

The Presbytery of Huntingdon



Certified Lay Preacher and Commissioned Ruling Elder Program

The Presbytery of Huntingdon

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Lewistown, PA 17044

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huntingdonpresbytery.org

And Peter said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." John 21:17

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Becoming a Certified Lay Preacher or a Commissioned Ruling Elder in the Presbytery of Huntingdon:

The purpose for the positions of the Commissioned Ruling Elder and Certified Lay Preacher is to provide for the ministry of churches who are without pastoral service for either short term or long-term periods. Commissioned Ruling Elders may perform commissioned duties only in those churches in which they are specifically commissioned to serve. Certified Lay Preachers may fill a pulpit in any church within the Presbytery at the invitation of the pastor and/or session. The purpose of the Certified Lay Preacher/Commissioned Ruling Elder program is to provide leadership in the worshipping communities by training those ruling elders who feel called and whose session believes they are called.

The *Book Of Order* provides for the training, examination, and authorization of persons to exercise a public ministry of the Church as Commissioned Ruling Elders : to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. “The presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. A ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery.” An elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in a particular congregation 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-2.1002]

The Book of Order provides that when a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of an individual who may be a ruling elder, in a temporary pastoral relationship. Huntingdon Presbytery calls these “Commissioned Ruling Elders,” and shall determine the terms of service for such Temporary Supply relationships. [G-2.0504b; G-2.1001.]

The Book of Order also provides that individuals may be certified and called to service within presbyteries. “These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication.” [G-2.1102] The Presbytery of Huntingdon trains ruling elders to provide worship leadership, including administration of the Lord’s Supper. These ruling elders shall be authorized to lead worship and to administer or preside at the Lord's Supper, for periods not to exceed one year at a time. In the Presbytery of Huntingdon, they are not Commissioned Ruling Elders but are termed “Certified Lay Preachers” as designated by Presbytery.

The Manual of the Presbytery of Huntingdon notes that “The Committee on Ministry shall consider any person who has preached more than three times in a month for three consecutive

months at the same church to be a Temporary Supply. The committee shall consult with the Session about drafting a specific Temporary Supply agreement.” (A-36.3200; G-2.0504b)

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

“To those called to exercise special functions in the Church...God gives suitable gifts for their various duties....those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian Gospel in the Church and in the world. They must have the approval of God’s people and the concurring judgment of a council of the Church.” (G-2.0104)

Those desiring to serve as Commissioned Ruling Elders or as Certified Lay Preachers should recognize the importance of receiving thorough preparation for their tasks. They must be willing to accept the guidance of the presbytery in their ministry. They should promise reliance upon the grace of God to help them maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to help them be diligent and faithful in this special ministry.

“It is necessary to the integrity and health of the Church that the persons who serve in it...shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity, as expressed in The Book of Confessions and the Form of Government. So far as may be possible without serious departure from these standards, without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the Church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of scripture is to be maintained.” (G-2.0105)

It is to be recognized that in becoming a candidate or officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of the Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves. (G-2.0105)

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. Standards

1. Faith, as expressed by trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and belief in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve: acceptance of the Old and New Testaments as the unique and authoritative witness to that faith; receiving and adopting the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of the Church.

2. Maturity as expressed by membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), faithful, regular participation in its worship and service; demonstrated leadership in the Church; ability to develop facility in the craft of preaching: demonstrated pastoral ability.
3. Christian life expressed by moral standards acceptable to the Christian community; commitment to personal spiritual growth through prayer, Bible reading and devotions.
4. Constitutional fidelity as expressed by affirmative answers to the constitutional questions in (W-4.0404).

B. Qualifications

1. High School diploma
2. Currently a member for at least 2 years in the sponsoring PC(USA) congregation
3. Ordained a ruling elder and have served at least one year as a ruling elder on session before entering the program
4. Endorsement by the local session where membership is held
5. Three personal references
6. A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture
7. Ability to speak publicly, with a clear voice and in good English
8. Demonstrated leadership in the church
9. Reliability
10. Compassion
11. Skills in personal relationships such as: listening skills, ability to relate to various age groups, ability to keep confidentiality
12. Completion of an agreement to abide by the Sexual Conduct Policy of The Presbytery of Huntingdon, and criminal background checks as required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

