



CHEROKEE PRESBYTERY

Cultivate. Support. Facilitate.

BUILDING LEADERS TEAM

2024 HANDBOOK

**Cherokee Presbytery
Building Leaders Team Handbook**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Building Leaders Team.....	3
Section 2: Preparing for Ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament.....	4
Section 3: Commissioned Ruling Elders.....	9
Section 4: Certified Church Personnel.....	13
Section 5: Ordination Examination Readers.....	14
Section 6: Educational Opportunities.....	15
Appendices	
1 - Cherokee Presbytery Candidates Aid Fund Application.....	16
2 - Approved Providers for Psychological/Career Evaluation.....	18
3 - Application Form for CRE Candidates.....	19
4 - Session Endorsement of CRE Candidate.....	21
5 - Commissioned Ruling Elder Personal Reference.....	22
6 - Commissioned Ruling Elder Approved Training Programs.....	23
7 - CRE Field Education Learning Goals and Evaluation.....	24

Section 1: Building Leaders Team

A. Introduction: The Building Leaders Team (BLT)

This Handbook sets out the policies and practices for supporting leaders and those preparing for leadership within Cherokee Presbytery, including ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament, commissioning to particular pastoral service(s), and certification to church service.

B. Responsibilities from the Presbytery's Manual of Administrative Operations

The Building Leaders Team serves Cherokee Presbytery by creating educational opportunities for teaching and ruling elders, deacons, commissioned ruling elders, and certified church personnel. The BLT oversees inquirers and candidates and their preparation for ordered ministry, provides officer training support, provides opportunities for boundary training (including sexual misconduct prevention and child abuse prevention), and standard ordination examination readers for election by the presbytery.

C. Leadership and Administrative Practices of the BLT

The leadership of the BLT is determined by the Team, and may include a Chair or Co-Chair, and other appropriate roles to support its work.

The BLT provides liaisons to those pursuing vocational ministries, including: inquirers or candidates for ordination as Minister of the Word and Sacrament, elders seeking to be commissioned to pastoral service (commissioned ruling elder (CRE)), and persons seeking certification in church service. These liaisons work with the individuals and their sponsoring congregations to plan their journeys, answer questions, and facilitate the completion of requirements set forth by the BLT, Cherokee Presbytery, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The BLT works with the national certifying body for persons seeking certification to service within congregations, councils, and church-related entities. The BLT also works with Educator Certification Advisors to provide support for those working toward becoming Certified Christian Educators (CCE) and/or Christian Education Associates (CEA).

The BLT works with the Cherokee Presbytery Stated Clerk to maintain accurate roles of those preparing for ordination, certification, or enrolled in CRE preparation and submits paperwork as required by the Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The BLT works closely with other ministry teams, committees, and commissions in Cherokee Presbytery and throughout the denomination to engage in mutual ministry that supports the work of the greater Church.

Section 2: Preparing for Ordination as Minister of the Word and Sacrament

A. Nature and Purpose of Preparation

"It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy." G-2.0601

B. BLT Responsibilities

BLT covenants to support all under care of Cherokee Presbytery with prayer and discernment to enable those called to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to realize their calling and service through the church. The BLT will:

1. Maintain regular contact with inquirers and candidates and their sessions;
2. Be prompt and responsive to questions, and clear about requirements for the process for preparation for ministry;
3. Explain all decisions for advancement or lack of advancement in the preparation for ministry process;
4. Maintain records and denominational contacts with the Stated Clerk;
5. Support and pray for inquirers and candidates.

C. Entering the Process

Purpose of Inquiry (G-2.0603)

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore the call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.

1. Requirements - Inquirers

Persons considering ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) under care of Cherokee Presbytery shall:

- a. Be a member active in the work and worship of a congregation in Cherokee Presbytery for at least six months (G-2.0602);
- b. Complete Forms 1 A "Application to be Enrolled by the Presbytery as an Inquirer," 1B "Questions for Reflection" and 1C "Financial Planning for Theological Education" <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/application-forms/>.
- c. Meet with the session of the congregation of membership to discuss the sense of call and request its endorsement as an inquirer. If the session endorses the person for inquiry, the session assigns a liaison to serve as the primary point of contact between the session and congregation.
- d. Submit an official college transcript to the Cherokee Presbytery office.
- e. Request an interview with the BLT.
- f. Meet with the BLT to enter into the inquiry phase by:
 - 1) reception of completed paperwork as noted above;
 - 2) articulation of desire to explore a calling to ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and
 - 3) covenant to commit to BLT policies and guidelines while under care of Cherokee Presbytery.
- g. Provide a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The Presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements. (G-2.0603)

