Dean's Position Description, Committees with Chairs, and process of the application for non-profit status as a subordinate unit of the PC(USA) were approved. Plans to request grant funds, begin the process to ask local congregations for funds, and other sources were initiated.

TIPS was incorporated on Feb. 1, **2000**.

1995-1997

1997 The Rev. Tim Phillips started developing the Hispanic Lay Academy
August 18, 1997 Hispanic Lay Academy established and endorsed by Presbytery of New Covenant
Committee on Commissioned Lay Pastors

1995 The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie* Director of Lay Academy

New Covenant Presbytery committee on commissioned lay pastors past chairs:
Sally Lichtenwalter 1995, 1997 Jane MacColl 1994, 1996

Note: PC(USA) 1995-1996

(From excerpt June 2017 Constitutional Musings: Note 28 Ruling Elders Commissioned to Limited Pastoral Service)

1996 “208th General Assembly additions made that now allow CLP’s to baptize, counsel, moderate session, provide pastoral care, perform weddings (where allowed by civil law) and have voice and vote in presbytery when so stipulated by the Presbytery. Also, CLP’s must be ordained elders, must receive training in Bible, reformed theology, sacraments, Presbyterian polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching.

1995 207th General Assembly changed Commissioned Lay Preacher to Commissioned Lay Pastor. Prior to 1996 Commissioned Lay Pastors if approved by local presbytery were allowed to lead worship, preach and administer communion and did not have to be ordained elders.”

1990-1994

1993-1994 John Sweeney, Director Lay Academy, Ruling Elder at Heritage Presbyterian church

1994 The Rev. Pamela Ann Morgan, PhD became first chair of the task force to examine lay preachers
March 3, 1994, the Committee on Commissioned Lay Preachers was established by the General Council and placed under the oversight of the Presbytery’s Vocations Division. The Committee on Ministry created a task force to be responsible for the examinations.

April 13, 1994 was the first official meeting of the Committee on Commissioned Lay Preachers
1995 the first Lay Academy Brochure was distributed to the Presbytery.

1992 The Rev. Dr. Michael Jinkins Director Lay Academy
(Note: Dr. Jinkins went on to serve as faculty at Austin Seminary, then President of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.)

1990-1992 The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie* Director of Lay Academy
Lay Academy courses were offered at Camp Cho Yeh 1991-1992
Dr. Currie and others started developing the Lay Academy in 1990.

About the beginning in 1990

*In 2020 The Rev. Dr. Mary Miller Currie shared these memories of our CRE history with me (Pam Morgan):
“We started putting together the Lay Academy toward the end of 1990. We thought it would mainly be made up of people from smaller first-generation churches--like the Lao church, the Vietnamese church, other Asian language churches and a few new Spanish speaking churches (Tim Phillips was just getting started.) It turned out there were a lot of people hungry for that kind of training for work they were already doing in churches of all sizes. The Lay Academy was also seen as a way to get people to Cho-Yeh and help the camp, so initially all the monthly Lay Academy weekends were held at Cho-Yeh through 1991 and 1992. The first Lay Academy weekend was in February or March of 1991 and was over 30 people--most of whom went through the then 2-year cycle of courses we drew up. We would have a topical/practical course discussion Friday night based on the class the previous month, then about 8 hours of class on Saturday with an assignment for the next month's Friday evening. Occasionally Friday night would lead into Saturday's class.”

Who Does What?

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-Doc 2 (CPM approved 8/22/20) (revised 8/13/20)

Pastor and Session

Ruling Elder wanting to become a CRE

CPM Liaison

We are the local church pastor and session of a ruling elder who wants to become a CRE, what do we do?

1. Review this document: Who Does What G-Doc 2.
2. Read and review CRE Kit of documents and forms.
3. Session examines the ruling elder for suitability. If pastor and session believe the ruling elder is not yet ready to apply to become a CRE, they let them know how come.
4. If a ruling elder is ready to enter the CRE training program, then session provides:
 - a. ongoing support, encouragement, prayer, and guidance.
 - b. a local church Liaison to work with and support the CRE ruling elder.
 - c. a pastor's letter of reference.
 - d. a session endorsement.
5. Maintain open communication with Committee Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and your CRE student.
6. Offer (optional) opportunities to the CRE student for service and preparation for ministry through working in the congregation under the supervision of the pastor(s).
7. Offer (optional) to provide financial assistance to the CRE student for class work, resources and/or study.

I am a ruling elder and want to become CRE, what do I do?

1. Pray regularly for discernment.
2. Maintain an ongoing working knowledge of the Creeds, Confessions, the Book of Common Worship, and the most current Book of Order and guidelines provided by New Covenant Presbytery COM and CPM committees
3. Review this document: Who Does What G-Doc 2.
4. Read and review the CRE Kit of documents and forms.
5. Find out if I qualify by requesting from presbytery the document entitled: Ruling Elder PreQualifications G-Doc 0.
6. If I qualify, I take the steps to enter Phase 1-Applying to become a CRE. I will:
 - a. confer with my local Pastor.
 - b. request from presbytery all necessary forms and documents.
 - c. provide my pastor and session with all CRE Kit of forms and documents.
 - d. request an endorsement of my session.
 - e. make sure all my Phase 1 application documents are submitted to presbytery.
7. Request to meet with CPM to be approved to enter the CRE training program.
8. Move from Phase 1 Applying applicant to Phase 2 Preparing student; I will:
 - a. confer regularly with my assigned CPM Liaison.
 - b. enter a minimum of 2 years Preparing Phase 2 (The 2 years begins on date of CPM approved acceptance into the program.).
9. As a student in Phase 2 Preparing; I will:
 - a. continue to serve in my local church, pray, discern, and grow as a ruling elder.
 - b. complete all my required course competencies and submit documentation.
 - c. use my study guide as a workbook by reading resources, answering questions as needed.
 - d. request an annual consultation with my CPM Liaison.
 - e. keep in touch with my pastor and my local church CRE Liaison.
 - f. make sure all my Phase 2 preparing documents are submitted to presbytery.
 - g. keep duplicate copy of all records, document, forms, etc.

10. As a student in Phase 3 Assessing as Ready; I will:
 - a. continue using the study guide to help me prepare for my assessed as ready comprehensive exam.
 - b. confer with my CPM Liaison as to my readiness to take the comprehensive exam.
 - c. ask my CPM Liaison to make arrangements for me to take the assessed as ready comprehensive exam.
 - d. take and pass the assessed as ready comprehensive exam.
 - e. request to meet with CPM to be assessed as ready.
 - i. Submit my written assessed as ready exam to CPM for approval.
 - ii. Submit my PIF/Resume to CPM for approval (Ask CPM Liaison for help as needed).
11. After I am assessed as ready, I move from student under care of CPM to candidate under care of COM.
12. Pass the exam administered by COM Sub-Committee on Examinations.

I am the CPM Liaison to a CRE student, what do I do?

1. Pray regularly for discernment.
2. Review this document: Who Does What G-Doc 2.
3. Read and review the CRE Manual for committee policies and procedures with CRE Kit of documents and forms.
4. Upon receiving assignment of my CRE student, I will:
 - a. say hello and get to know my student.
 - b. discuss their plans.
 - c. advise as needed.
5. Continue to meet and offer guidance as needed.
6. Encourage, support, and pray for the CRE student throughout his or her time of preparation for service.
7. Maintain open communication with CRE student's pastor, church Liaison and my CRE student.
8. Have CRE Liaison/student annual consultations and request approval from CPM of their annual consultation.
9. Schedule times for the student to come before CPM as needed:
 - a. whenever an issue arises that needs committee action in which the committee needs to meet with the student.
 - b. at time the student needs to be assessed as ready.

Contact

Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Presbytery of New Covenant
Attn: Chair of CPM and/or Coordinator for Committees on Ministry and/or Preparation for Ministry
4803 San Felipe Street, Houston, TX 77056

List of Forms and Documents

General Forms and Documents

- G-Doc 0 -- Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications
- G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery
- G-Doc 2 -- Who Does What
- G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
- G-Doc 4a -- List of Forms and Documents
- G-Doc 4b -- How and When to Use CRE Kit Forms and Documents (For use by CRE Applicant and Student)
- G-Doc 5 – CRE Manual: CPM Policy and Procedures (For use by CPM and CPM Liaison)
- AC-Form 1 – CRE Annual Consultation

Phase 1 Applying

- A-Form 1A – Application (Part I) to Become Commission Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
- A-Form 1B – Application (Part II) Session Endorsement
- A-Form 2 – Reference Letters (3) (one must be from the Applicant’s Minister of Word and Sacrament)
- A-Form 3 – Background Check for Presbytery of New Covenant Committee on Ministry (COM) and Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

Phase 2 – Preparing

- P-Doc 1 – Study Guide
- P-Doc 2 – Course Competency Training Programs
- P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet
- P-Form 2 – Instructor Certificate of Course Competency (for use when student cannot provide a transcript)

Phase 3 – Assessing as Ready

- AR-Doc1V1, AR-Doc1V2, AR-Doc1V3, AR-Doc1V4, AR-Doc1V5, etc. Assessed as Ready Exam
Confidential use only -- when exam administered
- AR-Doc 2 -- Test Bank CRE Comprehensive Exam Short List
Confidential use only -- when exam administered
- CRE Comprehensive Exam – Template (available for students to see)
- AR-Form 1 – Personal Information Form (PIF) – Resume

Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-Form 3 -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 9/3/20)

The process of training as a CRE is both lengthy and comprehensive. Course work and ongoing use of study guide provides growth and understanding but does not guarantee that the individual will be commissioned. A commission is dependent upon the identification of a service within a particular setting within the bounds of this presbytery and commissions are subject to annual review, ongoing mentoring and accountability. Phase 2-Preparing is minimum 2 years starting from date CPM approved applicant to enter Phase 2. At the time COM examination committee works with the student they will ask for additional paperwork as they see fit.

Name:

Contact phone:

Email:

Address:

Steps	Form/Doc		
Pre-Qualifying Ruling Elder checks to see if meets qualifications to apply	G-Doc-0		
Phase 1 - Applying	G-Doc 2, 3 G-Doc 4a, b		
Ruling Elder completes application; meets with Session to express sense of becoming a CRE	A-Form 1A		
Session endorses Ruling Elder; appoints a session liaison	A-Form 1B		
Ruling Elder submits application with endorsement to PCPM**			
Reference Letter 1 – Presbytery New Covenant Minister	A-Form 2		
Reference Letter 2	A-Form 2		
Reference Letter 3	A-Form 2		
Background Check	A-Form 3		
College and Post Graduate Transcripts			
Phase 2 – Preparing (2 year or more process)	G-Doc 1		
Ruling Elder requests meeting with CPM			
CPM Votes to approve applicant to enter Phase 2 Preparing			
When accepted CPM assigns CPM liaison			
CRE student receives information for planning course/competency work and begins process.	P-Form 1, 2 P-Doc 1, 2		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible and Biblical Interpretation • Reformed Theology • Polity • Christian Education (Teaching Ministry) • Pastoral Care • Preaching • Worship and Sacraments 			
Psychological Assessment			
Annual Consultation Approved*	AC-Form 1		
Annual Consultation Approved*	AC-Form 1		
Phase 3 – Assessing as Ready	See:		
Annual Consultation Approved*	AC-Form 1		
Annual Consultation Approved*	AC-Form 1		
Assessed as Ready Comprehensive exam***	AR-Doc 1		
CPM meets with CRE student to assess as ready			
CPM votes to assess as ready			
After Assessed as Ready student submits PIF resume	AR-Form 1		
CRE student contacts COM Coordinator for instructions to meet with COM examinations sub-committee			
Healthy Boundaries Training (Every 5 years)			

*Annual consultation is between the CPM Liaison and Ruling Elder in process of becoming a CRE.

**PCPM stands for Presbytery Coordinator for Preparation for Ministry

***CPM has option to send COM completed Assessed as Ready Exam and/or COM has option to request a copy of the completed exam.

