

Commissioned Lay Pastor Program

PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS & LAPSLEY

Do you feel a call to minister to smaller churches looking for pastoral leadership?

Do you sense a call to church ministry but cannot commit to the long road of seminary?

Do you have an average of 25 hours each month to dig deeper into God's Word?

Do you have the ability to commit to a short year and a half training program?

Are you a church that can invest just as little as \$100 a year to provide leadership to our churches throughout the Presbytery?

If you said YES to any of these questions, check out this packet detailing our exciting and practical Commissioned Lay Pastor Program especially designed for busy people and churches like YOU!

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What is a Commissioned Lay Pastor, and what can they do?

A Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP) is an elder who is trained and commissioned by the presbytery to provide pastoral services to a particular church or churches (G-14.0560). The Book of Order says that a presbytery may authorize a CLP to five functions (G-14.0562) which include administering the Lord's Supper and the Sacrament of Baptism, moderating the session under presbytery supervision, perform a service of Christian marriage, and have a voice and vote at Presbytery meetings (counted as an elder commissioner). Remember that upon completion of the CLP program, candidates are not automatically authorized to perform the above pastoral duties. Each presbytery authorizes specific duties for the CLP in each specific commission.

What does the process look like?

Here is the outline of the process:

1. A CLP candidate must be an ordained elder in good standing in their member church.
2. Seek an application from Rev. Molly Clark, Dean of Training (contact info. below).
3. Within that packet a candidate must complete, in detail, the application - due by _____
4. Each candidate must be endorsed by the Session of their church.
5. After examination of all application materials, candidacy will be determined.
6. Payment of _____ is required by _____. Participants are responsible for books and travel expenses to training sites.
7. A mentor from the COM will be identified and approved for each candidate.
8. Completion of training schedule including 2 progress reports to assigned mentor.
9. Upon superior completion of the course work, candidates will be examined by COM.
10. All successful candidates will receive a certificate of completion and will be eligible in our presbytery to be commissioned by COM for specific service in a particular church.



Direct inquiries and questions to:

Rev. Molly Clark
144 Penhale Park Road
Helena, AL 35080
ATTN: CLP Training

moltoad@bellsouth.net
(h) 205-621-7310
(c) 205-913-3511

Communication with Rev. Clark via e-mail is preferred.

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Personal Information

Name:	
Mailing Address:	
City, ZIP:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
E-mail address:	
Occupation/Place of Employment:	
Educational Background: List academic institutions attended and degrees obtained, beginning with high school.	

Church Background

Year of Baptism:	
Year of Confirmation/Public Profession of Faith:	
Name of Church where you are an active member:	
Date you were received as active member of above church:	
Other churches where you have been a member:	
Date of ordination to office of Elder:	
List your areas of involvement in the life and mission of the church (use space below if needed):	

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Please answer the following questions. Feel free to use additional paper.

Why are you interested in this program? What motivates you to apply?

What aspects of your present church do you enjoy the most?

What aspects are most frustrating?

What does it mean to you to be a Presbyterian?

What gifts and skills do you bring to this program?

In what areas of your life would you like to grow?

What are your current spiritual practices and disciplines?

What are some of your interests and hobbies?

In what community or volunteer service have you been involved?

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Faith Statement & Autobiography

Please attach a brief statement of your personal faith. Describe what you believe about God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and your relationship to them. Include a brief summary of your understanding of the role of scripture, the church, and the sacraments in your life.

Also attach an autobiography using the attached guidelines.

Pastor/Moderator's Endorsement

You should take your completed form and your faith statement to your pastor, or if your church is without a pastor, to the moderator of your church's Session. Your minister/moderator will take your application to the Session, along with a reference she or he will complete. No application may be considered without this and the Session's endorsement.

Session Endorsement

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

References

In addition to the minister and the Session, please list three (3) additional persons who you know well, in a variety of relationships, who will serve as individual references. Duplicate an Individual Reference Form to each, asking that the form be completed and sent directly to Rev. Molly Clark, moltoad@bellsouth.net, or 144 Penhale Park Road, Helena, AL 35080.

Statement of Consent

I am applying for admission to the CLP Program of the Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley. If accepted, I hereby commit myself to participate fully in the scheduled activities and assignments to the best of my ability. I understand that successful completion of the program does not necessarily mean that I will be assigned to a specific commission in the future without the approval of the COM and Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley.

