

Preparation for Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP)
Presbytery of Cincinnati
Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

Discernment Process:

1. As part of a candidate's discernment process the candidate shall have conversation with the Committee on Ministry (COM) about the need for CLP's within the presbytery. This provides information about future calls.
2. A candidate shall have had extended conversation with her/his pastor about the sense of call and the gifts and tasks of ministry.
3. A candidate shall fill out the Presbytery Application to become a CLP Candidate.
4. A candidate shall meet with the Session of her/his church and obtain their endorsement for this process.
5. A candidate shall provide three references – forms are provided and are to be mailed directly back to the committee by the references.
6. A candidate shall meet with the Committee on Preparation and receive its endorsement to become a CLP candidate.

Entrance Requirements:

In order to be considered for CLP Candidacy, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- Be a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) for at least two years
- Be a member in a particular church for at least six months
- Be an ordained elder
- Be regular in attendance and active in the life of the congregation
- Have demonstrated leadership ability
- Have demonstrated pastoral concern and ability
- Have a Bachelor of Arts degree, or the equivalent

Educational Requirements:

The Book of Order (G-14.0560 ff) requires education for CLP's in the following areas: Bible and Exegesis, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, Preaching, Worship, Pastoral Care, and Education. These requirements can now be met with seminary programs set up for CLP education. The Committee on Preparation can assist a candidate in obtaining information about these programs. The Presbytery of Cincinnati also requires education in the areas of Reformed Church History and Small Church Dynamics. If these are not available as part of a seminary program, CPM will make arrangements which will allow the candidate to meet these requirements. All coursework must be approved by the Committee on Preparation.

To supplement these educational programs, CPM requires that CLP Candidates have:

- a preaching practicum in addition to any coursework.
- a pastor appointed by CPM (but not on CPM) who will serve as mentor throughout the educational process. The candidate will meet regularly with the mentor

- participate in a peer/mentor group within the presbytery (if there are no other candidates, CPM will make alternate arrangements to meet this requirement)
- successfully complete a six month internship in a congregation other than the candidate's home congregation
- pass examinations in polity and worship and sacraments
- complete annual consultations with CPM
- upon successful completion of all requirements, the candidate will present to CPM a personal statement of faith and be examined by CPM towards recommending the candidate as ready to be commissioned.

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will:

- provide care, oversight and guidance to the CLP candidate throughout the process
- provide an advisor from the committee to support the candidate and provide a means of communication with CPM
- appoint the candidate's mentor and prepare that person to be a CLP mentor
- meet with the CLP candidate's Session to help them understand their role in the preparation process
- arrange for internship opportunities
- proctor/ grade examinations required by the presbytery
- maintain documentation for each candidate with all appropriate records of coursework, progress through the process, etc. This will be kept by the Moderator of CPM
- coordinate with COM when candidates are ready for placement

The Candidate's Session and Congregation will:

- pray in an ongoing way for the candidate
- provide care and support to the candidate
- provide a Session liaison to the candidate
- if possible, provide some financial support toward tuition costs