C. Covenant with the Presbytery

1. Agree to complete appropriate level of training before being qualified to:
 - a. Serve as a Certified Lay Preacher for the Presbytery
 - b. Serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

2. Continue active participation in the life and mission of the current local church.
3. Participate responsibly with the local session, mentor and the Commissioned Ruling Elder program administrators in the goal setting, evaluation and decision-making processes related to preparation for service as a Certified Lay Preacher or Commissioned Ruling Elder.
4. Give diligent attention to the educational and developmental tasks involved in the training programs.
5. Adhere to the schedules, deadlines, and time requirements of the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.
6. Take initiative in maintaining regular communication with mentor and the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry regarding experiences, progress, and other issues pertaining to educational, spiritual, and personal development.
7. Respond promptly and responsibly to all communications, correspondence, and requests for information, consultations, and reports.
8. Understand that completion of training does not guarantee being qualified to preach as a Certified Lay Preacher or to be commissioned as a Commissioned Ruling Elder, nor does commissionability as a Commissioned Ruling Elder guarantee that a position as a Commissioned Ruling Elder will be available.
9. Agree to attend regular continuing education provided by and through the presbytery or other available continuing education as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.
10. Submit annual report to and participate in reviews by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry
11. If any of these covenants are not maintained, the Commissioned Ruling Elder or Certified Lay Preacher may **not** have his or her commission or certification renewed.

GUIDELINES FOR THE CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER

The *Book of Order* provides that individuals may be certified and called to service within presbyteries. “These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication.” [G-2.1102] The Presbytery of Huntingdon trains ruling elders to provide worship leadership, including administration of the Lord’s Supper. These ruling elders shall be authorized to lead worship and to administer or preside at the Lord's Supper, for periods not to exceed one year at a time. In the Presbytery of Huntingdon, they are

not Commissioned Ruling Elders but are termed “Certified Lay Preachers” as designated by presbytery.

THE AUTHORIZATION TO PREACH AND LEAD SERVICES OF WORSHIP AS A CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER

1. Is granted by the presbytery, upon completion of all requirements and examination.
2. Is recognized by the presbytery at a regular meeting of the presbytery.
3. Is valid for a period of up to twelve months as determined by the presbytery.
4. The authorization may be renewed or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery.
5. There will be an annual report from the Committee on Ministry of the status of those serving in this capacity to the presbytery.
6. Certified Lay Preachers may be authorized to serve the Lord’s Supper, and then may do so when invited by a local church Session. G-3.0301b; W-2.0303)
7. The Compensation Policy of the Presbytery of Huntingdon notes that “The Committee on Ministry shall consider any person who has preached more than three times in a month for three consecutive months at the same church to be a Temporary Supply. The committee shall consult with the Session about drafting a specific Temporary Supply agreement.”
(Compensation in the Presbytery of Huntingdon Pulpit Supplies, #3; G-2.0504b).

THE TRAINING

1. The person shall be ruling elder recommended by the session of his or her local church.
2. The person shall make application to the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry. If accepted, the person shall then participate in the training program.
3. The person shall receive instruction in:
 - Old Testament
 - New Testament
 - Reformed Theology
 - Creeds and Confessions
 - Faith Formation
 - Polity & Robert’s Rules

Teaching about Preaching
Worship and Sacraments
Leadership Training, Time Management

4. Attendance is considered either being present in person or via video conference.
Electives may be taken if the core/basic class has been taken within the past two years.
Individuals who have already been certified may take either the core class or the advanced class.

Each course listed above is required for certification and/or commission, and all assignments must be completed. The Lay Preacher program will also provide optional courses as needed: Weddings and Funerals, Grief Counseling, Conflict Resolution, Church History, Clergy Ethics, Mandated Reporter Training, Moderating a Session, Pastoral Care, Praying in Public.

Each candidate and certified lay preacher and commissioned ruling elder is required to attend a minimum of four classes offered each year and encouraged to attend all of them. The “year” for determining attendance will be April 1 – March 31 as that coincides with the annual reporting structure.