List of Forms and Documents

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-Doc 4a -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (revised 9/2/20)

Title Code

G	general
Doc	document
Form	form to fill out
AC	annual consultation
A	applying
P	preparing
V	version
AR	assessing as ready

General Forms and Documents

G-Doc 0 -- Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications

G-Doc 1 -- History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery

G-Doc 2 -- Who Does What

G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

G-Doc 4a -- List of Forms and Documents

G-Doc 4b -- How and When to Use CRE Kit Forms and Documents

G-Doc 5 -- CRE Manual: CPM Policy and Procedures

AC-Form 1 -- CRE Annual Consultation

Phase 1 Applying

A-Form 1A -- Application (Part I) to Become Commission Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

A-Form 1B -- Application (Part II) Session Endorsement

A-Form 2 -- Reference Letters (3) (one must be from the Applicant's Minister of Word and Sacrament)

A-Form 3 -- Background Check for Presbytery of New Covenant Committee on Ministry (COM) and Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

Phase 2 -- Preparing

P-Doc 1 -- Study Guide

P-Doc 2 -- Course Competency Training Programs

P-Form 1 -- Course Competency Worksheet

P-Form 2 -- Instructor Certificate of Course Competency (for use when student cannot provide a transcript)

Phase 3 -- Assessing as Ready

AR-Doc1V1, AR-Doc1V2, AR-Doc1V3, AR-Doc1V4, AR-Doc1V5, etc. Assessed as Ready Exam

Confidential use only -- when exam administered

AR-Doc 2 -- Test Bank CRE Comprehensive Exam Short List

Confidential use only -- when exam administered

CRE Comprehensive Exam - Template (available for students to see)

AR-Form 1 -- Personal Information Form (PIF) -- Resume

CRE Manual: CPM Policy and Procedures
Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
G-Doc 5 (CPM approved 8/22/20) revised 8/13/20)

CRE Manual with Kit

This manual provides the policies and procedures for CPM members to follow as they serve on CPM and assist CRE students.

I - Policy for Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

AUTHORITY

The development of the Commissioned Ruling Elder to Particular Pastoral Service (CRE) Program of the Presbytery of New Covenant is in accordance with the provisions in the Book of Order (G-2.10). The purpose of the Program is to prepare and commission those ruling elders trained for preaching and pastoral commissions at places of need within the Presbytery. The Policy for Commissioned Ruling Elders provides guidelines to attract, discover, train, counsel, and support qualified ruling elders to provide leadership, nurturing, and service to member congregations and other service opportunities within the Presbytery of New Covenant (See: G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery).

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER (CRE) TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE

A Commissioned Ruling Elder is a full-time or part-time, salaried or volunteer ruling elder interested in lay ministry, affirmed by his or her Session, and trained and commissioned by Presbytery to be a preacher or pastor for a particular parish or congregation in the Presbytery. CREs are not ordained ministers. Commissioning is only to a particular congregation or a validated ministry in the Presbytery of New Covenant for a specific term at the end of which the commission ends. Therefore:

- 1) They shall follow a separate “track” from those seeking ordination as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. Before a Ruling Elder applies, she or he needs to meet pre-qualifications (See: Form G-Doc-0 Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications). If qualified, she or he may apply to enter the CRE track. The track presented is applying, preparing, and assessing as ready (See: G-Form 3 Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service).
- 2) Requirements and preparation are different from ordination, not requiring the same level of knowledge and training. A layperson’s ability to preach, teach, and lead worship is as much a gift of the Spirit developed through experience and practice as it is part of academic training. Consequently, we present competency more than credentials as a basis for commissioning. This competency is in light of the place of local commissioning and not of the whole church (See: P-Doc 1 – Study Guide; P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet, G-Doc 2 -- Who Does What, G-Doc 4b -- How and When to Use CRE Kit Forms and Documents).
- 3) CRE’s are not called by a church or Presbytery. Instead, CRE’s are contracted and commissioned by a local church and Presbytery.

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE PROGRAM

The Presbytery has designated the Committee Preparation for Ministry (CPM) to prepare those called to serve in a contact as Commissioned Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service and shall evaluate the effectiveness of the training. The purpose is to prepare ruling elders who are members of congregations in the Presbytery of New Covenant to preach, teach, and lead worship as well as to develop skills to serve as a resource for other congregational programs for validated ministries.

The CPM is responsible for the selection of applicants and the training and the examination of students. The CPM is also responsible for approving the student as ready to accept a position as a Commissioned Ruling Elder to Particular Pastoral Service. The Committee on Ministry (COM) is responsible for authorizing the placement and commissioning. The CPM and the COM consider the CRE Program a further means of fulfilling its commitment to see that all congregations within

the bounds of the Presbytery of New Covenant have the best possible leadership in ministry (See: G-Doc 2 -- Who Does What, G-Doc 4b -- How and When to Use CRE Kit Forms and Documents, G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery).

PRE-QUALIFICATIONS

Normally, the pre-qualifications for acceptance into the program shall be that the individual (See: Form G-Doc-0 Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications):

- Senses that he or she has a call to ministry.
- Is a member in good standing of a congregation in the Presbytery of New Covenant
- Has been an ordained elder for at least two years.
- Has been a member of their local church for at least 6 months.
- Holds a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, except in certain cases approved by the CPM. The CPM shall determine appropriate credit for post-high school course work and life experience.
- Possesses recognized leadership ability.

QUALIFICATIONS

Normally, the qualifications for acceptance into the program shall be that the individual:

- Has an endorsement from the Session of the congregation where he or she is a member (See: A-Form 1B Application (Part II) Session Endorsement).
- Has a recommendation from three references, at least one of whom is a Minister of the Word and Sacrament and a member of the Presbytery of New Covenant (See: A-Form 2 – Reference Letters).
- Submits and passes a background check (See: A-Form 3 – Background Check for Presbytery of New Covenant Committee on Ministry (COM) and Committee Preparation for Ministry (CPM)).
- Is willing to accept the care and guidance of a CPM Liaison followed by COM mentor appointed by the Presbytery via respective committees of CPM and COM (See: Who Does What G-Doc 2).
- Submits a completed application that provides responses to all stated questions (See: A-Form 1A – Application (Part I) to Become Commission Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service).

APPLICATION

Qualified applicants must complete all sections of the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program Application for Enrollment. (See: A-Form 1A) Application Part I). The applicant must also obtain the endorsement of their home Session (See: A-Form 1B Application Part II). The CPM shall interview and recommend each applicant for acceptance into the CRE program.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

All developmental and administrative aspects of the education of Commissioned Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service (CRE'S) shall be the responsibility of the CPM. The CRE curriculum shall prepare Commissioned Ruling Elders to lead congregations in all aspects of service to God and each other (See: Form G-Form 3 Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service). It shall include instruction in Bible and Biblical Interpretation (Exegesis), Reformed Theology, Presbyterian Polity, Christian Education (Teaching) Pastoral Care, Preaching, Leading Worship and Sacraments (See: P-Doc 1 – Study Guide; P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet; P-Form 2 – Instructor Certificate of Course Competency).

Note: CRE's in all phases are required to have training in Healthy Boundaries every 5 years. This satisfies the PC(USA) and Presbytery of New Covenant requirements for sexual misconduct training.

ASSESSED AS READY EXAMINATION

At the successful completion of all the coursework and following the desires of the student, the CPM shall arrange an examination of the student, scheduled at a time, place, and location and in a manner determined by the CPM (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam - Template).

The written examination shall include, but not be limited to, questioning on the following items (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam - Template Approved):

- Statement of Faith
- Discernment Process
- Reformation Theology
- Biblical Interpretation (Exegesis) on a particular biblical passage used with your exam Sermon
- Sermon with Order of Worship and a homiletical rationale based on the selected scripture reading
- Distinction between contracted CRE and ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament
- Healthy Boundaries
- Specific Role and Function of a CRE
- CRE's own background
- Specific Plan or hope of how to serve in New Covenant Presbytery
- Competency areas: Bible and Biblical Interpretation (Exegesis), Reformed Theology, Presbyterian Polity, Christian Education (Teaching) Pastoral Care, Preaching, Leading Worship and Sacraments.

The CPM shall review the material and discuss it with the student. In addition, CPM may or may not ask the student to read the scripture and preach their exam sermon to the CPM. Based on this discussion and examination, the CPM may:

- Request that the student revise or rewrite sections of weak material.
- Approve the student's readiness and preparedness to be a Commissioned Ruling Elder.
- Disapprove the student's readiness and request the student do further work and preparation and retake the exam scheduled at a time, place, and location and in a manner determined by the CPM.

After the CPM has approved the student as ready for commissioning, the student may actively seek a position as a CRE. The COM must recommend an invitation to serve and the Presbytery must approve it. When seeking a commission, the candidate comes under the supervision of the Presbytery through the care of COM.

COMMISSIONING

The Presbytery shall commission CREs. Ordinarily, this commissioning shall take place at a stated meeting of the Presbytery. If other circumstances warrant, and if Presbytery approves, the commissioning may take place at another time and place. Refer to the Book of Order (W4.04, per G-2.1003) for questions asked at the time of commissioning.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Commissioned Ruling Elder to Particular Pastoral Service shall work under the supervision of a mentor (Minister of Word and Sacrament) whom the COM assigns. The CRE shall comply with the polity of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the bylaws of the congregation(s) served. The CRE should participate in continuing educational training experiences while commissioned (See: G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service).

II - Procedures

Introduction and Overview

Introduction

The Presbytery of New Covenant is committed to providing the best possible leadership to all congregations within its bounds. Ministers of Word and Sacrament ordinarily provide this leadership. However, one additional way of providing leadership is with Commissioned Ruling Elders as provided in the Book of Order, G-2.10.

This Manual

This manual has been prepared to provide the policies and procedures for CPM to guide ruling elders seeking to become Commissioned Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service and to be a resource for the various committees of the Presbytery in the administration of the CRE program. It includes the policies, procedures, and forms (CRE Kit) developed for the Presbytery of New Covenant to carry out the CRE program as outlined in the Book of Order. A person considering becoming a CRE and those responsible for administering the CRE program should familiarize themselves with the applicable sections in the Book of Order and the CRE Kit.

Adopting and amending this Manual with CRE Kit is done by a majority vote of the CPM.

Definition of a Commissioned Ruling Elder

A Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) is a ruling elder who has been a member of a Presbyterian congregation for six months or more and is currently a member of a congregation of the Presbytery of New Covenant. This person may serve as full time or part time, in a salaried or volunteer position. He or she has been called by God and affirmed by his or her Session and received appropriate training in accordance with the Book of Order, G-2.1002, and under the supervision of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). The Presbytery commissions the CRE to serve a particular congregation or another validated ministry or field of service in the Presbytery of New Covenant after deeming the CRE as ready for commissioning, invited by the Session of a congregation or other entity, recommended by the COM, and approved by the Presbytery.

Standards for Commissioned Ruling Elders

Those under consideration as CREs shall follow these standards of faith and Christian life:

- Belief in Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, and acceptance, understanding of, and faithfulness to the questions and vows of a CRE (Book of Order, W-4.04)
- Membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and faithful, regular participation in its worship and service
- Demonstrated leadership in the congregation as a ruling elder
- Demonstrated pastoral ability
- Commitment to personal spiritual growth through prayer, Bible reading, and devotions
- Acceptance and understanding of, and faithfulness to, the ethical standards of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Overview of the CRE Program

Those persons seeking to become a CRE follow a different track or program from those seeking ordination as Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. A person's ability to preach, teach, and lead worship is as much a gift of the Spirit as it is something developed through experience, practice, and formal training.

To develop further the gifts for service in a particular field of ministry, the Presbytery, through the CPM, will guide the CRE student through a program of training and preparation for the service. For others who wish to attend training, but do not know their specific contract to service, the CPM and the CRE student will work together to prayerfully discern God's call for the individual.

The program track for a CRE is:

Phase 1 – Applying (The ruling elder is a CRE Applicant.)

The individual seeking to become a CRE receives endorsement from the Session of his or her own congregation and is evaluated and received by the CPM.

Phase 2 – Preparing (The ruling elder is a CRE Student.)

With the authorization, guidance, and support of the CPM, the CRE student will engage in study and preparation for service as a CRE.

Phase 3 – Assessing as Ready (After approved as ready by CPM the ruling elder becomes a Candidate)

After completing the program of training, preparation, and discernment with the CPM, and after the CPM determines the CRE candidate is ready to receive a commission to a field of service or congregation, and CPM has approved their PIF/Resume (See: PIF Resume AR-Form 1 Approved); CPM will recommend him or her to the COM. At the recommendation of the COM and with the approval of the Presbytery, the CRE's commissioning will be to a particular congregation or validated ministry.

The CPM strongly recommends familiarity with the entire manual by all members of CPM.

CREs Trained or Commissioned by Other Presbyteries

If a CRE with training or a formal commission from another presbytery seeks commissioning to a congregation in the Presbytery of New Covenant, the CPM will evaluate the training program and explore past ministerial experiences of the CRE student/candidate. The CPM would then interview the CRE student/candidate to determine if he or she has met the standards established for training or commissioning CREs in the Presbytery of New Covenant.

The CRE will make up any discrepancies of training at the discretion of the CPM before the recommendation of the CRE student to COM for recommendation to a congregation for commissioning by the Presbytery of New Covenant (See: G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service); P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet).

PHASE 1- APPLYING

During this phase, a person, believing that he or she has been called by God to be a contracted Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE), seeks validation by his or her Session and then by the Presbytery through the CPM (Book of Order, G-2.0601).

