

**THE PRESBYTERY
OF SHEPPARDS
AND LAPSLEY**

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COMMISSIONED PASTOR PROGRAM**

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Jesus Calls Us!

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said to them, *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people."* And immediately they left their nets and followed him. Mark 1:16-18

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."* Luke 10:1-2

Jesus came and said to them, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:18-20



**Commissioned Pastor
for the Presbytery of
Sheppards and Lapsley**



COMMISSIONED PASTOR (CP)

PROGRAM OF THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS & LAPSLEY

G-2.1001 When the presbytery, in consultation with one or more sessions or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as a **commissioned pastor also known as commissioned ruling elder** as assigned by the presbytery. A ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve **one or more validated ministries** of the presbytery. Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation or congregations to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by state law. This commission shall also specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery shall review the commission at least annually. **G-2.1002** A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. **Such preparation shall include a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.** The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by presbytery. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions specified in G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.

G-2.1003 "When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a ruling elder to serve a congregation providing the services described above, it shall commission the ruling elder to pastoral service as designated by the presbytery, employing the questions contained in W-4.0404. **G-2.1004** The ruling elder commissioned under the terms of G-2.1001 shall work under the supervision of the presbytery. The presbytery may at any time withdraw the commission for reasons it deems good and sufficient. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor.

RESPONSIBILITIES of CP

- A ruling elder may be granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service for a designated congregation and may be allowed to perform the following functions for that particular congregation renewable at the request of the session and upon recommendation of the Commission on Ministry (COM) on an annual basis: Moderate the session, Administer the Sacraments, Officiate at Marriages where permitted by state law
- The commission shall also specify the term of service, not to exceed three years and shall be reviewed annually. (G-2.1001)
- A Commissioned Pastor may be commissioned to particular service in his/her own church when there is no one else available and when the responsibility is not incumbent on the session to perform.
- All CPs are required to participate in the annual ten-hour continuing education event provided by Presbytery, or an equivalent event as approved by the CP Director(s). Antiracism training is required for each CP as well. There may be required group retreats planned for the purpose of education and fellowship. All CPs are required to submit an annual report of his/her work and continuing education to the Director(s) of the CP Program by January 1 of the year following the year of report. (G-2.1002)
- The COM shall provide care and oversight of the CP program, through the Director(s) of the CP Program, including recommendation for commissioning. (G-2.1003 and G-2.1004) Prior to commissioning, COM shall examine CP candidates as to personal faith, motives, and areas of instruction. (G-2.1002)
- Presbytery decides what to authorize for each commission; this authorization is only for the particular church or churches to which the ruling elder is commissioned at a particular time. Presbytery consults with the session of the church involved and considers whether the work to which the elder is commissioned requires such authorization and/or whether the particular Commissioned Pastor is ready, able, and willing to take on these activities.

WHAT DOES A POTENTIAL CP LOOK LIKE?

- A High School graduate. Some college level experience is helpful.
- An Ordained Ruling Elder and active member of a local Presbyterian (USA) congregation.
- A person who exemplifies devotion to a personal life of faith.
- A person who shows commitment to the worship and work of the local congregation.
- A person who has a passion for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with others.
- A person who is capable of basic communication skills, both oral and written, for congregational leadership.
- A person who exhibits an interest and willingness to serve a small congregation on a continuing basis.

(Revised 8-5-25)