A person may be excused from a course/requirement by:

- a. Having taken and successfully passed the course elsewhere (as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry), or
- b. Completion of other continuing education options as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry (see Appendix A)

The Presbyterian Church seeks leadership that will uphold its ordination vows to fulfil its ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions. Just as the presbytery expects and requires teaching elders to continually educate themselves, the presbytery expects and requires its certified lay preachers and commissioned ruling elders to continually educate themselves and to meet together to hold each other accountable.

COURSE PARTICIPATION

1. Courses may be offered in person or by video conference. Individuals may participate in person or by ZOOM as they choose. Zoom participation will count as attendance.

2. Many basic/core level courses will be recorded as well as live streamed. If a course is to be recorded, the instructor will be so notified in advance. The host of a meeting that is being recorded will announce that fact in the beginning of a meeting.
3. For privacy concerns and to encourage discussion, advanced level/second or third tier classes should not be recorded.

Guidelines for taking a class outside of those offered by the Huntingdon Presbytery

- Any certified lay preacher or commissioned ruling elder is eligible to be reimbursed by the presbytery for up to two classes offered by a recognized seminary program per year.
- Anyone wishing to take a class for reimbursement must make a request in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of the class. All details about the class must be included in the request. That request must go to the Chair of COM and the Chair of CPM.
- If approved, the class tuition/fee must be paid by the applicant up front. Once the course is completed, the applicant must submit a one- or two-page summary of what was learned in the course and how that knowledge will be used in their ministry. The summary will be submitted to the CPM Chair. The applicant may also be asked to share their experience with other CLP's and CRE's in the Presbytery.
- Once the course summary has been submitted, the applicant will be reimbursed for the full amount of the class, not to exceed \$500.00, provided there is money available through the Gloria Jean Smith fund.
- No other reimbursement is offered (i.e. mileage, meals, books, etc.).
- Exceptions to these conditions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION

1. After successfully completing the training, the person shall be examined by two persons from or designated by COM on personal faith, motives/sense of call for seeking to serve as Lay Preacher, special gifts for ministry, and the successful completion of the areas of instruction outlined above. This will include a brief statement of personal faith.
2. The person must conduct a full worship service at which a representative lay person and pastor are present. At least one of these persons must be a current member of the Committee on Ministry.

3. Upon successful completion of all requirements, the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry will recommend to Committee on Ministry who will recommend to the Presbytery that the person be certified during a special service.
4. Once the person is certified, the Presbytery shall continue to provide oversight for the person's on-going spiritual and professional development.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER

1. Lead worship and preach the Gospel as requested by a session and officiate at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper when invited by a session.
2. May perform any of those duties specifically outlined by the presbytery for Certified Lay Preachers.
3. Acknowledge the authority of presbytery, which is responsible for all certified lay preachers and commissioned ruling elders.
4. Agree to complete appropriate level of training before being certified to serve as a Certified Lay Preacher for the presbytery
5. As duties allow, continue active participation in the life and mission of the church of membership.
6. Understand that completion of training does not guarantee being qualified to preach or that an assignment will be available when certified.
7. Agree to attend **required**, regular continuing education approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.
8. Complete an annual end of year report and/or review as required by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.

SUPERVISION

1. Certified Lay Preachers shall work under the supervision of the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry. Certified Lay Preachers serving as Temporary Supply shall have a mentor assigned by the Committee on Ministry, usually the pastor/moderator of the church of membership.
2. Certified Lay Preachers will be evaluated triennially by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.

GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

The *Book of Order* provides for the training, examination and authorization of persons to exercise a public ministry of the Church as *Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE)* [G-2.1002]

THE COMMISSION

1. The commission is granted by the presbytery to lead worship, preach the gospel and perform other duties as granted to individual Commissioned Ruling Elders by the presbytery.
2. The commission is valid in one or more congregations designated by the presbytery.
3. The requesting congregation, the candidate, and representatives of the Committee on Ministry will complete the Covenant for Services of a Commissioned Ruling Elder worksheet. The proposed terms of call shall meet the minimums determined by the presbytery. [See Appendix A, for Covenant for Services worksheet....]
4. The commission is valid for a period of up to twelve months as determined by the presbytery, with the terms of call reviewed annually.
5. The commission may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery.
6. There will be an annual report from the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry, of the status of those serving in this capacity to the presbytery.