The CRE Applicant completes

- The Commissioned Ruling Elder application form and presents this application to his or her Session for endorsement and then to the CPM for review and examination.
- A vocational and psychological assessment by approved CPM professional counselor(s) and has the report sent to the Presbytery for the chair of CPM.

The Session of the Home Congregation of the CRE

- Examines the CRE applicant and recommends him or her to the CPM for further evaluation and preparation toward becoming a CRE.
- Encourages, supports, and prays for the CRE applicant/student throughout his or her time of preparation for service.
- May offer to provide financial assistance to the CRE student for class work or study.
- May offer opportunities for service and preparation for ministry through working in the congregation under the supervision of the pastor(s).

- Provides materials to congregations to help ruling elders consider pursuing CRE training (See: G-Doc 0 -- Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications; G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service; G-Doc 4a -- List of Forms and Documents).
- Receives and reviews applications from CRE applicants and, if appropriate, guides them through training and preparation for a CRE. The CPM will follow the current CRE training process in accordance with the requirements of the Book of Order, G-2-0601, and this CRE Manual with CRE Kit, including examining the CRE student regarding his or her personal faith and motives for seeking the commission (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam – Template).
- The CPM shall secure a criminal background check, and a vocational and psychological assessment by CPM approved counseling professional(s) before the applicant may begin the process.
- The CPM will ask the CRE applicant to address inadequacies in any area before recommending further preparation as a CRE.

Upon satisfactory completion of this Phase 1 of Applying, the CPM will authorize the CRE applicant to move on to the next Phase 2 of Preparing.

PHASE 2 – PREPARING

During this phase, the CRE student will acquire competency and skills relevant to the particular proposed commission, which can include Bible and Biblical exegesis, Reformed theology, Polity, Christian Education (Teaching Ministry), Pastoral Care, Preaching, Worship and Sacraments (See: P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet) under the supervision and direction of the Committee Preparation for Ministry CPM.

The CRE student, with the approval of the CPM, may take classes offered by the Presbytery and designated for CRE students; may enroll in a designated CRE training program offered by a college, or seminary, approved and recommended by the CPM. Approved are all PC(USA) seminaries: as well as The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, the Houston Graduate School of Theology, and Fuller Theological Seminary (with additional coursework in Presbyterian polity). Also approved is Whitworth University and Association of Presbyterian Church Educator (APCE) training and events. Non-PC(USA) seminaries for consideration must be in the Reformed theological tradition and require CPM approval (See: P-Doc 2 – Course Competency Training Programs; P-Doc 1 – Study Guide).

The CRE Student will explore available training options with the approval of the CPM and will enroll in and begin his or her program of study. The CRE student needs to take the initiative through this phase of the process. It is the student's responsibility to:

- Seek out and learn the steps needed to become a CRE.
- Track progress and provide documentation.
- Provide (if needed) a translator to translate to English.
- Keep a copy of all work and records.
- Proactively request help as needed.

The Presbytery CPM

- Reviews available CRE training programs from seminaries or colleges and provides an authorized list of available programs to the CRE student (See: G-Doc 5 – CRE Manual: CPM Policy and Procedures). The CPM will review and approve independent study arrangements and other Presbytery-sponsored training programs as requested by a CRE student (See: P-Doc 2 – Course Competency Training Programs, P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet; P-Form 2 – Instructor Certificate of Course Competency).
- Meets with the CRE student at least annually through this phase to review his or her progress and determine other needs or plans (See: CRE Annual Consultation AC-Form 1 Approved).
- Requires evidence of successful completion of a written final assessed as ready examination (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam).

- Has the option to hear a sermon preached by the student.
- Interviews a student as to his/her readiness for commissioning to a field of service or congregation or validated ministry (See: Book of Order, G-2.1002) (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam Template).

PHASE 3 – ASSESSING AS READY

During this phase, the CRE student prepares to take the Assessed as Ready exam. The student will:

- Ask for help from their CPM Liaison, as needed.
- Review their completed course work and training.
- Review the study guide and their answers to the questions in the study guide (Study Guide P-Doc 1).
- Review the Exam template and review their answers to make sure they are accurate (See: CRE Comprehensive Exam Template).

The student with the help from their CPM Liaison will complete a PIF/Resume (See: PIF Resume AR-Form 1).

The student will meet with CPM to be assessed as ready. They will submit for approval their written assessed as ready exam and their PIF/Resume.

AFTER APPROVED AS ASSESSED AS READY

After completing the program of training, preparation, and discernment with the CPM, and after the CPM determines the CRE candidate is ready to receive a commission to a field of service or congregation, and CPM has approved their PIF/Resume (See: PIF Resume AR-Form 1 Approved); CPM will recommend him or her to the COM.

The CRE candidate will be examined by COM Sub-committee on Examinations.

At the recommendation of the COM and with the approval of the Presbytery, the CRE's commissioning will be to a particular congregation or validated ministry.

HISTORY OF CRE PROGRAM IN PRESBYTERTY OF NEW COVENANT

Note: For the history of CRE program of the Presbytery of New Covenant, please read: G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery.

CRE KIT

Title Code

G	general
Doc	document
Form	form to fill out
AC	annual consultation
A	applying
P	preparing
V	version
AR	assessing as ready

General Forms and Documents

G-Doc 0 -- Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications
G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery
G-Doc 2 -- Who Does What
G-Form 3 -- Check List Steps -- Process for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
G-Doc 4a -- List of Forms and Documents
G-Doc 4b -- How and When to Use CRE Kit Forms and Documents
G-Doc 5 – CRE Manual: CPM Policy and Procedures
AC-Form 1 – CRE Annual Consultation

Phase 1 Applying

A-Form 1A – Application (Part I) to Become Commission Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
A-Form 1B – Application (Part II) Session Endorsement
A-Form 2 – Reference Letters (3) (one must be from the Applicant’s Minister of Word and Sacrament)
A-Form 3 – Background Check for Presbytery of New Covenant Committee on Ministry (COM) and Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

Phase 2 – Preparing

P-Doc 1 – Study Guide
P-Doc 2 – Course Competency Training Programs
P-Form 1 – Course Competency Worksheet
P-Form 2 – Instructor Certificate of Course Competency (for use when student cannot provide a transcript)

Phase 3 – Assessing as Ready

AR-Doc1V1; AR-Doc1V2, AR-Doc1V3, AR-Doc1V4, AR-Doc1V5, etc. Assessed as Ready Exam
Confidential use only -- when exam administered.
AR-Doc 2 -- Test Bank CRE Comprehensive Exam Short List
Confidential use only -- when exam administered
CRE Comprehensive Exam – Template (available for students to see)
AR-Form 1 – Personal Information Form (PIF) – Resume

CRE Annual Consultation

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

AC-Form 1 – (CPM approved 6/27/20) (revised 6/16/20b)

Annual Consultation for the year _____

Date of Consultation _____

CPM Liaison _____

Part A - General Information

CRE Student Name _____

Current Address _____

Home phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Work phone _____

Email _____

Part B – References

Current References for reporting progress in this reporting period

(Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two persons, not immediate family members, who know you and can comment on your progress for the ministry of a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service.

a. Name _____

Address _____

Phone: Home _____

Cell _____

Work _____

b. Name _____

Address _____

Phone: Home _____

Cell _____

Work _____

Authorization to Contact References

(Please sign) I hereby authorize those inquiring into my annual progress to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder to Particular Service to contact the persons listed above.

Student's signature _____

Part C – Past Year Reflections on my study and growth

My Study

Course competencies I completed this year

How I made use of the CRE Study Guide

My Spiritual development

My Interpersonal relations

My Personal growth

My Ruling Elder development

Part D – Future Plans (Looking ahead) -- My Growth objectives

How will I continue to Study?

What course competencies do I plan to complete this next year?

How do I plan to use the CRE Study Guide? (be specific)

How will I further grow in Spiritual development?

How will I improve my Interpersonal relations?

How will I further improve my Personal growth?

How will I further grow as a Ruling Elder?

I and my CPM Liaison have reviewed this report. And we mutually agree with the future plans as listed in Part D.

Student's signature _____

CPM Liaison's signature _____

PHASE 1
APPLYING

Application

To Become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service

in the Presbytery of New Covenant

A-Form 1A -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 6/24/20)

Part I (To be completed by the applicant)

Part A – General Information

Date this application completed _____

Name _____

Address _____

Home phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Work phone _____

Email(s) 1) _____

2) _____

Links to my Social Media (as applicable)

LinkedIn

Facebook

Other _____

Date of birth (month/day/year) _____

Sex () Male () Female

Church Membership: Name of Local Congregation _____

Congregation Address _____

Date received into Church Membership _____ Date of Baptism _____ Date ordained as a Ruling Elder _____

Part B - Family Information

() Single () Married; If married, name of spouse _____

If children, names, and ages of children living at home _____

Part C - Educational History

High School

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____

Did you graduate? () Yes () No If “No”, do you now have a GED? () Yes () No

College/University (List current first)

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____ Did you graduate? () Yes () No

Major Area of Study _____

Post-Graduate School (List current first)

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____ Did you graduate? () Yes () No

Major Area of Study _____

Part D - Work/Military History (List current and/or most recent position first)

Date from/to	Employer (Name/City/State)	Part-time (PT) Full-time (FT)	Type of work

Part E – Additional Church Service and Miscellaneous (as applicable)

Officer in local congregation (List current first)

Deacon (Date and Church Ordained) _____

Trustee (Date and Church Ordained) _____

Clerk of Session (Dates of Service) _____

Treasurer (Dates of Service) _____

Teacher/Worship Leader Service in local congregation

Sunday/Church School Teacher () Yes () No Date last served _____

Lay Leader in Worship () Yes () No Date last served _____

Committee(s) in local congregation (List current first)

List any Church Committees you have served on (indicate whether a member or moderator, and years served) (List current first)

Larger Church/Judicatories of PC(USA) (List current first)

List service to Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly) List any Departments, Committees, Task Forces on which you have served (indicate whether a member or moderator and years served)

The reasons I am interested in becoming a contracted Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service are:

Applicant’s Statement

I meet all the pre-qualifications (see G-Doc 0 -- Ruling Elder Pre-Qualifications).

I hereby apply to be accepted as an applicant for Commission Ruling Elder training by the Commissioned Ruling Elder to a Particular Pastoral Service of the Presbytery of New Covenant. I promise in reliance upon the grace of God to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this special ministry. I promise a commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). I promise to submit myself to the care of the presbytery in matters that pertain to this preparation.

Applicant’s Signature _____ **Date** _____

Part F - References

(Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three persons, not immediate family members, who know you and can comment on your suitability for the ministry of a commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service. One reference must be from a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. Please have your references fill out and submit Reference Letter Form: A-Form 2

a. **Name** _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____

b. **Name** _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____

c. **Name** _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____

Authorization to Contact References

(Please sign) I hereby authorize those inquiring into my suitability to become a commissioned Ruling Elder to Particular Service candidate to contact the persons listed above.

Applicant's signature _____

Part G – Accountability and Responsibilities

Upon submitting this application, I understand it is my responsibility to:

- Actively seek out and learn the steps needed to become a CRE
- Track my progress and provide documentation
- Provide (if needed) a translator to translate to English
- Keep a copy of all my work and records
- Proactively request help as needed

The preparing CRE student is responsible for submitting current versions of forms, documents, requests for annual consultation and so forth. To fail to do so may result in delay, temporary suspension, or removal.

Application – Part II Session Endorsement

To Become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service in Presbytery of New Covenant
A-Form 1B (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 6/17/20)

(To be completed by the Applicant's Clerk of Session)

NAME of Applicant _____

Applicant is an active member of _____ Presbyterian Church,
_____, Texas.

The Session of _____ Presbyterian Church, on the _____ day of _____, 20_____, met with the above named applicant and conducted an interview to determine his/her readiness to begin the process to prepare to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service in the Presbytery of New Covenant.

THE SESSION VOTED TO _____ RECOMMEND; _____ NOT RECOMMEND THIS PERSON.

Please comment on: (use and attach additional paper, if needed)

- a. Applicant's sense of call to contract to serve as a CRE to Particular Pastoral Service
- b. Applicant's gifts identified for this ministry

Applicant's

Date of Ordination as Elder _____ Length of Active Membership in this congregation _____

Length of Membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) _____

Applicant's Session Liaison: _____

Address _____

City & Zip _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email(s) 1) _____ 2) _____

Signatures

Clerk of Session _____ Date _____

Moderator of Session _____ Date _____

Please return all pages to: Presbytery of New Covenant Attn: Coordinator for Committees on Ministry and/or Preparation for Ministry at 4803 San Felipe Street, Houston, TX 77056

Reference Letter

for Ruling Elder to enter the process to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE)
to Particular Pastoral Service in the Presbytery of New Covenant
A-Form 2 -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 6/24/20)

Reference for (applicant's name): _____ Date submitted: _____

Name of person giving this reference is: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____ E-Mail: _____

What is your relationship to the applicant?