Signature

Date

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Autobiography Guidelines

Writing our autobiographies is a useful exercise in self-reflection; also a way to get in touch with our personal stories and make use of them in ministry. Following are some suggestions for the content of your autobiography. They are intended to be stimuli for remembering and writing; not required areas to be covered in depth. To attempt such would likely result in a very long story, if not a short book. Feel free to use the suggestions in ways that allow you to tell your story as honestly as you can. Don't try to create a legend!

Your autobiography will greatly help the CLP Committee to know you as a person and be able to offer more helpful feedback as you journey through the process of becoming a Commissioned Lay Pastor in the Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley.

Content of Autobiography:

Birth

Parents & Grandparents

Siblings

Home life; environment

Childhood

Religious development

School Years

College Years

Career

Marriage

Birth of Children

Is there a central theme to your story?

We suggest the length of your autobiography to be three to five typed, single-spaced pages (longer if you like). Please bring copies for the committee members when you come for your interview. If you have questions, please contact Rev. Molly Clark at 205-621-7310 or moltoad@bellsouth.net.

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4. Everyone has ways in which they need to grow personally and professionally. Please comment on the applicant's growth areas.

5. The following personal and professional characteristics are important for CLP candidates. Please circle all those you believe apply to the candidate.

Ability to speak publicly with a clear and coherent voice.

A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture.

Reliability

Leadership

Compassion

Skills in personal relationships

Well-developed listening skills

Ability to relate to various age groups

Able to keep confidentiality

6. Describe any reservations you might have in endorsing this candidate. Note that reservations do not necessarily disqualify the candidate.

Your Signature

Date

If possible please return this form electronically via e-mail.

Please send this completed form directly to:

Rev. Molly Clark

moltoad@bellsouth.net

OR

144 Penhale Park Road

Helena, AL 35080

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Pastor/Moderator and Session Endorsement Form

Primary attention should be given at this time to evaluating the applicant's natural gifts, quality of commitment, strength of motivation, and potential for growth. You should know that your Presbytery must rely upon the Pastor/Moderator, the Session, and the applicant to exercise good judgement in discerning whether this individual seems to be called by God to consider service as a Commissioned Lay Pastor.

Name of Applicant: _____ **Length of Relationship:** _____

Please respond candidly to the following questions. Use extra paper if needed.

1. What personal qualities are evident of a vital faith in God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?
2. How is that faith currently being expressed through the individual's participation in the worship, ministry, and mission of this congregation?
3. What evidence do you see of a sense of call?
4. What actual and potential talents for ministry as a CLP are evident in this individual?
5. Describe a few situations in the life of your church in which the applicant has demonstrated leadership capacity.

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6. How would you rate the applicant's physical health/stamina, emotional well-being, and maturity?

7. Describe the applicant's capacities for effective public speaking and demonstration of pastoral care.

8. The following are especially important in a CLP. Please circle all which you think are demonstrated by this applicant in the life of your church.

Ability to speak publicly with a clear and coherent voice.

A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture.

Reliability

Leadership

Compassion

Skills in personal relationships

Well-developed listening skills

Ability to relate to various age groups

Able to keep confidentiality

9. Describe any reservations you might have in endorsing this candidate. Note: This does not necessarily disqualify the candidate.

Sign and circle where applicable:

I, the Pastor/Moderator of the _____ Church

I, the Clerk of Session of the _____ Church

DO endorse the applicant to the CLP Program.

DO NOT endorse the applicant to the CLP Program.

DO WITH RESERVATIONS endorse the applicant to the CLP Program.

Signature _____

Date _____

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CLP Committee Members

Name	Address	Phone #s	E-mail
Molly Clark	144 Penhale Park Road Helena, AL 35080	(h) 205-621-7310 (c) 205-913-3511	moltoad@bellsouth.net
Becky Davis	1010 East Street S Talladega, AL 35160	(h) 256-362-2293 (w) 256-761-4024	Becky.Davis@bhsala.com
Margaret Northen	2112 Vesthaven Way Cir. Birmingham, AL 35216	(h) 205-824-0515	mrorthen1@charter.net
David Stephens	2220 Bluff Road Birmingham, AL 35226	(h) 205-822-2933	dls1606@gmail.com
Elizabeth Goodrich	1815 Kensington Road Birmingham, AL 35209	(h) 205-414-6088 (c) 205-542-1042	elizgoodrich@hotmail.com

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