THE TRAINING: Additional training for commissioning

2. The person shall be a ruling elder endorsed by the session of his or her local church. The ruling elder must have two full years of experience as a certified lay preacher before becoming eligible to be commissionable as a commissioned ruling elder.
3. The person shall receive additional instruction in:
 - a. Leadership Training, Time Management
 - b. Old Testament
 - c. New Testament
 - d. Weddings, Funerals and Baptism
 - e. Church History
 - f. Moderating a Session
 - g. Pastoral Care
 - h. Conflict Management
 - i. Mandated Reporter training (every five years or as determined by the

Commonwealth of PA.)

j. Small membership church dynamics

Each course is required and all assignments must be completed. The SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry will certify the successful completion of all courses.

A person may be excused from a course/requirement by:

- a. Having taken and successfully passed the course elsewhere (as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry), or
- b. Other reasons as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry

REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMISSIONING

1. After successfully completing the training and serving as a certified lay preacher for two years, the person shall be examined by two representatives designated by SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry on personal faith, motives/sense of call for seeking to serve as Commissioned Ruling Elder, special gifts for ministry and the successful completion of the areas of instruction outlined above.
2. Upon successful completion of all requirements, the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry will recommend to Committee on Ministry who will recommend to the Presbytery that the person be designated commissionable. Being designated commissionable enables the individual to be considered for commissions but does not guarantee that opportunities for commissioning will be available, nor that the individual will be selected for any particular commission.
3. When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a ruling elder to serve a particular congregation, the presbytery, upon the request of a session, and upon approval of the terms of service for the relationship, may commission a ruling elder to such service. The candidate must submit a statement of personal faith to the presbytery. The commission shall be valid for a specific time period of no more than twelve months and shall be reviewed annually. The commission shall specify the functions authorized by the commission and shall assign a teaching elder as mentor and supervisor of the Commissioned Ruling Elder. [G-2.1001
4. When a commission has been approved, the presbytery shall appoint an administrative commission to commission the ruling elder to his or her service in a service of worship, employing the questions contained in W-4.0404. The affirmation of the vows shall be recorded in presbytery minutes. [G-2.1003]

5. The commissioned ruling elder remains a member of her or his home congregation so that he or she continues to have a pastor him- or herself. If the Commissioned Ruling Elder is commissioned to his or her home congregation, their assigned mentor should provide pastoral care.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONED Ruling Elder

1. Lead worship, preach the Gospel and perform other duties as granted to individual Commissioned Ruling Elders by the presbytery.
2. May be assigned pastoral oversight of a local church.
3. Attend at least three presbytery meetings a year, acting as a communicator between presbytery and the session.
4. Agree to complete appropriate level of training before being qualified to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.
5. As duties allow, continue active participation in the life and mission of the church of membership.
6. Take initiative in maintaining regular communication with the assigned mentor.
7. Attend **required**, regular continuing education approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry. Introductory classes are not required.

Six or more classes will be offered per year. After commissioning, the ruling elder is required to take four classes per year and may choose entry or advanced level classes as they wish.

A person may be excused from a course/requirement by:

- A. Having taken and successfully passed the course elsewhere (as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry), or
 - B. Completion of other continuing education options as approved by the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry (see Appendix A)
8. The commission may include one or more of the following responsibilities within the boundaries of the congregation:
 - a. Administer the Lord's Supper.
 - b. Have voice and vote in meetings of presbytery.
 - c. Administer Baptism.
 - d. Moderate meetings of session.

- e. Officiate at a service of Christian marriage of members of the congregation or of the local community when invited by the session. Such service may only be performed within the geographical bounds of the presbytery. In performing such service of Christian marriage, the commissioned ruling elder shall follow all provisions of the Directory for Worship regarding marriage.
10. Complete an annual end of year report and/or review as required by SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry

SUPERVISION

- 1. Commissioned Ruling Elders shall work under the supervision of a mentor assigned by the Committee on Ministry.
- 2. Commissioned Ruling Elders serve under the authority and at the will of presbytery.

COMPLETION OF A COMMISSION

- 1. The commission shall be renewable upon the concurrence of all parties (session, commissioned ruling elder, and presbytery).
- 2. 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 “Responsibilities 9” and G-2.1002 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.
- 3. A former Commissioned Ruling Elder is subject to the requirement of the Code of Conduct of Former Pastors of the Presbytery of Huntingdon. [See presbytery website for Code of Conduct for Former Pastors of the Presbytery of Huntingdon.]