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Are you a Minister of Word and Sacrament? Yes _____ No _____

Are you a member in good standing of the Presbytery of New Covenant? Yes _____ No _____

Are you the applicant's Pastor? Yes _____ No _____

If you are a Minister of the Word and Sacrament and a member of the Presbytery of New Covenant, would you be willing to serve as the applicant's mentor, if asked? Yes _____ No _____

Are you an ordained Ruling Elder? Yes _____ No _____

Are you a member of the applicant's congregation? Yes _____ No _____

Please confirm that you are Not a member of the applicant's family. I am not _____

The Ruling Elder named above is seeking admission to become Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Service in the Presbytery of New Covenant. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry would appreciate your candid response to the following questions:

1. To what extent does the applicant adhere to Christ's teachings?
2. What is your experience of the applicant's commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
3. What strengths, special gifts, talents, and skills does the applicant exhibit for service as a Commissioned Ruling Elder?
4. What is the most recent example of the applicant's service to their congregation?
5. If the applicant were your Commissioned Ruling Elder, what specific areas would you wish him or her to improve?

Send your responses directly to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the following address:
Presbytery of New Covenant Attn: Coordinator for Committees on Ministry and/or Preparation for Ministry at
4803 San Felipe Street, Houston, TX 77056.

Presbytery of New Covenant
Committee on Ministry (COM) and Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)
Policy Regarding Background Checks

(A-Form 3 – (CPM approved 6/27/20) - Revised April 22, 2020b)

Rationale:

In order to assure high standards of ethical conduct, the Presbytery of New Covenant has implemented and mandates background checks of all clergy entering the presbytery and those with in the Presbytery seeking to become Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE).

Procedure:

A background check shall be requested by the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) of a church **prior** to making a request to COM-Calls and Contracts for approval for “Serious Contact”, accompanied by a completed Disclosure and Authorization form (attached). The Coordinator for COM and CPM shall certify to the chairperson of the PNC that a background check has been completed.

The Presbytery Coordinator for COM and CPM shall request background check at time Ruling Elder applies to become a CRE.

In the case of those transferring to the presbytery without a pastoral call, the Stated Clerk shall request a background check be done by the Coordinator of COM and CPM.

Process:

The background check will be conducted using information provided by the candidate after receiving his/her permission. In addition to checking personal references provided by the candidate, an individual background check shall be made for reports, records, or incidents of moral turpitude and criminal activity. The computerized search is normally completed within one business day. Research is provided by an agency recommended by presbytery and costs approximately \$16 per inquiry. The information obtained shall be used solely for the purposes described in this policy and shall be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

Fee Payment:

Installed and contract relationships: Local church shall pay for checks of prospective clergy receiving calls to enter the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Members-At-Large and Retired Clergy entering Presbytery of New Covenant shall pay Presbytery directly to conduct background check for them.

Those seeking to become Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE) to a particular service: CPM shall pay for conducting the background check.

Record Retention:

All records shall be retained at the Presbytery Office for four years after the clergy person has left the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Effective: All calls extended, and clergy received after 7/1/06

**DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FORM
TO OBTAIN CONSUMER REPORTS FOR EMPLOYMENT, VOLUNTEER,
OR TENANT PURPOSES**

Please Read Carefully Before Signing the Authorization

In considering you for employment and, if you are employed, in considering you for subsequent promotion, assignment, reassignment, retention, or discipline, the Presbytery of New Covenant (“the Company”) may request and rely upon one or more consumer reports or investigative consumer reports about you that we obtain from a consumer reporting agency, such as IntelliCorp Records, Inc.

IntelliCorp Records, Inc. can be contacted by mail at 3000 Auburn Dr, Suite 410; Beachwood, OH 44122; or phone: 1-888- 946-8355; or website: www.intellicorp.net.

For explanation purposes:

- a “consumer report” is a written, oral or other communication of any information by a consumer reporting agency bearing on your credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used or expected to be used or collected in whole or in part for the purpose of serving as a factor in making an employment-related decision about you. Such information may include, for example, credit information, criminal history reports, or driving records; and
- an “investigative consumer report” is a consumer report in which information on your character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living is obtained through personal interviews with your prior employers, neighbors, friends, or associates, or with others who may have knowledge concerning any such items of information. In the event an investigative consumer report is requested about you, you are entitled to additional disclosures regarding the nature and scope of the investigation requested, as well as a written summary of your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (“FCRA”).

Under the FCRA, before the Company can obtain a consumer report or investigative consumer report about you for employment purposes, we must have your written authorization. Before we take adverse action on the basis, in whole or in part, of information in that report, you will be provided a copy of that report, the name, address, and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency, and a summary of your rights under the FCRA.

DISCLOSURE and AUTHORIZATION

I understand and acknowledge that it is the express general policy of the Presbytery of New Covenant to contact personal references which have been provided by a prospective candidate or employee and to conduct a background check for reports, records, or incidents of moral turpitude for all seeking to become a commissioned ruling elder, new clergy entering the presbytery and/or obtaining employment with the Presbytery or in the local church. I further understand that such checks are conditions which must be met prior to my receiving serious consideration for a call to, employment, or membership in the Presbytery of New Covenant. With these understandings, I freely and voluntarily execute the Disclosure and Authorization and acknowledge that I understand its contents.

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of your review and consideration of my application for a position of employment in the Presbytery of New Covenant or in one of its local churches, the undersigned:

- A. does hereby authorize and agree that the Presbytery of New Covenant, the local employing church, their respective agents, committees, agencies, directors, trustees, employees, attorneys, representatives, successors and assigns may perform, request, obtain or conduct a background check on the undersigned and contact those personal references provided by the undersigned and consent to these check and contact. The background check and personal contacts may include an inquiry into my Employment History, Education, Character, Reputation, Work Experience, Volunteer Experience, Credit, and/or reports, records, criminal records, or incidents of moral turpitude.
- B. does hereby authorize any third parties who may be the custodians or in possession of the requested information, to disclose such information to the Presbytery of New Covenant, the local employing church, their respective agents, employees, attorneys, committees, agencies, directors, trustees, representatives, successors, and assigns;
- C. does hereby reserve the right to receive a copy of any such report and to explain, contest, or otherwise dispute the results of any inquiry.

I understand that the background check and personal contact are for the sole purpose of considering my application for employment in the Presbytery of New Covenant or in one of the Presbytery's churches and that the information shall not be sold, or in any way transferred to a third party except for the express purpose of conducting the background check or personal contacts.

AUTHORIZATION

I have read and understand the foregoing Disclosure and authorize the Presbytery of New Covenant to obtain and rely upon consumer reports or investigative consumer reports concerning me. By my signature below, I authorize the Presbytery of New Covenant to obtain any such reports and to share the information received with any person involved in their decision about me.

I do _____ do not _____ authorize you to contact my current employer for Employment and Reference Verifications. (This will authorize immediate inquiries to the Human Resources Department and to any listed supervisors or references in the Employment/Reference Section of your application.)

I also agree that this Disclosure and Authorization in original, faxed, photocopied, or electronic (including electronically signed) form will be valid for any consumer reports or investigative consumer reports that may be requested about me by or on behalf of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Signed _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Address/City/State/Zip _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Driver's License State _____ Driver's License Number _____

PHASE 2
PREPARING

Study Guide -- English with some Español

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service in the Presbytery of New Covenant

P-Doc 1 – (Version 5-Editor Rev. Pamela Morgan, PhD, (CPM approved 8/22/20) (revised 9/1/20)

This Study Guide is a workbook for use while preparing to become a CRE as well as an ongoing resource for use after a student has completed their training. Please update the resources given in this study guide, as needed. You are encouraged to read and discover resources beyond those listed in this study guide. You are encouraged to interact with your CPM Liaison, and those in ministry settings who may provide you opportunities for application and understanding of resources.

We assume you are in constant study of the Word of God and have an ongoing working knowledge of the Creeds, Confessions, the Book of Common Worship, and the most current Book of Order and guidelines provided by New Covenant Presbytery COM and CPM committees.

The Study Guide Sections include:

- CPM Guidance
- Helpful Hints for CRE Students
- Training Settings and Programs
- Web Site Links
 - PC(USA)
 - Synod of Sun
 - New Covenant Presbytery
 - Online Stores
 - Social Media
 - CPE
 - Texas
- General Questions
- CRE Student Course Competencies
 - General Description of Competency
 - Practice Questions
 - Review
 - Application
 - Resources
- About Being Presbyterian
- Additional Resources
 - Administration
 - Ethics
 - Evangelism
 - Multicultural Diversity
 - Personal Faith and Motives (Spirituality)
 - Small Church, Rural Church
 - Stewardship
 - Texas Law for Texas Clergy

CPM Guidance

CRE Requirements and preparation are different from ordination, not requiring the same level of knowledge and training. A layperson's ability to preach, teach, and lead worship is as much a gift of the Spirit developed through experience and practice as it is part of academic training. Consequently, we present competency more than credentials as a basis for commissioning.

It is the desire of the Committee Preparation for Ministry to honor several options for the completion of coursework required of CRE students. Members of the committee or support staff assigned to the CREs will discuss these options with CRE students.

- It is anticipated that a minimum of thirty hours is spent in the completion of assignments and classroom contact.
- It is expected that a minimum of 2 years is spent in the Preparing Phase 2 (Phase 2 begins on date CPM approves you to move from Phase 1 applicant to Phase 2 Preparing student.)
- The Committee Preparation for Ministry will work with each student to develop a personal plan for completion of requirements, based on life situation and experience of the individual via 3 phases:
Phase 1 Ruling Elder **Applying**
Phase 2 Student CRE **Preparing**
Phase 3 Student CRE **Assessing** as Ready

In general, the desire is for students to combine

- understanding of the history of the CRE program (See: G-Doc 1 – History of CRE in New Covenant Presbytery).
- use of this study guide as an ongoing workbook
- pre-class reading
- classroom instruction with a minimum of 8-10 hours of classroom time OR one-on one interaction with an instructor per course
- interaction with teacher in a timely fashion in keeping with the instructor's directions

The course work is deemed as completed when the instructor is satisfied with the completion of the class requirements. When the instructor is satisfied, he/she should provide a certificate* of completion to the student. --For academic courses—provide an official transcript from the approved by CPM academic institution.

The student is responsible for submitting course completion documentation*. The student is expected to keep a duplicate copy for their own files. The student shall provide a copy of all course documentation when the student prepares to go before Committee Preparation for Ministry to be assessed as ready and/or to Committee on Examinations.

*Please request correct certification and course documentation forms P-Form 1 provided by CPM.

Note: CPM or COM may at any time request a student retake a course or resubmit additional assignments as needed to assure demonstrated competency. At the time COM examination committee works with the assessed as ready student they may ask for additional paperwork or coursework as they see fit

Helpful Hints for CRE Students – your use of this study guide is optional, but encouraged)

- When attending classes, ask instructor for insight into answering any of the questions that are provided in this study guide that pertain to their area of expertise.
- Throughout your preparation time, work on answering and updating your answers for all the questions and applications provided in this study guide. The study guide questions may show up in your comprehensive assessed as ready exam.
- At each of your annual consultations with your CPM Liaison, you may be asked to share how or if you are using this study guide. For example, what resources have you read, what questions have you answered, what new resources have you added to the study guide, etc.
- Continue to actively use this study guide in between courses and after you are assessed as ready to become a CRE.
- It is your responsibility to update the resources in this study guide. Please check for and only use current versions of any resources listed in the study guide. Please update any website URL's needed.

Training Settings and Programs

Approved

All PC(USA) Seminaries

[University of Dubuque Theological Seminary](#)

[Houston Graduate School of Theology](#)

[Fuller Theological Seminary](#) (with additional coursework in Presbyterian polity)

[Whitworth University](#)

[Association of Presbyterian Church Educators](#) training and events

Courses offered by Presbytery of New Covenant for CREs

Pending Approval (Please request approval in advance of taking any course or training)

Other non-PC(USA) seminaries for consideration must be in the Reformed theological tradition

[Stephen Ministries](#) training

[POPS – Prayers of the People](#) training

Web Site Links

Web Site Links -- Español

[PC\(USA\)](#)

[PC\(USA\) Bookstore](#)

[APCE](#)

[Una Introducción a la Teología Reformada](#)

[Presbiterianos hoy](#)

[PC\(USA\)](#)

[Presbyterian Church Beliefs and Practices](#)

[PC\(USA\) Spanish, Korean Resources](#) with browse by topic

[PC\(USA\) Publications](#) (magazines, periodicals, books)

[PC\(USA\) Preaching & Worship](#)

[General Assembly of the PC\(USA\)](#)

[Association of Presbyterian Church Educators](#)

[Ruling Elder Training](#)

[Synod of the Sun](#)

[Presbytery of New Covenant](#)

[Resource Center](#)

[POPS – Prayers of the People](#)

Seminaries (approved* by CPM)

[Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*](#)

[Fuller Theological Seminary*](#)

[Houston Graduate School of Theology*](#)

[University of Dubuque Theological Seminary*](#)

[Union Presbyterian Seminary](#)

College approved by CPM

[Whitworth University](#)

Publications

[Presbyterians Today](#)

[Presbyterian Outlook](#)

Misc.