- h. Undergo psychological testing at site approved by BLT, with the cost to be paid by Cherokee Presbytery;
- i. Progress toward completion of Master of Divinity degree;
- j. Take and pass the PC(USA) Bible Content Exam (BCE) (Note: this exam may be fulfilled during candidacy, but shall ordinarily be completed in inquiry phase);
- k. Maintain regular contact with BLT through the liaison, notifying the liaison of changes in circumstances that may impact calling to ordained ministry or progress in the preparation for ministry process;
- l. Complete an annual consultation with BLT following the first year of inquiry, and every subsequent year under care of Cherokee Presbytery independent of other contact with BLT (Please see section entitled "Annual Consultation" for additional information).

2. Requirements Clerks of Session

The clerk of session must complete Form 1D "Session Evaluation and Recommendation" <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/application-forms/> and submit all forms (1A, 1B, 1C, 1D) to the Cherokee Presbytery office.

3. Requirements of the BLT

Following the initial consultation, the BLT will complete Form 2A "Report of Consultation Regarding Application" and if approved, Form 2B "Covenant Agreement and Inquirer Release" (<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/forms-enrolling-inquirer/>) and assign a liaison to be a primary point of contact and support.

4. While Under Care

a. Oversight

"During the phases of Inquiry and Candidacy, the individual continues to be an active member of their congregation and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. However, during the time the individual is enrolled as an inquirer or candidate, the session shall report to the presbytery any matters of sexual misconduct. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of their covenant relationship." (G-2.0605)

b. Annual Consultation

In order to exercise proper oversight, inquirers and candidates will maintain regular contact with the Building Leaders Team, including at least one formal annual review as long as they remain under care.

- 1) Prior to an annual consultation, the inquirer/candidate will respond to the liaison, who initiates contact, and schedule a time for an Annual Consultation, which may take place via video conferencing;
- 2) At least one week prior to meeting with liaison, the Inquirer/Candidate will complete Form 3 "Pre-consultation report on developmental areas"
- 3) Following Annual Consultation, the liaison will complete Form 4 "Report on Consultation," forwarding the completed form to the inquirer, the BLT Chair, and the clerk of session of the supporting congregation.

Note: Failure to respond to liaison or fulfill Annual Consultation requirement will preclude progress to Candidacy or Ordination and may result in termination of preparation for ministry process for the Inquirer.

c. Service in Covenant Relationship

"Inquirers and candidates shall, with the permission of the presbytery of care, engage in some form of supervised service to the church. No inquirer or candidate who has not been previously ordained as a ruling elder may serve as moderator of a session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a marriage service. An inquirer or candidate previously ordained as a ruling elder may be authorized by the presbytery to preside at the Lord's Supper when invited by a session." (G-2.0606)

5. Advancing to Candidacy

If, following at least one year of inquiry and having completed the enumerated requirements, the inquirer discerns a calling to ministry and wishes to pursue ordination as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the inquirer may request to the BLT to progress to candidacy.

To advance to candidacy, the inquirer will:

- a. Complete Form 5A and meet with session of their home congregation for approval
- b. Submit completed Form 5A to the Cherokee Presbytery office; the clerk of session submits completed Form 5B to the Cherokee Presbytery office.
- c. Meet with the BLT, exploring issues of calling to ordained ministry, suitability, and fitness for ordination;
- d. Sign and agree to Form 5C and Form 5D provided by BLT (Form 5C enumerates areas for growth in potential candidates, which informs future interviews with BLT and annual consultations with liaison);
- e. Complete Form 5C and Form 5D; BLT will request time on the agenda of a Cherokee Presbytery meeting agreeable to the inquirer and BLT for evaluation and action on candidacy;
- f. Prepare a Statement of Faith and brief autobiography (roughly 500 words each) to be included with the Presbytery packet. Materials must be received by the deadline for the Presbytery packet.
- g. Be examined on the floor of Presbytery regarding sense of call and Christian service undertaken. An affirmative vote of Presbytery enrolls the inquirer as a candidate.

Note: A candidate for ministry will not be eligible for ordination until at least one year from the date of enrollment as a candidate.

