

CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CREs

It is the desire and commitment of the Commission on Ministry of Salem Presbytery to enable every congregation that can afford to call an ordained Presbyterian Minister installed as its Pastor to do so. When that is not practical or possible, the commission's goal is to enable such congregations to have Stated Supplies who are ordained Presbyterian Ministers or Commissioned Ruling Elders who have been approved by the Commission on Ministry. It is our intention for every congregation to have consistent, Presbyterian Pastoral leadership.

1. A CRE may be employed as staff for any congregation where the calling of an ordained Presbyterian Minister is either impractical or unaffordable.
2. CRE contracts shall ordinarily be for thirty (30) hours per week or less. When serving a two-church field, the total number of hours for both churches shall ordinarily not exceed (35) thirty-five hours.
3. A CRE may be considered to be commissioned to pastoral service in a particular congregation serving as a Temporary Supply when the Pastor of that congregation is incapable of performing their duties, but shall only serve while the Pastor is incapable of serving. The Pastor shall notify the COM of their readiness to return to full responsibility.
4. While Presbytery's Commission may be for a period of up to three (3) years, the contract between a Session and a CRE shall be for no more than one year, and shall ordinarily be reviewed and renewed (if appropriate) annually. The review ordinarily shall be carried out by the mentor of the CRE or a person appointed by the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight to do the evaluation and include the Session in the review process. This review shall be conducted prior to the expiration date of the contract and the written evaluation shall be presented to the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight. During this evaluation there shall be inquiry and discussion about the future of the church, including leadership goals and financial forecast. The renewal shall be approved by the following: CRE, Session, and COM.
5. A CRE will be considered to be commissioned as the Pastor of a particular congregation, only after it is clear that the calling of an ordained Presbyterian Minister to that position is neither practical nor affordable.
6. The Presbytery, on recommendation of the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight, may grant to a CRE of a particular congregation (s) the authority to:
 - a. Administer the Lord's Supper;
 - b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism;
 - c. Moderate the Session of the congregation (s) under supervision of and when invited by the Moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery;
 - d. Have a voice in the meetings of Presbytery;
 - e. Have a vote in meetings of Presbytery (such a vote to be counted as an Elder Commissioner for purposes of parity);
 - f. After completing the Presbytery prescribed training program, the same process may also grant them the authority to perform marriage services for that congregation.

7. An ordained Ruling Elder of a particular PCUSA congregation may be considered for the CRE program upon completion of the following:
 - a. Secure an endorsement of the local Session;
 - b. CRE application to be forwarded to the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight of Salem Presbytery;
 - c. Successful completion of the criminal background check by Salem Presbytery;
 - d. Successful completion of psychological testing, the cost of which to be divided among the sponsoring church, the CRE, and Salem Presbytery;
 - e. Successful completion of the following academic requirements: Instruction in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care and teaching taken through an accredited theological institution or through other sources approved by the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight; and
 - f. A supervised internship under the supervision of an ordained Teaching Elder for a period of no less than six (6) months.
8. The COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight shall be responsible to:
 - a. Conduct annual consultations with each CRE candidate;
 - b. Assign Ministry Mentors to meet with the CRE on a regular basis;
 - c. Certify the CRE ready for pastoral service, allowing their name to be added to the Pulpit supply List;
 - d. Provide continuing Education training at the quarterly CRE meetings whether virtually or in person.
9. CREs shall be certified ready for pastoral service in a particular congregation for a period of three (3) years, upon the following:
 - a. Examination by the Examinations Committee of Salem Presbytery
 - b. Sharing their sense of call with the Presbytery.
10. CREs may be re-certified ready for pastoral service by Salem Presbytery for an additional three (3) year period upon:
 - a. A valid contract for service with a particular church or churches; or continuation of service as Ruling Elder certified ready for pastoral service;
 - b. Continuing education requirements are met;
 - c. Active attendance at CRE quarterly meetings;
 - e. Completion of Presbytery Sexual Misconduct training;
 - f. Affirmative vote of the COM Task Force on CRE Training and Oversight.
11. Regular attendance at Presbytery meetings is strongly encouraged for all CRE's. A recommissioning service will be scheduled.
12. CRE's are encouraged to remain in good standing with their congregation of membership.