[Creating Safe Ministries](#)

[Opening Doors to Discipleship](#)

[Stephen Ministries](#)

Online Stores

[Amazon Books](#)

[Amazon Kindle](#)

[Cokesbury](#)

[PC\(USA\) Bookstore](#)
[The Thoughtful Christian](#)

Social Media

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Zoom](#)

CPE

[CPE \(Clinical Pastoral Education\) Training](#)

- [Memorial Hermann](#)
- [Harris Health System](#)
- [Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center](#)
- [Houston Methodist Hospital](#) CPE Center
[Houston Methodist](#) The Woodlands Hospital

Texas

[Texas Rural Church Network](#)

Texas Law for Texas Clergy

[Texas Young Lawyers Association](#)

[Texas Child Abuse Laws](#)

[Texas Family Code](#)

[Texas Constitution and Statutes](#)

General Questions

1. Give your current statement of faith in 500 words or less. Include your understanding of the nature of God, the authority of scripture, and the sacraments.

2. Give your current statement of how you are discerning God's call for you to seek to contract as a CRE in 250 words or less.
3. How does reformation history impact modern reformation theology today? Briefly demonstrate a basic knowledge of reformed theology and the sacraments as applied to today's modern Presbyterian congregation.
4. Provide an outline or text of sermon delivered by you as part of preaching class or in a church setting. Provide an exegesis for your sermon. (Be sure to list and explain the steps one may use to interpret biblical passages. Then, from that list, tell us what steps you used to prepare the sermon submitted in this answer.) Please include your order of worship.
5. Explain the difference between a contracted CRE and an ordained minister of the word and sacrament. Give an example of how you would explain to a congregation that you are contracted rather than called to serve them.
6. Explain your understanding of sexual misconduct, pastoral confidentiality, reporting of crimes, and abuse requirements of our Presbytery and the state of Texas. Include your understanding of what a boundary is and how to set, follow and maintain boundaries.
7. Summarize what both the current Book of Order and the Presbytery of New Covenant says about the role and function of a CRE.

Pregunta Generales:

1. Da tu declaración actual de fe en 500 palabras o menos. Incluya su comprensión de la naturaleza de Dios, la autoridad de las Escrituras y los sacramentos.
2. Da tu declaración actual de cómo estás discerniendo el llamado de Dios para que trates de contratarte como CRE en 250 palabras o menos.
3. ¿Cómo afecta la historia de la reforma a la teología moderna de la reforma actual? Demostrar brevemente un conocimiento básico de la teología reformada y los sacramentos aplicados a la congregación presbiteriana moderna de hoy.
4. Proporcione un esquema o texto de sermón pronunciado por usted como parte de la clase de predicación o en un entorno de la iglesia. Proporcione una exégesis para su sermón. (Asegúrese de hacer una lista y explicar los pasos que uno puede usar para interpretar pasajes bíblicos. Luego, de esa lista, díganos qué pasos utilizó para preparar el sermón presentado en esta respuesta.) Por favor incluya su orden de adoración.
5. Explique la diferencia entre un CRE contratado y un ministro ordenado de la palabra y el sacramento . Dé un ejemplo de cómo le explicaría a una congregación que usted es contratado en lugar de ser llamado a servirles
6. Explica su comprensión de la mala conducta sexual, la confidencialidad pastoral, la denuncia de crímenes y los requisitos de abuso de nuestro Presbiterio y el estado de Texas. Incluya su comprensión de lo que es un límite y cómo establecer, seguir y mantener límites.
7. Resuma lo que dice tanto el Libro de Orden actual como el Presbiterio de Nuevo Pacto sobre el papel y la función de un CRE.

Preguntas basadas en competencias del curso:

Practice Questions Español

Biblia:

1. ¿Qué creen los presbiterianos de PC (EE. UU.) Sobre la Biblia?

Teología Reformada

2. ¿Por qué la comprensión de la Teología de la Reforma es importante para los miembros de una congregación presbiteriana de PCUSA?

Gobierno

3. ¿Cuál es el valor del Libro de Orden y cómo se debe usar hoy en un entorno congregacional?

Educación Cristiana (Ministerio de Enseñanza)

4. ¿Cuál es el propósito de la educación cristiana? Dé 5 ejemplos de donde ocurre CE en una congregación.

Cuidado Pastoral

5. Alguien viene a ti para orar, ¿qué haces? ¿Cómo?

Predicación

6. ¿Cuáles son las cualidades de un buen predicador? Y por que?

Adoración y Sacramentos

7. ¿Qué son los sacramentos y cómo encajan en un servicio de adoración?

CRE Student Course Competencies -- English

Bible and Biblical Interpretation

General Description of Competency

Introduction to The Old Testament:

An introductory survey course on the Old Testament is normally intended to give students an idea of the flow of the history, geography, people, and theological development of the Old Testament. Time needs to be spent developing a sense of the historical background, and major themes of the Old Testament as well as a general

overview of the contents of the books of the Old Testament. Most courses include a discussion of the theological importance of the Old Testament to the New as the Scriptures of the first centuries Jews and Christians. It should cover a basic understanding of the Old Testament's literary genre: history, poetry, prophetic literature, apocalyptic, etc., as well as basic hermeneutical/exegetical skills for interpretation (context, genre, historical setting of the book/passage, how the text has been interpreted in and used by the church). As time is available in this or additional Old Testament courses, attention can be given to study of books in more depth or developing exegetical and hermeneutical skills.

Introduction to New Testament:

An introductory survey course on the New Testament is normally expected to give students an overview of the development, timeline, geography, people, and themes of the New Testament. Time needs to be spent developing a sense of the historical background of the New Testament and the order of its writing, the development of the literary genre there (Gospel, history, letters, apocalyptic literature), and the roles these played in the early church. In covering a general overview of the books of the New Testament, most survey courses also deal with exegetical and hermeneutical skills and a discussion of the critical and theological importance of the New Testament. As time is available in this or additional New Testament courses, more attention can be given to the study of a book or books and developing exegetical and hermeneutical skills, the development of the canon, or other related subjects.

Study Of A Specific Book Or Text:

Study an individual book of the Old or New Testament, or focusing on one of the types of literature in one of the Testaments (history, Pauline letters, psalms and songs, parables, etc.), or focusing on lectionary texts for a specific church season. One focuses more on biblical interpretive (exegetical) skills in relating Biblical literature and passages to teaching and preaching.

Interpreting the Bible:

This course can focus on what the church has said about the use of Scripture in worship and study, methods of interpretation (exegesis), different models of interpretation, etc. It can give participants a chance to explore how teachers and preachers move from Scripture to lesson and sermon.

Practice Questions

Review

1. What are four major messages of the Old Testament and how would they impact the life of a congregation?
Book of Order, Confessions, future of the PC(USA)?
2. Give four major themes found in the New Testament and how the Old Testament impacts them.
3. Choose one book from the Old Testament and one book from the New Testament, and address these issues:
 - A. How the book impacts your own life of faith.
 - B. Possible sermon topics, and why.

- C. Relationship to the entire Bible
 - D. Implications for an understanding of reformed theology
 - E. Historical context
 - F. Theological context
 - G. Pastoral context
4. Explain covenant in the Old Testament and New Testament.

Application

1. Prepare and preach a sermon based the relationship between the Old and New Testaments.
2. Prepare a one-month personal bible study based on one book of the Bible.
3. Explain a variety of ways to interpret the Bible, giving both the strength and weaknesses of such interpretation.
4. Prepare a handout on the History of the Bible in the context of Presbyterian Theology and Biblical Interpretation.
5. Answer the question, how would I share an understanding of the Bible with someone, who is from another cultural and English is his or her second language? What would I say, give them, and how would I help them understand the value of the Word of God in their lives?
6. Choose a passage that interests you-perhaps one that troubles you, that you have problems understanding, or that you find opposition to in discussions with other Christians. Read the entire book of the Bible in which the passage is located. Answer the questions, what role does the passage play in moving along the “plot” of the book. Tell how the passage works in relation to other passages near it. If the book were a play, what scene would your passage be in and tell how it would function in the drama---From your reading of the passage, choose 2 or 3 particular words or short phrases that seem to stand out. In a concordance look up the words and note your discoveries. Look up your passage in more than one translation and look your key words up in a theological dictionary for a fuller understanding of them. Look in a commentary or theological journal for more information about your passage. Now after, exploring what others have said, and the various translations, write your own conclusions about the passage. Be sure to tell what the passage says about the nature of God, the nature of humanity, the ministry of the church, and our social environment.
7. Read six chapters in and introduction to Old or New Testament and write a summary in your own words.
8. Write an outline of an Old Testament, New Testament Book.
9. Write your own 1-page commentary on a book of the Bible.
10. Prepare and contrast two biblical passages.
11. Choose a current Biblical debate, choose the side you do not support and write a support paper for that side. (For example: Separation of church and state, Ordination of Gay people, etc.)

Resources

- Ackroyd, P.R. and C. F. Evans, Eds. (1963-1970). *The cambridge history of the bible*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bright, John. 4th Ed. *A history of Israel*, Louisville: The Westminster Press.
- Brown, Robert McAfee (1994). *Reclaiming the Bible*. Westminster John Knox.
- Brueggemann, Walter, William C. Placher, and Brian K. Blount (2002). *Struggling with scripture*. Westminster John Knox.
- Cahill, Thomas *The gifts of the Jews*.
- Coogan, M. (Ed). (2010). *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gome, Peter *The good book*.

Landis *An outline of the bible*. Barnes & Noble.

Mays, James L.; Miller, Patrick D. and Achtenmeier, Paul. Ed.s *Interpretation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Metzger, Bruce M. and Michael David Coogan. *The Oxford companion to the bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Miller, Carol J. *The gospel of Mark leader's guide*. With CD-Rom.

Miller, Carol J. *The gospel of Mark resource book*.

Miller, Patrick D. and Bartlett, David L., Eds. *Westminster bible companion*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Ogilvie, Lloyd John Ed. *The communicator's commentary*. Waco: Word Books.

Patte, Daniel; Croatto, Jose Severino; Duran, Nicole; Okure, Teresa and Lee, Archie Chi_Chung (2004). *The global bible commentary*. Abingdon.

Rogers, Jack *Claiming the center*.

Russell, Keith A. (1994). *In search of the church: New testament images for tomorrow's Congregations*. Alban.

Severance, W. Murray. *That's easy for you to say: Your quick guide to pronouncing biblical names*. Holman.

Shute, John *How the bible is wired*. A paper, Houston, The Institute for Pastoral Studies.

Witherup, Ronald D. *The bible companion: A handbook for beginners*. Crossroads.

Old Testament

Anderson, Bernard W. 4th Ed. (1997). *Understanding the old testament*. Old Tappan, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Anderson, Bernard W. Abridged 4th Ed. (1998). *Understanding the old testament*. Prentice Hall.

Brueggemann, Walter. (1978). *The prophetic imagination*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press.

Brueggemann, Walter. (1978). *Theology of the old testament: Testimony, dispute, advocacy*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press.

Heschel, Abraham. (1969, 1971). 2 volumes. *The prophets*. New York: Harper-Collins (Torch).

Mowinckel, Sigmund (1992). *The psalms in Israel's worship*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Walton, John H. *Chronological and background charts of the old testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

New Testament

Barr, Alan *A diagram of synoptic relationships*.

Brown, R. (2010). *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

Bryant, Robert A. (2001). *The risen crucified Christ in Galatians*. Society for Biblical Literature.

Dunn, James *Unity and diversity in the new testament*.

Ehrman, Bart D. (1997). *The new testament: A historical introduction to the early Christian writings*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Freedman, David Noel, Ed. *The anchor bible*. New York: Doubleday.

Gager, John (2000). *Reinventing Paul*. NY: Oxford.

Gaventa, B. and Petersen, D. (Eds.). (2010). *The New Interpreter's Bible: One Volume Commentary*. Abingdon Press.

Green, Joel B. (1995). *Hearing the new testament: Strategies for interpretation*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Hayes, John H. and Holladay, Carl R. *Biblical exegesis*.

House, H. Wayne. *Chronological and background charts of the new testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Lohse, Eduard *The formation of the new testament*.