D. Candidacy

Purpose of Candidacy

"The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the presbytery's support, guidance, and evaluation of a candidate's fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination." (G-2.0604)

1. Requirements - Candidates

- a. Make progress towards completion of a Master of Divinity degree;
- b. Work in supervised ministry in a church or chaplaincy setting (*Note: this requirement may be fulfilled during the inquiry phase*);
- c. Complete not less than one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or a similar field experience with a focus on pastoral care (*Note: this requirement may be fulfilled during inquiry phase*);

- d. Take all Standard Ordination Examinations administered by the PC(USA) with the approval of the BLT (*Note: if the Bible Content Exam was not completed during the inquiry phase, it is recommended that this requirement be completed before progressing to the Standard Ordination Exams*);
- e. Complete annual consultation with the BLT liaison every year while under care of Cherokee Presbytery, independent of other contact with BLT (Please see section entitled "Annual Consultation" for additional information);
- f. Maintain regular contact with the BLT through liaison, notifying liaison of any circumstances that may impact calling to ordained ministry or progress in the preparation for ministry process.

E. **Removal from Process**

Removal from Relationship

"An inquirer or candidate may, after consultation with the session and the presbytery, withdraw from covenant relationship. A presbytery may also, for sufficient reasons, remove an individual's name from the roll of inquirers and candidates, reporting this action and the reasons to the session, to the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled. Prior to taking such action, the presbytery or its designated entity shall make a reasonable attempt to give the candidate or inquirer an opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed removal." G-2.0609

An inquirer or candidate may, in consultation with the session and the BLT, withdraw from the process. The BLT reserves the right to remove inquirers or candidates from the preparation for ministry process for sufficient reasons (i.e., not making adequate progress, or communication regarding progress). An inquirer or candidate may, in consultation with the sessions and presbyteries involved, request to transfer the covenant relationship to another presbytery.

F. **Final Assessment**

The BLT shall conduct a final assessment of the candidate's preparation and readiness to begin ordered ministry. This final assessment certifies that the candidate successfully completed all the requirements in the *Book of Order* and the BLT Handbook, and to engage in seeking a call to service and ordination as a teaching elder. The final assessment includes certification of the candidate as ready to receive a call.

1. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include:
 - a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
 - b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;
 - c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
 - d. examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

2. Additional Requirements
 - a. Candidates must have satisfactorily completed the requisite paperwork including denominational forms, annual consultation reports, session endorsements, evidence of completion of psychological evaluation, CPE, transcripts, and boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention (with recertification every 36 months). After at least nine (9) months in the candidacy phase, a candidate may request a final assessment, and will submit the following with the request for the assessment:
 - 1) A brief, written response to each of the constitutional questions for ordination, W-4.4004, a-h, i(3). Responses should be 3-5 sentences, and demonstrate an understanding of the question as it relates to both personal and vocational life;
 - 2) The candidate may submit their most recent transcript, noting graduation date, to be followed by a final transcript after graduation if the final assessment is prior to seminary graduation,
 - 3) A draft version of the candidate's Personal Discernment Profile
 - 4) A one-page Statement of Faith and a one-page Faith Journey
3. Final Assessment Interview
 - a. The Building Leaders Team will meet with the candidate for a Final Assessment, which includes:
 - 1) The candidate's completion of all requirements for ordination;
 - 2) The candidate's sharing of Statement of Faith, Faith Journey, and sense of call;
 - 3) Preach a short sermon to the BLT;
 - 4) The Building Leaders Team's questions relating to candidate's readiness for ministry (based on G-2.0607a.);
 - 5) The Building Leaders Team's additional recommendations or suggestions to further assist the candidate in preparation for ministry (i.e., suggestions for PDP responses, additional study or practical experience, personal growth).
 - b. If approved:
 - 1) the BLT will submit a completed Form 6 signed by the candidate
 - 2) the candidate will immediately be "Certified Ready for Call."
 - 3) the BLT will continue to support the Candidate, providing discernment partners and appropriate references and connections with other church leaders within and beyond the Presbytery.
 - c. If not approved:
 - 1) the Building Leaders Team will work with the Candidate to develop a plan to address any areas of needed growth, using previous goals as guidelines.
 - 2) the BLT will continue to support the Candidate, providing discernment partners and mentors.

