

PROCESS FOR BECOMING A COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR IN FoothILLS PRESBYTERY

To enter into the study to be a Commissioned Lay Pastor in Foothills Presbytery, one must be an active member of a Foothills congregation and an ordained Elder in the PC (USA).

1. Before proceeding to any other steps, please meet with your pastor or Session moderator and read section **G-14.0801 on Commissioned Lay Pastor** in the *Book of Order, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.), Part II*, most recent edition.
2. A written **application form (including release for background checks)** must be completed and endorsed by the Elder's Session and then sent to the Inspiration and Support Team via the Associate Presbyter for Education.
3. The applicant must **meet with the Inspiration and Support Team** or its representatives to be approved pending acceptable results of psychological testing and receipt of acceptable background checks.
4. **Applicant takes psychological testing** as designated by the Inspiration and Support Team.
5. **Approval of credit for courses** will be granted based on the information below. However, seminary course work is often considered for those who have taken the appropriate courses. If this is true in your case, please have a transcript from your institution sent to the Associate Presbyter for Education. After evaluating the prior coursework you will be notified which courses will be applied toward your certification requirements.
6. When the 11 required courses are completed, the elder should **meet with the Inspiration and Support Team or its representatives** to move his or her name to the care of the Committee on Ministry and begin the phase to receive a commission for a designated period of time.
7. **The COM makes the name of the lay pastor ready to receive a commission available** to those churches which it deems might benefit from the CLP's services.
8. When a congregation desires the services of a CLP and has written a covenant specifying the work of that CLP, **the Examinations Commission of Foothills Presbytery examines the lay pastor ready to receive a commission** in relation to the covenant and the content of that lay pastor's training and preparation.
9. **Presbytery votes** on the CLP to create the commission for a specified amount of time.
10. **COM assigns a Mentor** to the CLP.
11. **COM monitors the covenant relationship** between the CLP and the congregation.
12. COM oversees the continuing education requirements while a CLP is serving in a commission.

Ways to earn course credits:

As mentioned in G-14.0801a, the presbytery has oversight of the selection and training of the elder who seeks to become a commissioned lay pastor. Foothills Presbytery does the certifying of its own CLPs. This is done through the oversight of the Inspiration

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and Support Team of Foothills Presbytery. They inform the COM of persons who are being trained. **Foothills Presbytery has approved 3 ways that persons can earn credit toward their certification.**

1--SC Lay School of Theology has been in existence for many years and is managed by the 5 SC presbyteries. The Lay School is held one weekend in March and one weekend in November of each year. You may take one course on each weekend. Instructors report grades to the Lay School registrar who in turn sends reports to the Associate Presbyter for Education two times a year to update your credits.

2--PACE (Presbyterians About Collegial Enrichment) courses are offered by Foothills Presbytery to help achieve certification goals for Christian educators, commissioned lay pastors, church musicians and open to any member of a Foothills congregation. About 3-4 courses are offered per year, many are on a semester model that covers several months. The Associate for Education keeps records from course instructors regarding your course credits.

3--Online courses through Dubuque Theological Seminary have been approved for credit toward commissioned lay pastor certification. Foothills Presbytery has set a limit that no more than 5 of the total 11 required courses may be taken online. When signing up for an online course, you must request that the seminary send notification to the Associate Presbyter for Education in order to receive the appropriate credit. This is an additional fee.

What courses are required?

Foothills Presbytery requires 11 courses to complete training to become a Commissioned Lay Pastor. Those mentioned in the *Book of Order* G-14.0801a are noted with an * below. Other additional courses mentioned are those that Foothills has specified must also be taken and passed in order to complete the training requirements.

1. Old Testament*
2. New Testament*
3. Reformed Theology and Sacraments*
4. Presbyterian Polity*
5. Preaching*
6. Leading Worship*
7. Pastoral Care*
8. Teaching*
9. Church History
10. Elective of your choice
11. Elective of your choice

Once commissioned, Foothills requires that the CLP take at least one continuing education course per year.

SC Lay School Certificate

The SC Lay School awards a certificate to persons who complete their "core" courses in the CLP Track. To earn credit in the CLP Track you must have your Session's

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endorsement and the Inspiration and Support Team's on behalf of COM. Simply completing the 7 "core" courses at the SC Lay School will not meet all of the requirements that Foothills has put in place. There are 7 core courses to be taken at the SC Lay School in order to receive a certificate from the Lay School. These are listed below along with which weekend they are usually offered. The courses at the Lay School are about 10 hours in a weekend with a follow-up paper sent to the instructor to complete the course. **To receive complete training as a CLP in Foothills Presbytery you will need to complete the additional four courses in the above mentioned Foothills required list.**

1. Worship and Sacraments (Spring)
2. Old Testament Survey (Spring)
3. New Testament Survey (Fall)
4. Reformed Theology (Fall)
5. Polity (Spring)
6. Church History (Spring)
7. Pastoral Care (Fall)

PACE – Presbyterians About Collegial Enrichment

The PACE Team of Foothills Presbytery has planned to offer the following courses over the coming years for any adult in Foothills Presbytery, but especially CLPs in training, Christian educators and church musicians who want to be certified. PACE courses are usually 30-hour courses, therefore more in-depth and offer the CLP student a more thorough and integrated experience, including written assignments, projects, or collaborative work as well as weekly readings. PACE courses are often scheduled on a semester type schedule, but may also include other formats such as retreats or forums that relate to the content of the courses. Scholarship funds are available for PACE courses by contacting the Associate Presbyter for Education and completing a scholarship application.

Tentative PACE Course Schedule

2006 Summer:	Church History
Fall:	Pastoral Care
2007 Spring:	Human and Faith Development
Spring:	Ethics/Bonhoeffer
Summer:	Worship and Sacraments
Fall:	Polity and Presbyterian Program and Mission
Fall:	Pauline Epistles
2008 Spring:	Preaching
Spring:	Biblical Interpretation
Summer:	CS Lewis or Teaching Theology in the Church
Fall:	Reformed Theology and Sacraments
Fall:	World Religions

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The University of Dubuque Theological Seminary—online courses

These courses are designed for the elder training to be a CLP or any interested adult. To apply for a course, fill out an online application at www.udtslearning.net. To take these courses you need to be comfortable with your email program: sending email, receiving email, and opening and sending attachments to email. These skills are not taught in the courses, but expected of each student prior to enrolling 30 days before the course begins. Visit these two web sites to test your readiness to take an online course. www.learnthenet.com/english/section/www.html or www.internet101.org/

Most Dubuque online courses run for 12 weeks and equate to a 1.5 to 2 credit hour college course. On average the online student reads 500-700 pages, writes 8-12 pages of assignments, spends 4-6 hours per week of class participation and preparation time. (Courses do not carry seminary or university credit.) You can pay extra to earn CEUs for the online courses. Dubuque offers many courses online, both core courses and electives such as:

- Introduction to Old Testament
- Introduction to New Testament
- Pastoral Care
- Presbyterian Polity
- Reformed Theology
- Introduction to Preaching
- Foundations of Christian Education
- Reformed Worship and Sacraments
- Church History
- Studies in Paul
- The Pentateuch

Foothills Presbytery has set a limit that no more than 5 of the total 11 required courses may be taken online.

For More CLP Information or Questions

Please contact Mary A. Morrison, Associate Presbyter for Education by calling 864-288-5774, ext. 11 or emailing MAMorrison@foothillspresbytery.org.