

MONMOUTH PRESBYTERY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER POLICY

Pursuant to §G-2.10, “Commissioning Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service,” in the Book of Order, the Monmouth Presbytery CPM has established the following framework for preparing individuals seeking to be commissioned to serve in a limited pastoral service in the presbytery.

Step One: Application

Anyone seeking to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) must submit the following to the Moderator of the CPM (robertjoelee@aol.com):

- The completed application form available on the CPM’s page of the Monmouth Presbytery website (<http://monmouthpresbytery.com/category/committees-councils/cpm>);
- A brief statement of her or his sense of call to become a CRE; and
- Three recommendations, one each from the applicant’s home church pastor, a church friend, and another person of the applicant’s choice.

Once those documents have been received and are found to be in good order, the Moderator will, in consultation with the applicant, schedule the applicant for a consultation at the next available meeting of the CPM.

Step Two: Consultation with CPM

The applicant attends the scheduled meeting as docketed. The CPM and applicant explore together the applicant’s application and votes whether to take the applicant under care. If the application is successful, then the applicant will select a mentor (if needed, the CPM can help with that selection) to assist the candidate throughout the process and move forward with satisfying the program’s requirements. The CPM will ordinarily also assign a liaison from the CPM to support the applicant throughout the process.

Step Three: Theological Education

The applicant enrolls in a program of study at an approved seminary, whether via distance education or on campus. The following eight academic courses (or the equivalent) are required, although the applicant is free to take additional courses if desired. These courses must be taken for credit and for a grade. Any other courses the applicant may choose to take may be taken on a pass/fail basis or for a grade.

Introduction to Old Testament
Introduction to New Testament
Pastoral Care
Presbyterian Polity

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

In addition, the applicant must complete one unit of supervised field education at a church other than the applicant’s home church. Field education may be either one summer full-time or one school year part-

time (i.e., two semesters). The applicant must arrange for the supervisor to send an assessment of the applicant's field education performance to the CPM Moderator.

At the end of each school year the applicant provides a transcript to the liaison and/or Moderator. Once the program is complete, the applicant arranges for the seminary to send an official transcript directly to the Moderator.

Step Four: Consultations

- Annual: Ideally the CRE applicant attends a consultation with the CPM approximately once annually. The purpose of the meeting is to monitor the student's progress, provide guidance, and answer any questions the applicant may have. This will be flexible depending on the applicant's progress and the time available at CPM meetings.
- Final: Once all requirements have been completed, the CRE candidate is docketed for an in-depth consultation to reach a final determination of the candidate's readiness to be commissioned. In advance of that meeting (a minimum of five days beforehand), the applicant prepares and submits the following:
 - A statement of faith (see instructions on the CPM's website);
 - An exegesis of a Bible passage, which may be chosen by the CPM, but which supports the sermon to be preached (see next bullet); and
 - The text of a sermon with a homiletical rationale based on the exegeted Bible passage.

During the consultation the statement of faith and exegesis are explored, and the applicant preaches the sermon. CPM members provide feedback and, once the discussion is concluded, the CPM votes on whether the candidate has satisfactorily met all the requirements.

Step Five: Recommendation to Presbytery

Upon successful completion of Steps One-Four, the CPM Moderator certifies to the Moderator of the COM that the candidate is ready to be commissioned pursuant to an examination/affirmation conducted by the Presbytery at a stated meeting. Arrangements for the commissioning are made by Presbytery.

Approved by CPM January 8, 2019

Reviewed and endorsed by Mission Council January 10, 2019