G. Ordination Checklist

All forms can be found online at <https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/forms-used-preparation-ministry-process/>

- a. Official college or university transcript;
- b. Official seminary transcript showing successful completion of Master of Divinity Degree from ATS accredited school with classes in Greek *and* Hebrew exegesis;
- c. Report of psychological testing from BLT-approved site;
- d. Record of completed Standard Ordination Exams, including Bible Content, Worship and Sacraments, Polity, Theology, and Biblical Exegesis;
- e. Form 1 series (A, B, C, D)
- f. Form 2 series (A, B)

- g. Form 3 for every year under care of Cherokee Presbytery
- h. Form 4 for every year under care of Cherokee Presbytery
- i. Form 5 series (A, B, C, D)
- j. Form 6
- k. Brief Personal statement/autobiography (Faith Journey)
- l. Statement of Faith
- m. Response to Ordination Questions
- n. Copy of Personal Discernment Profile

Section 3: Commissioned Ruling Elders (G-2.10)

A. Purpose and Goals

The Book of Order states that a “. . . presbytery, in consultation with one or more sessions or other responsible committees, . . . may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to . . . pastoral service as a commissioned pastor also known as a commissioned ruling elder as assigned by the presbytery.” (G-2.1001). The purpose of the CRE program is to provide appropriately trained and consistently excellent ministry among Commissioned Ruling Elders across congregations or entities within the presbytery, supported by the Building Leaders Team (BLT) and the Commission on Ministry (COM) throughout their commission.

The CRE may work in partnership with existing pastors and ministries or complement and support congregations that serve people who need particular cultural sensitivities, linguistic skills and ministry gifts and experience. The CRE might serve as a chaplain, in prison ministry, college and hospital and/or nursing homes, new immigrant fellowships, or new and creative leadership positions within Cherokee Presbytery. This service requires elders who sense a deep call from God to move into responsibility in and for the presbytery. It is the responsibility of the presbytery to help in discerning such a call. It is also the responsibility of the presbytery to offer training for this work and ministry.

B. Process for Churches Desiring the Services of a Commissioned Ruling Elder

The session will meet with the General Presbyter and COM to determine the appropriateness of a commissioned ruling elder, based on the needs of the congregation or other validated ministry, the support potential of the congregation ministry, and the mission strategy of the Presbytery.

C. Process for a Ruling Elder Seeking to be Commissioned to Particular Pastoral Service

A Ruling Elder who seeks to be commissioned in Cherokee Presbytery will meet with the General Presbyter and BLT Chair to discuss the process and the opportunities for a Commissioned Ruling Elder in the presbytery. The Ruling Elder shall provide any educational transcripts at this time, or within 30 days of the meeting.

D. CRE Applicant Qualifications

The CRE Applicant will:

1. Be a Ruling Elder and a member in good standing in a congregation of Cherokee Presbytery. The session of the Ruling Elder’s church of membership shall provide a statement of good standing.
2. Be faithful in spiritual discipline and possess mature spiritual depth
3. Have experience and service as a Ruling Elder on Session
4. Exhibit readiness for theological education and training.

E. Discerning the Call to CRE

The Applicant will:

1. Submit to the Building Leaders Team (BLT) the following documents:
 - a. Application for CRE Candidates (Appendix 3)
 - b. Written statement on personal faith journey, including a sense of call to this ministry
 - c. The endorsement of the Session of their congregation of membership (Appendix 4)
 - d. Three references from congregation of membership, with at least one reference from outside the congregation (Appendix 5)
2. Consult with the BLT regarding educational requirements and develop a mutually agreed upon plan to satisfy the requirements.

3. Sign and agree to abide by the Sexual Conduct and Child Protection Policies of the Cherokee Presbytery
4. Complete Boundary Training within six months of acceptance into the training program.
5. Upon acceptance into the training program, a mentor will be assigned to the CRE Applicant (ordinarily a teaching elder member of Cherokee Presbytery).

F. Educational Preparation Requirement for CRE Applicant (G-2.1002)

1. **Theological training:** Once the CRE Applicant has been approved by the BLT, the Applicant must complete a series of courses covering the Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. These can be completed through one of the approved programs (Appendix 6) or another program of the Applicant's choice with the prior approval of the BLT. The cost for the coursework (fees, tuition, books, and supplies) is the responsibility of the CRE Applicant, although the Applicant can petition their Session to help defray costs. Cherokee Presbytery may also have scholarship funds available, administered by the BLT.
2. **Boundary Training:** The CRE Applicant shall complete boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training, with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.
3. **Psychological/career assessment:** after completion of the first year of study, the CRE Applicant will undergo a psychological/career assessment from a BLT-approved site with those costs paid by the presbytery.
4. **Ongoing assessment by BLT:** During this time, the Applicant will meet with the BLT annually, and meet with their mentor at least quarterly.