Lohse, Eduard *The new testament environment*.
Long, Thomas G. Preaching and the literary forms of the bible.
Luke, Timothy Johnson (1999). *The writings of the new testament: An interpretation*. Minn: Forbes.
Nickle, Keith F. *The synoptic gospels*.
Perrin, Norman *The new testament: An introduction*.
Roetzel, Calvin J. *The letter of Paul*.
Smith, Eric C. (2019) *Paul the Progressive? The Compassionate Christian's Guide to Reclaiming the Apostle Paul as an Ally*. Chalice Press.
Throckmorton, B. H. (1992). *Gospel parallels*. Nashville: Nelson Communications.

Other Resources

Historical Geography of the Bible Lands
Student Map Manual (1973). *A course of study outlines for bible class leaders*. New York: Gordon Press.
A general book on the history of the world, of religions
Various Translations of the Bible
Various Bible Commentaries (Heremia Commentary, Anchor Bible Commentary, etc.)
The interpreter's bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press,
The new interpreter's bible. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Greek English Interlinear
Bible Concordances
The interpreter's dictionary of the bible. 5 volumes Nashville/New York: Abingdon Press.
The Westminster dictionary of the bible.
Various Journals such as: *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *New Testament Studies*.

Reformed Theology

General Description of Competency

Introduction Christian Theology:

The focus of this course is the essential theological heritage of Reformed Christians. The course seeks to help participants understand what theology is; how we should go about "thinking", "speaking", and "acting" theologically; what are the sources of our authority and the specific doctrinal content of our faith. The emphasis will be on gaining a basic comprehension of the Christian theological tradition, as represented by a wide variety of major Christian figures. Many programs use Shirley Guthrie's *Christian Doctrine (revised)* for this course.

Reformed Theology:

This course is usually an introduction to Reformed theology with emphasis on teachings of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, the Westminster Assembly and other reformers and reformed movements. It typically covers the tenets of the Reformed Faith as well as those beliefs that define the Reformed Faith compared to other systems of belief.

A Survey of Church History: (Note: available CRE theology courses sometimes combine theology and history.)

This is usually an introductory course that covers major periods of church history and traces the formation and growth of the church. Such a course often briefly covers the social/political setting as well as religious developments. A common breakdown of these broad periods is:

1. Early Church-from about 30 AD through the Council of Nicaea

2. Council of Nicaea through the beginning of the Reformation
3. The Reformation, including the development of Lutheranism, Reformed Protestantism, the Anabaptists
4. The church in England-Episcopal and Protestant
5. A brief history of the church in the United States

Presbyterian And Reformed History:

More narrowly defined courses on Presbyterian and Reformed history usually focus on the Protestant Reformation, Westminster, the Presbyterian Church in America. Both the historical development of the church and basic theological developments are often developed in the course-the tenets of reformed thought, the theology of Westminster, the theological reasons behind the schisms and splits in the Presbyterian Church in this country (Old School/New School; the Cumberland split, northern and southern churches, etc.) and the unions/reunions that have brought some of those branches back together.

Creeds And Confessions Of The Church - An Historical Survey:

This course becomes a broad survey of church history using the creeds and confessions of our church as the basis for understanding some of the major issues that have helped shape the church from the beginning. Looking at the issues and debates that lay behind the counsels, creeds, and confessions of the church, helps put some of the debates of our day in perspective. By looking at what the church has called heresy through the years and seeing how those variant beliefs and opinions were dealt with through the belief statements of church counsels and various creedal statements, participants can gain insight on how the issues of a period of church history begin to shape the church and its theology, worship and activities.

Practice Questions

Review

1. What is meant by the term: Reformation Theology? What is the historical context?
2. Give five basic tenets of Reformed Theology; explain their historical context and how they relate to your personal faith.
3. Name five or more Confessions, place them in the context of human history and tell why they help us live our faith.
4. Name 3 key Presbyterian reformers from the Reformation period and explain how their theology impacts Presbyterian theology today.
5. List and describe five marker events in the history of Presbyterianism and tell why they matter.
6. List and describe ten marker events in the history of Christianity and tell how they impact Presbyterianism today.
7. Be able to explain to a twelve-year-old child the historical complexity of the meaning of "Holy and Inspired Word of God."
8. How does reformation history impact modern reformation theology today?

Application

1. Describe a situation that call upon your understanding of theology, and then demonstrate how you would apply that understanding to that particular situation.
2. Prepare an Advent series. Give the theological implications.
3. Prepare a theological explanation for why one should study the Bible using the lectionary.
4. Choose a controversial issue and address the theological concerns surrounding the issue.
5. Describe a human event and show how theology applies in that situation.

6. Explain to a 5-year-old, what confession means and why it is important.
7. Explain to a Baptist what we Presbyterians mean by Biblical doctrine and Reformed theology.
8. Write a book review.

Resources

- Barth, Karl (1988). *A Karl Barth reader*, ed. by Rolf J. Eerler and Reiner Marquard; Trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Bevans, S. *Models of contextual theology*. Orbis Books.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1995). *The cost of discipleship*. Riverside, NJ: Simon & Schuster.
- Calvin, John *The Institutes*.
- Guthrie, Shirley C., Jr. (1994). *Christian doctrine*. Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press.
- Johnson, Ben Campbell *Rethinking evangelism: A theological approach*. Westminster Press.
- Kung, Hans (1984). *On being a Christian*. New York: Doubleday and Co.
- Leith, John (1993). *Basic Christian doctrine*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Leith, John H. (1982). *Creeds of the churches: A reader in Christian doctrine from the bible to the present*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
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- McKim, Donald (2019) *Everyday Prayer with John Calvin*. Cascade Books.
- Posey, Lawton W. (2003). *The reformation: A history*. Viking.
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- Tillich, Paul. (1973-197). *Systematic theology*. 3 Vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

History

- Ahlstrom, Sydney (1974). *A religious history of the American people*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
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- Latourette, Kenneth Scott (1975). *A history of Christianity*. 2 Vols. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lingle, Walter L. and John W. Kuykendall. *Presbyterians: Their history and beliefs*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Marty, Martin E. *A short history of Christianity*. Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press.
- Mead, Frank S. *Handbook of denominations in the United States*. Abingdon Press.
- Posey, Lawton W. (2003). *The reformation: A history*. Viking.
- Smylie, James H. (1996). *A brief history of the Presbyterians*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Other Resources

- About the sacrament of the Lord's supper*. Channing Press.
- About the sacrament of baptism. Channing Press.

The history of the Presbyterian church. Channing Press.
About being Presbyterian. Channing Press.
The Westminster dictionary of Christian theology. (1983). Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology
Works of Theologians: Barth, Calvin, Luther, Niebuhr(s), Scott, Tillich etc.
The Nicene Creed
The Apostles' Creed
The Scots Confession (1560)
The Heidelberg Catechism (1563)
The Second Helvetic Confession (1566)
The Westminster Confession of Faith (1645)
The Larger Catechism (1645)
The Shorter Catechism (1645)
The Theological Declaration of Barmen (1934)
The Confession of 1967
A Brief Statement of Faith (1991)

Polity

General Description of Competency

This course uses the Book of Order and actual case studies to delve into the connection between the spiritual character of the Church and its human organization and system of agreed-upon rules of government. It will cover the content of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the make-up of the Book of Order (The Form of Government, The Directory of Worship, and The Book of Discipline), the structure and function of the governing bodies, the other governing bodies with which our General Assembly has relationships.

Practice Questions

Review

1. What does the Book of Order say about the role of the commissioned lay pastor?
2. Who can perform the Sacraments and under what conditions?
3. What are the conditions required for someone to receive the Sacraments?
4. What is the role of our judicatories?
5. What are the rules for calling, leading a session meeting?
6. What are the guidelines for relating to an educator, music director, staff, and fellow clergy in a local congregation?
7. What is the value of the Book of Order and how should it be used in a congregational setting?
8. What is discipline?
9. What is polity?
10. What is membership?
11. What does have a voice in Presbytery mean?
12. When is a commission of a lay pastor valid? When may you identify yourself as a CRE?
13. What is the role of COM-Contracts, Of COM-Exams?
14. What is the role of your CPM Liaison? Of you COM-Contracts assigned mentor in your contract setting?
15. How to you maintain an educational good standing with CPM and when do you submit that information to COM-Contracts?
16. How come your CPM education does not automatically qualify you to contract with a congregation or guarantee that you will pass the COM Exam?
17. What is the difference between a CPM comprehensive written exam and the COM oral exam and why is it

important to maintain this difference?

Application

1. How would you become a CRE?
2. The pastor resigns; you are the CRE, what do you do?
3. You are asked to baptize a baby that is dying in the hospital, what do you do?
4. The minister is out of town, the session wants to meet, what do you do?
5. You believe that you know more than the new pastor in certain key areas of the life of the congregation, the pastor does not want your advice or input, what do you do?
6. John and Jane do not want the woman pastor to do their wedding; they explain that their parents are old-fashioned, they ask you to find them a male pastor for the service at the church, what do you do?
7. Write a paper on suggestive changes to the Book of Order and give a clear and concise rational for those changes. Be sure to identify and explain what type of rational (pastoral, biblical, orderly, or?) you are using and how come?

Resources

Beattie, Frank A. *Companion to the constitution of the PC(USA)) polity for the local church*. Louisville: Geneva Press.

Gray, Joan S. and Joyce C. Tucker (1999). *Presbyterian polity for church officers*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

The constitution of the PC(USA) Part I: Book of confessions. Louisville: The Office of the General Assembly.

The constitution of the PC(USA) Part II: Book of order. Louisville: The Office of the General Assembly (Available in English, Spanish, Korean, Taiwanese) Annotated Edition.

Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of the General Assembly. (2019).

<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/constitutional-services/constitution/>

Other Resources

Congregation's Manual of Operations

Current Book of Order

Presbytery Manual of Operations

Robert's Rules of Order

Christian Education (Teaching Ministry)

General Description of Competency

This course considers various aspects of Christian Education materials: the strengths and weaknesses of curricula available, types of classes, adapting curricula to a group, and small groups (formation and dynamics), It may also help participants become familiar with their Presbytery (and/or Synod) Resource Center, local religious bookstores and supply houses, presbytery events centered on education and training. Crucial to understanding Christian Education – Teaching Ministry is a working knowledge of human growth and development.

Practice Questions

Review

1. Explain why there is no one theory of Christian Education.
2. What is the role of Christian Education in relation to:
 - A. Presbyterian Polity?
 - B. Reformed Theology?
 - C. Reformed Worship?
 - D. Role of the Congregation?
 - E. Role of the CRE?
3. According to Seymour, describe in your own words four approaches to Christian Education, by comparing and contrasting their goal, teacher role, learner role, education process, educational context, and implications for ministry. Be able to give an example of each, and its relationship to the role of the CRE.
 - A. Social Transformation
 - B. Faith Community
 - C. Spiritual Growth
 - D. Religious Instruction

Application

1. Design a Christian Education Course and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. Please be specific, clear and concise.
2. Design a cross-cultural confirmation class demonstrating integration of Bible concepts, reformed theology, and appropriate human development.
3. Design a Christian Education event that would not occur on Sunday morning in a church building, but rather would happen in the community in another context. Tell how you would go about discovering what to do and how to provide the Christian education.
4. Examine your own congregation and list the activities by which the congregation educates. Through these activities, formulate their Christian self-identity and write a short essay describing what your congregation is communicating through its educational activities.
5. Review a Christian Education book and demonstrate how to apply the CE concepts in your own congregation.
6. Design a program to engage adults in the use of computer technology.
7. Develop a Confirmation class; discuss what resources you would use, and how you would use them and how you would involve your congregation, the students and their parent(s).
8. Interview or volunteer to work with a Director of Christian Education in the Presbytery and complete a project or interview reflective paper.
9. Volunteer to serve on a Presbytery, Synod level educational committee and/or event and write a reflection paper or complete a project.

Resources

Bandler, Richard, *Using your brain for a change*.

Bandler, Richard, and Grinder, John *Frogs into princes: The structure of magic*.

