

Presbytery of Scioto Valley
Certified Lay Professionals Committee

CERTIFIED LAY PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM POLICY
(Adopted April 17, 2007 and Amended February 17, 2009)

I. CERTIFIED LAY PASTOR [G-14.0560]

1. Introduction

- A. Every Christian is called to ministry. The Reformed tradition holds that all baptized Christians are called to be active participants in the church's total ministry. The total ministry is nothing less than the exercise of the church's vocation to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ; we are called to embody that reconciliation in our own time and in our own place through worship, service to others and by proclamation of God's word to all people.
- B. The Presbytery of Scioto Valley is aware of the growing need to provide competent ministerial leadership in churches which do not have the resources, but have the need, for regular pastoral leadership. In view of this need and in keeping with the Reformed tradition the Presbytery adopts the Certified Lay Professionals Program as described in this proposal, and in accordance with the *Book of Order*, G-14.0560.
- C. The purpose of the program is to recruit, equip, place and supervise persons who will serve in churches qualifying for the ministry of a Certified Lay Pastor (hereafter as CLP). The Certified Lay Pastor shall not be viewed by the congregation (church) as a replacement for ordained clergy, nor shall the CLP program be viewed as an alternative track of preparation for, or function as, ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament. The CLP will not normally be commissioned to serve in multiple staff congregations.

2. Constitutional Authority

- A. The *Book of Order* states that, "the commissioned lay pastor is an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is granted a local commission to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. (G-14.0560)
- B. The commission of this individual is valid "only in one or more congregations designated by the presbytery, and shall be valid for a period of up to three years as determined by the presbytery." This relationship "may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery." The work of the CLP shall be reviewed initially, at six months, and thereafter annually by the presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM).
- C. The *Book of Order* specifies that a commissioned lay pastor may be authorized to perform any of all of the following functions, but only in the contexts specified in the commission of the lay pastor:
 - 1. Administer the Lord's Supper
 - 2. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism
 - 3. Moderate the session of the congregations under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery: or when so commissioned by the presbytery
 - 4. Have a voice in meetings of presbytery
 - 5. Have a vote in meetings of presbytery (such vote to be counted as an elder commissioner for the purposes of parity)
 - 6. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.

- D. The CLP shall work “under the supervision of the presbytery through the moderator of the church being served or through the Committee on Ministry.” Each CLP will be assigned a minister of the Word and Sacrament who will serve as a mentor and supervisor.

3. Administration of the Certified Lay Pastor Program

- A. Oversight and administration of the Certified Lay Pastor training program shall be the responsibility of the Certified Lay Professionals Committee. The Certified Lay Professionals Committee (hereafter as CLPC) shall function as a committee of the Presbytery and shall have regular representation from The Committee on Ministry (hereafter as COM). The committee shall consist of 9 members, with at least 2 members from COM. The Presbytery’s nominating committee shall nominate the remaining members. Members of the CLPC shall be aligned in 3 classes of three-year terms.
- B. The CLPC shall coordinate various aspects of the program and shall have authority to make decisions, but shall rely on other Presbytery committees for information and input on important aspects of CLP education and deployment.

The CLPC shall coordinate resources for instruction and address questions of recruitment and selection of persons for the program.

The COM will determine churches to be served by a CLP as well as the nature of the commission. The COM will also negotiate and act on matters related to contract, including salary and other benefits.

- C. The COM shall provide for an annual review of persons serving as CLPs and shall have regular communication with those who are listed as certified for this ministry. The committee shall also assign and communicate regularly with the clergy mentor/supervisor of the prospective CLP.
- D. The CLPC shall provide for liaisons for the CLPs to assist in communications between and with the CLPC and the CLP.
- E. If the CLP program is in partnership with other denominations which are in the Formula of Agreement, they may be represented on the CLPC.

4. Qualifications

- A. The Presbytery of Scioto Valley CLPC will accept applications to the Certified Lay Pastor training program from members of the churches within the Presbytery.