PROCEDURES FOR ENTERING THE CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER OR COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER PROGRAM

1. Meet with your pastor or moderator of session.
2. Request a Certified Lay Preacher/Commissioned Ruling Elder application from the presbytery office (Susan Ferguson - SusanPresbytery@gmail.com) or online [here](#).
3. Complete the application (Form A) and meet with your Session for their review. (See Appendix for application Form A) [See presbytery website for Code of Conduct for Former Pastors of the Presbytery of Huntingdon.]
4. The session will complete the session endorsement (Form B) and will return it to the presbytery office or emailed. Presbytery and email addresses are at the bottom of the form [See Appendix for Application Form B.]
5. Return your completed application (Form A) to the presbytery office.
6. Distribute 3 Personal reference forms - one to your pastor/moderator and two to references of your choice (Form C). Include a self-addressed envelope for each form so that these may be returned directly to the Presbytery office when they are completed or they can be emailed. Presbytery and email addresses are at the bottom of each form.

The completed application (Forms A, B, and C) will be directed by the presbytery office to the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry.

7. You will be scheduled for an interview with the representatives from the SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry. The interview will include, but may not be limited to, seeking elaboration of the materials from your Application.
8. The SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry will make a recommendation on your application to the Committee on Ministry, which will determine your acceptance into the program and report those so enrolled to presbytery.
9. Read the Sexual Conduct Policy of the presbytery and submit a signoff agreeing to abide by its provisions; submit copies of all Commonwealth of Pennsylvania background checks and clearances. [See presbytery website for the Sexual Conduct Policy of the Presbytery of Huntingdon.]

Appendix A: Ideas for Alternative Continuing Education

Online Continuing Education Resources

The Bible for Normal People (podcast & classes with Bible scholars, substack newsletter)

<https://thebiblefornormalpeople.com/>

Homebrewed Christianity (online classes & podcasts with various scholars/thinkers/writers)

<https://www.homebrewedchristianity.com/>

Admirato (online Bible classes) <https://www.admirato.org/>

The Bible Project (online Bible classes) <https://bibleproject.com/classroom/>

Carey Nieuwhof Leadership (online classes & podcast on church leadership)

<https://careynieuwhof.com/>

Slow Theology (podcast on theology topics) <https://ajswoboda.com/slow-theology-podcast/>

PCUSA podcasts (various podcasts from the denomination) <https://pcusa.org/news-storytelling/podcasts>

Renovare (spiritual formation classes, book groups, podcasts) <https://renovare.org/>

Small Church Ministry (podcast, classes, online workshops & retreats geared toward small church ministry) <https://smallchurchministry.com/>

Other Possibilities

Read a book or article and write a summary of what you learned.

Start a book club with fellow lay pastors.

Take a course for lay pastors at a seminary (online or in person)

Attend a retreat, seminar or conference (i.e. [Wee Kirk](#), etc.)

The Presbytery of Huntingdon
CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER/COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER APPLICATION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Email _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone (If you can receive calls) _____

Occupation/Place of Employment _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Formal Education: List academic institutions attended and degrees obtained, beginning with High School:

School/Location	Years Attended/ Degree Date	Diploma or Degree	Major/Minor/ Area of Study

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 in current local congregation _____

Are you an Elder? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Date of Ordination to Office _____

Are you a Deacon? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Date of Ordination to Office _____

Other churches where you have been a member _____

List below your areas of involvement in the life and mission of the church, as a participant and as a leader.

Area of Involvement	Currently Involved	Participant	Leader
	Yes _____ No _____		
	Yes _____ No _____		
	Yes _____ No _____		
	Yes _____ No _____		
	Yes _____ No _____		

Please answer the following questions. Feel free to use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

What experiences will help you in this program? (Travel, conferences, seminars, etc.)?

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

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

What aspects are the 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/hobbies?

In what community or volunteer service have you been involved?

FAITH STATEMENT

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. (Suggested length: one-half to one page - single-spaced typed).

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 the endorsement form.