Barna, G. (2003). *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*. Ventura, CA: Regal

Blount, Brian K. and Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs Eds. (2001). *Making room at the table: An invitation to multicultural worship*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Bruce, B. (2013). Question: Is there a Future for Christian Education? (Christian Educators Fellowship)
At <https://cefumc.org/>

- Bruce, B. (2007). *Triangular Teaching: A new way of teaching the bible to adults*. Nashville: Abingdon Press
- Buechner, Frederick Telling secrets: Whistling in the dark.
- Dean, K., Ellis, W. W., Forbes, J., Rusert, A. V. (2020) *Delighted: What Teenagers Are Teaching the Church about Joy*. Eerdmans.
- Dean, K. (2010). *Almost Christian: What the faith of our teenagers is telling the American church*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- DeVries, R., Reese-Learned, Morgan, Pamela (1992). A manual for coding young children's enacted interpersonal understanding. *ERIC*.
- DeVries, R., Learned, H., Morgan, Pamela (1991). Sociomoral development in Direct-Instruction, Eclectic, and Constructivist kindergartens: A study of children's enacted interpersonal understanding. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. Ablex Publishing, Urbana, Illinois (6)4.
- DeVries, R., Zan, B., Learned, H., Morgan, Pamela (1991). Sociomoral atmosphere and sociomoral development: A study of interpersonal understanding in three kindergarten classrooms. *Moral Education Forum*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Devries, R., Morgan, Pamela, Learned, H. (1990). Interpersonal understanding in children from DISTAR, constructivist, and eclectic kindergarten programs. A paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the *American Educational Research Association*. Boston, April. Also translated: Seoul, Korea: East West Educational Institute.) John Knox Press.
- Dykstra, Craig (1999). *Growing in the life of faith: Education and Christian practices*. Louisville: Westminster
- Foltz, Nancy Ed. (1990). *Religious education in the small membership church*. Religious Education Press.
- Harris, Maria and Moran, Gabriel (1998). *Reshaping religious education: Conversations on contemporary practice*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hill, P., Manzo F., Liberman, D., Nichols, C., York, J., Morgan, Pamela (1988). A plea for computer integration: Let's bring computers into the classroom. *Educational Technology*. (28)5. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Holohan, June *Climate for learning*. PC(USA).
- Hill, P., Morgan, Pamela (1994). *Breaking barriers of apprehension*. A paper.
- Hill, P., Morgan, Pamela (1994) *Student mentorship in hard core situations: Psychological implications*. A paper.
- Juengst, Sara Covin (1998). *Equipping the saints: Teacher training in the church*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Love, Jean Floyd. *Get ready! get set! worship!* SharTree Notebook format.
- Miller, Carol J. *The gospel of Mark leader's guide*. With CD-Rom.
- Miller, Carol J. *The gospel of Mark resource book*.
- Morgan, Pamela (2002). I wonder. Dean's Roundtable. *Connections*. Presbytery of New Covenant.
- Morgan, Pamela *A constructivist intervention model for educators and psychologists working with children, families and at-risk populations*. A paper.
- Morgan, Pamela (1994). *The practice of constructivist interventions in an alternative learning environment: A move from cognitive behaviorism to cognitive construction*. A paper.
- Morgan, Pamela (1992). A constructivist analysis of the maladaptive development of women. A paper presented at the *Annual Symposium of the Jean Piaget Society for the Study of Knowledge and Development*. Montreal, Quebec, Canada, May 1992.
- Oser, Richard *Confirmation*.
- Paterson, Katherine (2001). *The invisible child: On reading and writing books for children*. Dutton.
- Powell, K. and Clark, C. (2011). *Sticky Faith: Everyday ideas to build lasting faith in your kid*. Danvers, MA: Zondervan

Seymour, J (1997). *Mapping Christian Education*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Smith, S. (2020). OpenBible.info.

Sweep, D. & Willadsen, T. (2019). The Bible for people with short attention spans at [\(PCUSA Presbyterian Mission\)](#)

Pastoral Care

General Description of Competency

This course considers various elements of spiritual care, such as prayer, home and hospital visitation, spiritual advising, faith formation and when to refer someone to a professional psychological professional.

Practice Questions

Review:

1. What is the difference between pastoral care and professional psychological counseling? How and when does a CRE refer a person for professional psychological counseling?
2. How does one pray with a person?
3. What Biblical passages assist a person in times of decision making, stress, tragedy and joy? And how would you make use of those passages in a pastoral care moment?
4. What is pastoral care?
5. What are the standards of ethics and guidelines of the state of Texas regarding confidentiality, reporting of crimes, and abuse?
6. What are normal grief stages and what should you do in response to them?

Application:

1. Someone comes to you for prayer, what do you do? How come?
2. A young person's dad is abusing her, and she tells you, what do you do? How come?
3. Someone needs a Bible passage before going into the hospital, what do you do? How come?
4. Someone comes to tell you that another person's child is ruining their Church school class, what do you do? How come?
5. Someone comes to you and says that they just are not comfortable talking to the minister, but they feel good talking with you and trust you, what do you do? How come?
6. Participate in a Stephen's Ministry program and write up what you have learned?
7. Interview a pastoral care professional, transcribe your notes and write an analysis of what you have learned.

Resources

Augsburger, David *Caring enough to confront*. Regal Books.

Augsburger, David *Caring enough to hear and be heard*. Regal Books.

Beaumont, Susan (2019) *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Bennett, George *When they ask for bread: Pastoral care and counseling in everyday places*. John Knox Press.

Bierly, Steve R. (1998). *How to thrive as a small-church pastor: A guide to spiritual and emotional well-being*. Zondervan.

Browning, Don S. (1976). *The moral context of pastoral care*. Westminster.

Buechner, Frederick (2001). *Speak what we feel (not what we ought to say): reflections on literature and faith*. San Francisco: Harper.

- Burley-Allen, Madelyn *Listening: The forgotten skill-a self teaching guide*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Carder, Kenneth L. (2019). *Ministry with the Forgotten: Dementia through a Spiritual Lens*. Abingdon Press,
- Carnes, Patrick (1983). *Out of the shadows: Understanding sexual addiction* CompCare.
- Clark, Patricia (2019) *Feeling the Shift: Cancer, Faith, and Kindergarten Art*. Liberto Press
- Colby, Damon (1992). *Some do care*. N.Y.: Macmillan.
- Connelly, Kerry (2020) *Good White Racist? Confronting Your Role in Racial Injustice*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Covey, Steven R. *The seven habits of highly effective families*.
- Escobar, Kathy (2020) *Practicing: Changing Yourself to Change the World*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Doran, Carol and Troeger, Thomas H. (1992). *Trouble at the table: Gathering the tribes for worship*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Fowler, James W. (1987). *Faith development and pastoral care*. Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press.
- Fowler, James W. (1995). *Stages of faith*. San Francisco: Harper-Collins.
- Freedman, Judy S. *Easing the teasing*.
- Friedman, Edwin H. (1990). *Friedman's fables*. New York: Guilford Publishing.
- Gebbie, K. M. (2001). Privacy: The patient's right: In the age of information, regulations will govern its handling and use. *AJN*. 101(6), 69-73.
- Gilligan, Ward, Taylor Eds. (1988). *Mapping the moral domain*. MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Gomes, Peter (2002). *The good life: Truths that last in times of need*. Harper.
- Hands, Donald R, and Fehr, Wayne L. (1992). *Spiritual growth for clergy: A new psychology of intimacy with god, self, and others*. Alban.
- Haugk, Kenneth *Christian care giving: A way of life*.
- Haugk, Kenneth *Speaking the truth in love*.
- Kimball, Charles (2002). *When religions becomes evil*. San Francisco: Harper
- Nouwen, Henri *The wounded healer*.
- Lerner, Harriet Goldhor (1986). *The dance of intimacy*. Harper & Row.
- May, Gerald *Addiction and grace*. Harper & Row.
- McKnight, Scot *The Jesus creed: Loving God loving others*.
- McRae-McMahon (1992) *Being clergy. Staying human*. Alban.
- McRay, Michael T. (2020). *I Am Not Your Enemy: Stories to Transform a Divided World*. Herald Press
- Morgan, Pamela (2005). *Troublesome people workshop notes*. Houston: The Institute for Pastoral Studies.
- Morgan, Pamela (1992). A constructivist analysis of the maladaptive development of women. A paper presented at the *Annual Symposium of the Jean Piaget Society for the Study of Knowledge and Development*. Montreal, Quebec, Canada, May, 1992.
- Morgan, Pamela. (1993). Family empowerment: A constructivist approach for coping with crisis. A paper presented at the *American Cancer Society conference: Managing the Psychosocial Needs Along the Cancer Continuum*. Houston, TX, Feb. 12,1993.
- Morgan, Pamela. (1993). The use of interpersonal process recall for examining how women in crisis construct their socio-cognitive and affective survival. A paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*. Atlanta, April 12-18, 1993.
- Morgan, Pamela. *The constructivist challenge: When epistemology speaks to teleology and ontology*. A paper.
- Morgan, Pamela. (1990) *Faith development of adult women in crisis: A constructivist window to intervention*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Houston.
- Myers, David G. *The inflated self*.
- Oates, Wayne *The care of troublesome people*. Alban Institute.
- Oates, Wayne *Pastoral care and counseling in grief and separation*. Fortress Press.

Oswald, Roy M. *Clergy self care: Finding a balance for effective ministry*. Alban.
Sanders, Randolph K. ed. (1997). *Christian counseling ethics: A handbook for therapists, pastors & counselors*.
InterVarsity Press.
Savage, John *Listening and caring skills: A guide for groups and leaders*.
Selman, R.L. (1980). *The growth of interpersonal understanding*. N.Y.: Academic Press.
Turnage, Mac N. and Anne Shaw Turnage (2001). *Grace keeps you going: Spiritual wisdom from cancer survivors*. Westminster John Knox.
Yates, Susan A. *And then I had teenagers*.

Other Resources

(1990) *Services for occasions of pastoral care*. PC(USA) Westminster Press.

Preaching

General Description of Competency

This course will focus on the many aspects of sermon preparation, resources for sermons, kinds of sermons and styles of preaching, the cycle of the Christian year, the lectionary (using it and diverging from it).

Specific preaching courses that focus on the Old or New Testament give the participants an opportunity to consider the practical skills needed to develop a sermon from a text. Focus is usually on the lectionary texts from the Testament being considered.

This course explores the church, when it is most truly the church of Jesus Christ, is grounded, centered in, and empowered by liturgical experience. This course will look at the essential elements of The *Directory for Worship*. Using the *Book of Common Prayer*, it will look at the elements of worship and cover the skills needed in planning and leading worship, speaking, reading Scripture, choosing hymns, etc. It will also introduce some of the resources available in planning worship services.

Practice Questions

Review

1. Compare and contrast three different styles of preaching
2. What are the components of a good sermon?
3. What does one need to do to deliver an effective sermon?
4. What should one never do when preaching a sermon?
5. What are the pros and cons of preaching via the use of the lectionary?

Application

1. Prepare a sermon outline and evaluate its strengths and weaknesses.
2. Select a sermon written by someone else. Write an outline of that sermon, showing how it was constructed, and write an analysis addressing how it is an effective sermon.
3. Write and present a sermon.

Resources

- Bartlett, David (foreword by Leonora Tubbs Tisdale) (2020). *The Collected Sermons of David Bartlett*. Westminster John Knox.
- Bartlett, D. & Brown Taylor, B. (Eds.), (2010). *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary*.
- Brooks, Phillips (1989). *Lectures on preaching*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publishing.
- Buechner, Frederick (1977). *Telling the truth, the gospel as tragedy, comedy and fairy tale*. San Francisco: Harper-Collins.
- Cousar, Charles B. (1994). *Texts for preaching-NRSV-Year C*. Louisville: PCUSA.
- Cox, James W. *Handbook of themes for preaching*. Louisville: Westminster.
- Kim, Grace Ji-Sun Ed. (2019) *Keeping Hope Alive: Sermons and Speeches of Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.* Orbis Books
- Long, Thomas G. (1989). *The witness of preaching*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Newton, S., Childress, K., Marshall, J. and Cuniff, W. (2010 – 2020). Various Conversations About the Practice of Preaching and Preaching Examples.
- Nieman, James R and Rogers, Thomas G. (2001). *Preaching to every pew: Cross-cultural strategies*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Nieuwhof, C. (2020). [Some Simple Practices that Will Make Your Preaching Better.](https://careynieuwhof.com/simple-practices-that-will-make-your-preaching-better/)
- Preach. Inspired. Informed. In Touch. (2017). [10 Common Mistakes Made by Preachers.](https://www.preachweb.org/archive/2017/6/13/bm3boe2ake3ydkrx942fr6j17rkp0g)
- Schlafer, David J. (1992). *Surviving the sermon: A guide to preaching for those who have to listen*. Boston: Cowley Press.
- Walton, Jon Editor. *Restoring faith: Great American preachers answer terror with home*. New York: Forrest Church.

Worship and Sacraments

General Description of Competency

This course explores the sacraments of our church through historical, theological and liturgical considerations. It looks at what Reformed Theology and *The Directory for Worship* say about these sacraments. Other resources often include the *Book of Common Prayer* and/or *Supplemental Liturgical Resources*.