The applicant for Lay Pastor must be an ordained elder within the PCUSA and will ordinarily have served as an elder for at least two years.

- B. Applicants shall complete the application and furnish at least three written recommendations, at least one of which shall be a minister of the PCUSA. The applicant shall have the endorsement of his/her session.
- C. Applicants shall exhibit a sense of call to this ministry and shall express this call to members of the CLPC.
- D. Applicants shall ordinarily have finished a college degree program. Post high school course work and life experience may also be considered sufficient for meeting this requirement. Applicants must demonstrate ability to meet the academic requirements of the educational program.
- E. Commissioned lay professionals previously trained and approved in other presbyteries may be considered to serve as CLP in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley with documentation from the commissioning or certifying presbytery. The normal selection process will apply. The CLPC will

determine whether additional education is required and recommend the applicant to the Presbytery for approval and commissioning.

5. Preparation and Education

- A. The CLPC shall insure that all selected candidates for the CLP program receive instruction in "Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching" (G-14.0560). The emphasis in the CLP preparation shall be on the practice and understanding of ministry, theological reflection, and spiritual growth.
- B. Aspects of Education:
 1. Individual Supervision and Mentoring. Each prospective CLP shall be assigned to an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament to foster a relationship of personal, professional, and spiritual formation.
 2. Group and Structured Studies. Each prospective CLP shall also engage in a regular course of study. The purpose of these group experiences shall be to provide instruction in the various concerns outlined in the *Book of Order*, to provide for an experience of Christian community in learning, and to provide an additional environment for the formation of the CLP.
 3. Attendance and Make-up. Because the Certified Lay Pastor Program is a concise and compact course of study, students should make every effort to attend all classes and complete all assignments. In the event it is necessary to miss a class, the student shall contact the instructor, who will make an appropriate "make-up" assignment to cover the material missed. The student will not be evaluated for that course until the assignment is completed and turned in.

6. Examination/Evaluation

Each student will complete a written exam responding to case studies in pastoral care, Reformed theology, and Presbyterian polity. The CLPC will require an assessment by the Midwest Ministry Development Service, e.g. Ennagram evaluation and interpretive workshop, or comparative measuring tools.

At the end of year 3 – Students are eligible to be recognized by the Presbytery as a Certified Lay Pastor (Cert. LP) if a position is available, to serve as a Commissioned Lay Pastor.

Administration of Education and Preparation:

- A. Resources for training include teaching Pastor, lay or ordained, seminary professors and staff, governing body staff (Presbytery, Synod, and GA), program staff, and staff from ecumenical programs and bodies. Persons identified to teach in this program shall have demonstrated clear qualification in their field of expertise. In addition, certain congregations may be designated as "teaching parishes".
- B. Financing of the program for CLPs is a shared responsibility of the individual in the program, the local church, and the Presbytery.

7. Certification and Commissioning

- A. At the end of the second year, the CLPC shall arrange an appropriate opportunity for presenting a certificate of completion to those who have successfully finished second year of the program. "Certified" Lay Supply Preachers may be listed on the Presbytery's supply preaching list.

- B. After the third year of the program, CLPs who have been examined by the CLP committee and recommended for certification should be recognized by the Presbytery in an appropriate setting. Final placement is the responsibility of COM.

II. **Certified Educators (G-14.0710-.0732)**

A. Preparation and Education

Certified educators shall have skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed Theology, human development, religious education theory and practice, and the polity, programs and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Academic preparation and work experience will be evaluated by the accrediting process provided by the General Assembly.

B. Examination and Certification

The education Certification Council of the GA will examine and grant certification for the educator.

C. Presbytery Support

The Presbytery shall provide a service of recognition, minimum compensation and benefits requirements for Certified Christian Educators and guidelines for compensation and benefits for Associate Christian Educators.

III. Other Certified Employees (G-14.0740)