REFERENCES

In addition to the minister and the Session, please list three additional persons who know you well in a variety of relationships (e.g. another church member, a colleague at work, a teacher, a friend) who will serve as Individual References. Duplicate and pass along an Individual Reference Form to each, asking that the form be completed and mailed directly to the Presbytery Office or emailed to Susan Ferguson (see addresses above). Please list below the persons who will be your Individual References.

Name	Address	City/State	Phone

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I am applying for admission to the Certified Lay Preacher/Commissioned Ruling Elder Program of the Presbytery of Huntingdon. If accepted, I hereby commit myself to participate fully in the scheduled activities and assignments to the best of my ability. I hereby give my permission to allow the Presbytery to contact session members, references and the pastor/moderator concerning my application. I understand that successful completion of the Lay Preacher training course is necessary before I may serve as a Lay Preacher for the Presbytery or be considered for admission to the Commissioned Ruling Elder portion of the Training Program.

Signature _____ Date _____

_____ I am applying for the Certified Lay Preacher Training Program only.

_____ If I successfully complete the Certified Lay Preacher Training Program, I anticipate applying for Training as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Return this application to:

Huntingdon Presbytery
PO Box 1185
Lewistown, PA 17044

Or, email to:

SusanPresbytery@gmail.com

The Presbytery of Huntingdon

CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER/COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER SESSION ENDORSEMENT FORM

Attention should be given to evaluating the applicant's natural gifts, commitment, motivation and potential for growth. The SubCommittee on Preparation for Ministry must rely upon the session and the applicant to exercise good judgement in discerning whether the individual seems called by God to serve as a Certified Lay Preacher or a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Name of Applicant _____

1. What personal qualities are evidence of a vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?

2. How is the faith of this person being expressed in the individual's participation in the life of the congregation?

3. The following qualities are especially important for Certified Lay Preachers/Commissioned Lay Pastors. Please check all that you have seen the applicant demonstrate in the life of your church:

_____ Ability to speak publicly, with a clear voice and in good English

_____ A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture

_____ Reliability

_____ Leader in a church

_____ Compassion

_____ Skills in interpersonal relationships

- _____ Well-developed listening skills
- _____ Ability to relate to various age groups
- _____ Able to keep confidentiality

4. Describe any hesitations the session might have in endorsing this candidate.

Check one: The session of the _____ Church.

[] **DOES** endorse this application for admission to the training program.

[] Does **NOT** endorse this application for admission to the training program.

[] **DOES** endorse with **QUALIFICATIONS** this application for admission to the training program
(List qualifications on a separate sheet of paper.).

Clerk of Session _____ Date _____

Moderator of Session _____ Date _____

Return this form to:

Huntingdon Presbytery
PO Box 1185
Lewistown, PA 17044

Or, email to:

SusanPresbytery@gmail.com

The Presbytery of Huntingdon

CERTIFIED LAY PREACHER/COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

PERSONAL REFERENCE FORM

Name of Applicant _____

Your Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Your Address

Your relationship to Applicant:

(One reference should be the moderator of your session.)

___ Family ___ Friend ___ Colleague ___ Teacher ___ Member of Church ___ Moderator ___ Other

Please answer the following questions. The back of this sheet may be used.

1. What are the greatest strengths of the applicant?
2. What personal qualities are evidence of a vital faith in God through Jesus Christ?
3. How is the faith of this person being expressed in the individual's participation in the life of the congregation?
4. Everyone has ways in which they need to grow. Please comment on the applicant's growth areas.
5. Service as a Certified Lay Preacher/Commissioned Ruling Elder often involves preaching two Services of Worship on Sunday mornings, with travel over country roads. Are there any factors which would affect the applicant's ability to fulfill these requirements?

6. The following personal and professional characteristics are important for Certified Lay Preacher/Commissioned Ruling Elder. Please check all those which you believe apply to the applicant.

_____ Ability to speak publicly, with a clear voice and in good English

_____ A demonstrated basic knowledge of the content of Scripture

_____ Reliability

_____ Leader in a church

_____ Compassion

_____ Skills in interpersonal relationships

_____ Well-developed listening skills

_____ Ability to relate to various age groups

_____ Able to keep confidentiality

Signature _____ Date _____

Revised 07/13/2026

Return this form to:

Huntingdon Presbytery
PO Box 1185
Lewistown, PA 17044

Or, email to:

SusanPresbytery@gmail.com