Practice Questions

Review

1. What are responsibilities for the worship leader?
2. What is the role of the CRE in Worship?
3. What is the function of Worship in relation to:
 - A. Presbyterian Polity?
 - B. Reformed Theology?
 - C. Role of the Congregation?
 - D. Role of the CRE as Lay Worship Leader?
 - E. The Laws of the State of Texas?
4. Describe the components of a Reformed Worship service from the perspective of the:
 - A. Preacher, the congregation, the lay leader, the elder, the deacon, the staff member, the educator, the musician, the child, the visitor, the unbeliever.

- B. Word of God
 - C. Sacraments
 - D. Order of Worship (Church Year and Special Services)
 - E. Preparation and Delivery of the Sermon
5. What is the purpose of the Sunday morning worship service?
 6. How do the various parts of the Sunday service carry out the purpose of Sunday worship?
 7. What does it mean to celebrate our witness to the resurrection?

Application

1. Design an ordinary worship service, a funeral service, a wedding service, compare and contrast them.
2. Design a Presbyterian worship experience for individuals that have never been in a church and have no intention of attending a church service. Where would this worship experience occur? How would you gather the information needed and what would happen in such a service?
3. Interview members of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Presbytery about how worship is planned for Presbytery meetings. Then develop a plan for Presbytery Worship, support your choices with norms for the Presbytery and give the reformed theological and Biblical basis for your plan.

Resources

- Presbyterian Church (2018) *Book of Common Worship*. Westminster Press.
- Black, Kathy (2000). *Culturally-conscious worship*. St. Louis: Chalice Press.
- Black, Kathy (1998). *Worship across cultures: A Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Cannon, Katie G. (2002). *Teaching preaching: Isaac Rufus Clark and Black sacred rhetoric*. Continuum.
- Clark, Patricia (1999). Coming to terms with history: This church, this body of Christ, (3)1, 21-29.
- Coffin, William Sloan (2004). *Credo*. Westminster John Knox.
- Costen, Melva Wilson (1993). *African American Christian worship*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Doran, Carol and Troeger (1992). *Thomas H Trouble at the table: Gathering the tribes for worship*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Erickson, Craig Douglas (1989). *Participating in worship*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Gonzalez, Justo, Ed. (1996). *Alabadle! Hispanic Christian worship*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Hunter, G. III *How to reach secular people*. Abingdon Press.
- Leith, John (2001). *Pilgrimage of a Presbyterian: Collected shorter writings*. Geneva.
- Miller, David A. *Contemporary worship in the reformed tradition*.
- Munroe, Jeffrey (2019) *Reading Buechner*. IVP Books.
- Noren, Carol (1992). *What happens sunday morning*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Teykl, Charles H. (2005). *The worship leader's handbook*. Houston: The Institute for Pastoral Studies.
- White, James F. (1992). *Documents of Christian worship*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Children and Youth

- Bailey, Betty Jane. *Youth plan worship*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press.
- Blount, Brian K. and Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs Eds.(2001). *Making room at the table: An invitation to multicultural worship*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Boling, Ruth (1999). *Children's guide to worship*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Lectionary

- Allen, H *Handbook for the lectionary*. Geneva Press
- Biddle, Perry H., Jr. *Preaching the lectionary*. Louisville: Westminster.
- Bower, Peter C., Ed. *Handbook for the common lectionary*. Louisville: PCUSA.
- de Waal, Esther *God under my roof: Celtic songs and blessings*. Orleans, Mass: Paraclete Press.
- Doyle, Dennis (1994). *Celtic spirituality and liturgy. Parish Liturgy*, Holland: American Catholic Press.
- Fogle, Jeanne S. (1988). *Seasons of God's love: The church year*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hickman, Hoyt L. (1992). *The new handbook of the Christian year*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Smith, Judy Gattis. *Teaching with music through the church year*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Music

- Auld, William D. editor (1997). *Sing and rejoice-favorite hymns in large print with lower keys*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Loh, I-to, Ed. (1983). *Hymns from the four winds: A collection of Asian American hymns*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Lovelace, A. C., and Rice, W. C. (2000). *Music and worship in the church*.
- McKim, LindaJo H. (1993). *Presbyterian hymnal companion*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Muck, Judith L. *Presbyterian hymnal-complete concordance and indexes*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Osbeck, Kenneth M.(1990). *Amazing grace*. Grand Rapids: Kregel
- Osbeck, Kenneth M. *101 Hymn Stories*. Grand Rapids: Kregel.
- Osbeck, Kenneth M. *101 More Hymn Stories*. Grand Rapids: Kregel.
- The psalter: Psalms and canticles for singing*. Louisville: PCUSA.
- Smith, Judy Gattis. *Teaching with music through the Church year*. Nashville: Abingdon Press
- Wren, Brian A. (2000). *Praying twice: The music and words of congregational song*.

Special Services, Weddings, Funerals

- Morgan, Pamela (2001). *Art of Worship and Liturgy, Interim Covenant Service in APIMS Handbook*. 6th Ed. Apims PC(USA).
- Morgan, Pamela (2001). *The Pastor Nominating Committee Commissioning Service in APIMS Handbook*. 6th Ed. Apims PC(USA).
- Kehret *Wedding vows*. Meriwether Publishing
- (1990) *Services for occasions of pastoral care*. PC(USA) Westminster Press.
- (1984-Present) *Supplemental liturgical resources*. PC(USA) Each has a commentary on the service/services contained in the resource which provides historical and theological background.
- The Service for the Lord's Day (Study Guide Available)
 - Holy Baptism and Services for Renewal of Baptism (Study Guide Available)
 - Christian Marriage
 - The Funeral: A Service of Witness to the Resurrection
 - Daily Prayer
 - Services for Occasions of Pastoral Care
 - The Liturgical Year.
- Klaus.A. (1986). *Weddings: A complete guide to all religious and interfaith marriage services*. Alpha Pub. Co.
- Scharen, Christian B. *Baptismal practices and the formation of Christians: A critical liturgical ethics* (2002). *Worship*. (76), 43-66.

Service of Holy Communion in a Time of National or International Tragedy from
http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item_id=13232

Other Resources

Book of common worship (1993). Prepared by the Theology and Worship Ministry Unit of PC(USA).
Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Christian marriage. PC(USA), Westminster Press

Directory of worship. Louisville: PC(USA)

Exploring presbyterian worship. Louisville: PC(USA).

Funeral PC(USA), Westminster Press

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Meeks, M. Douglas *God the economist*.

Strauss, William and Howe, Neil. *Generations: The history of America's future*.

Other Resources

Stewardship Resource Packets Louisville: PDS.

Bookmark-Spiritual Formation Office of PC(USA)

Pamphlet-Spiritual Formation

Lectio Divina

Pamphlet-Emmaus Walking Partners

Book-A Trail of Hope

Pamphlet-Spiritual Formation Network of the Presbytery of New Covenant

Pamphlet-The Method of Centering Prayer

Book-Bible for the Bewildered and Prayer for the Tongue-Tied

The Ministry of Spiritual Direction

Reformed Spirituality an Introduction for Believers

The Presbyterian Outlook (magazine published weekly) *The Presbyterian Outlook Foundation*

Presbyterian Today news magazine of the PC(USA)

Texas Law for Texas Clergy (which may include CRE's)

Please check current laws for the state of Texas as they pertain to CRE's. Sample topics may include:

- Clergy and the Elderly
- Clergy Malpractice
- Privileged Communications for the Clergy
- The Church's Ad Valorem Tax Exemption
- Marriage; Dissolution of Marriage
- Adoption, Guardianships
- Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Family Violence

- Wills and Probate
- Criminal Justice System
- Counseling Illegal Aliens
- Bankruptcy

Course Competency Training Programs

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
in the Presbytery of New Covenant

P-Doc 2 – Course Competency Training Programs (CPM approved 8/22/20) (Revised 8/7/20)

Approved

All PC(USA) Seminaries

[University of Dubuque Theological Seminary](#)

[Houston Graduate School of Theology](#)

[Fuller Theological Seminary](#) (with additional coursework in Presbyterian polity)

[Whitworth University](#)

[Association of Presbyterian Church Educators](#) training and events

Courses offered by Presbytery of New Covenant for CREs

Pending Approval (Please request approval in advance of taking any course or training)

Other non-PC(USA) seminaries for consideration must be in the Reformed theological tradition

[Stephen Ministries](#) training

[POPS – Prayers of the People](#) training

Course Competency Requirements Worksheets

To Become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service in the Presbytery of New Covenant

P-Form 1 -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 6/24/20)

Name:

Date:

Assigned CPM Liaison:

Date of review:

DIRECTIONS: In Completed Work Column II, document course competency requirements, noting name of program, course title, etc. In Course Plans to Complete Work Column III comment on how your plan to study and fulfill each course competency.

I Course Competency Areas	II Completed Work <i>(list and attach copies of transcript, CEU or *certificate P-Form 2, letter from instructor and or supporting documents of papers, tests, lesson plans or other work related to course competency)</i>	III Plans to Complete Work <i>(comments)</i>
Bible and Biblical Interpretation		
Reformed Theology		
Polity		

I Course	II Completed Work <i>(list and attach copies of transcript, CEU or *certificate P-Form 2, letter from instructor and or supporting documents of papers, tests, lesson plans or other work related to course competency)</i>	III Plans to Complete Work <i>(comments)</i>
Christian Education (Teaching Ministry)		
Pastoral Care		
Preaching		
Worship and Sacraments		

In addition to coursework it is expected that a CRE student will spend a minimum of 2 years using their study guide (P-Doc 1) both while taking courses and in study in between courses; and will engage in ongoing conversation with their assigned CPM Liaison about issues of progress, discernment and spiritual disciplines. *P-Form 2 – Instructor Certificate of Course Competency

Certificate of Course Competency Completion

Title _____

Description _____

CRE Student: _____

Has successfully completed a Course/Workshop/Study

Where: _____ When: _____

The course/workshop/study provided _____ hours of instruction time.

The student spent _____ hours in the completion of assignments.

_____ Date: _____

Signed by Instructor/Workshop or Study Leader*

This certificate is for documentation when a student was not given a school transcript.

*Note: Final approval from New Covenant CPM is pending.

PHASE 3
ASSESSING AS READY

Personal Information Form (PIF) -- Resume
Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service
in the Presbytery of New Covenant
AR-Form 1 -- (CPM approved 6/27/20) (Revised 6/11/20)

Part A – General Information

Date this PIF/Resume Completed _____

Name _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email(s) 1) _____ 2) _____

Links to my Social Media (as applicable)

LinkedIn _____

Facebook _____

Other _____

Date of birth (month/day/year) _____ Sex () Male () Female

Church Membership: Name of Local Congregation _____

Congregation Address _____

Date received into Church Membership _____ Date of Baptism _____ Date ordained as a Ruling Elder _____

Part B - Family Information

() Single () Married If married, name of spouse _____

If children, names, and ages of children living at home _____

Part C - Educational History

High School

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____

Did you graduate? () Yes () No If "No", do you now have a GED? () Yes () No

College/University (List current first)

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____ Did you graduate? () Yes () No

Major Area of Study _____

Post-Graduate School (List current first)

Name of School _____

Location of School (City/State) _____

Years attended – from _____ to _____ Did you graduate? () Yes () No

Major Area of Study _____

Part D - Work/Military History (List current and/or most recent position first)

Date from/to	Employer (Name/City/State)	Part-time (PT) Full-time (FT)	Type of work

Part E – Additional Church Service and Miscellaneous (as applicable)

Officer in local congregation (List current first)

Deacon (Date and Church Ordained) _____

Trustee (Date and Church Ordained) _____

Clerk of Session (Dates of Service) _____

Treasurer (Dates of Service) _____

Teacher/Worship Leader Service in local congregation

Sunday/Church School Teacher () Yes () No Date last served _____

Lay Leader in Worship () Yes () No Date last served _____

Committee(s) in local congregation (List current first)

List any Church Committees you have served on (indicate whether a member or moderator, and years served) (List current first)

Larger Church/Judicatories of PC(USA) (List current first)

List service to Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly) List any Departments, Committees, Task Forces on which you have served (indicate whether a member or moderator and years served)

Summarized Statement of Faith (50 words or less)

Lay leader ministry strengths and weaknesses:

As a Ruling Elder Commissioned to Particular Service, I would like my contract to include these duties:

Part F - References

(Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two persons, not immediate family members, who know you and can comment on your gifts for the ministry of a commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service.

a. **Name** _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____

b. **Name** _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work phone _____

Email _____

Authorization to Contact References

(Please sign) I hereby authorize those inquiring into my suitability to contract as a commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to Particular Pastoral Service to contact the persons listed above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Part G - Seeking CRE contract Statement

I hereby seek a contract as a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) to a Particular Pastoral Service of the Presbytery of New Covenant. I promise in reliance upon the grace of God to be diligent and faithful in serving as a contracted CRE. I promise a commitment to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) I promise to submit myself to the care of the presbytery in matters that pertain to my service.

Signature _____ Date _____

Part H - Any Additional Comments