G. Final Evaluation

Once all requirements have been satisfied, the CRE Applicant will:

1. Submit a Faith Journey, Statement of Faith, and Sense of Call to the COM. The COM will examine the CRE Applicant as to personal faith, motives for seeking a commission, as well as the areas of instruction required by the BLT.
2. If the COM approves the CRE Applicant for a commission to limited pastoral service, the COM will recommend the Applicant be commissioned at the next stated or a called meeting of Presbytery.

If there is not a congregation or ministry for commissioning, the CRE Applicant shall be available for commissioning when such service becomes available.

H. Ongoing Requirements for the CRE (G-2.1004)

The CRE will:

1. Be supervised by a Teaching Elder Mentor assigned by COM
2. Complete an annual report to the COM
3. Complete continuing education courses (workshops, etc.) at least every two years, in consultation with COM
4. Attend Stated Meetings of the Cherokee Presbytery, with voice and vote as a ruling elder.
5. The COM shall review the commission at least annually.

I. Commission and Compensation

1. The CRE Applicant may be commissioned to moderate the session of the congregation or congregations to which they will be commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to

officiate at marriages, where permitted by state law. The commission shall specify the term of service, not to exceed three years, but shall be renewable.

2. The commission shall state whether full or part time, with hours per week specified.
3. The commission shall state the compensation provided for the CRE.
4. The commission shall be reviewed annually by the COM, and renewed upon the request of the session and the CRE, and approval by the COM.
5. The COM may end the commission at any time for reasons it deems good and sufficient, or upon request of either the CRE or the session.

Section 4: Certified Church Service

Forms of Certified Church Service

“Persons may be certified and called to service within congregations, councils, and church-related entities, serving in staff positions. These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication” (G-2.1101). These persons are encouraged to meet the certification requirements of a national certifying body approved by the General Assembly.

Certified Christian Educators and Christian Education Associates

“Certified Christian educators are persons certified and called to service in the ministry of education in congregations or councils. They shall have skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, worship and sacraments, human development, religious educational theory and practice, and the polity, programs, and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).” (G-2.1103)

BLT Responsibilities

The BLT will support those in certified service, and encourage individuals to seek certification. The BLT will provide support and oversight as appropriate to persons pursuing certification, and shall encourage sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to those seeking certification.

The BLT shall establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators and Associate Certified Christian Educators, and shall provide access to the Commission on Ministry.

The BLT shall provide opportunities for boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention training for Certified Christian Educators and Associate Certified Christian Educators with recertification at least every 36 months. The BLT shall determine which trainings are approved to meet these requirements.

Following Certification

Names of those persons who have achieved certification will be forwarded to the Stated Clerk. The Presbytery shall affirm the skill and dedication of such persons by providing a service of recognition during a meeting of the Presbytery. The Presbytery may grant the privilege of voice at all its meetings to persons in certified service. Certified Christian Educators shall have voice in meetings of Presbytery during their term of service. Certified Christian Educators who are ordained as ruling elders will have voice and vote at Presbytery meetings during their term of service, such vote to count as a ruling elder.

Section 5: Ordination Examination Readers

The Building Leaders Team shall recommend one ruling elder and one minister of the Word and Sacrament for election as readers of standard ordination examinations. The BLT chair and the Stated Clerk shall report those readers to the Office of General Assembly annually, and provide communication with elected readers regarding their responsibilities as directed by OGA.

Section 6: Educational Opportunities

The BLT will provide opportunities for the following for minister members of the presbytery, certified church personnel, and commissioned ruling elders:

1. Boundary training, to include the topic of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention, in consultation with the Commission on Ministry
2. Officer Training (in consultation with the Stated Clerk and the General Presbyter)
3. Retreat / Sabbath / Renewal
4. Workshops of Interest
5. Leadership Summits to the benefit of local congregations

Appendix 1

Cherokee Presbytery Candidates Aid Fund Application Guidelines

The Candidates Aid Fund (Hoyt and Garrett Funds) are available for to support expenses related to preparing for formal ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), including educational expenses, vocational assessment tools, ordination exam fees, and similar expenses.

Eligibility - Recipients must meet the following criteria:

- Active member of a PC(USA) congregation in Cherokee Presbytery
- Enrolled in an educational program for the purpose of engaging in ministry service, including:
 - M.Div., M.A.C.E. or similar degree-seeking program at an accredited educational institution. M.Div. students ordinarily should also be pursuing ordination.
 - Educator pursuing certification as a Christian Educator in the PC(USA)
 - Ruling Elder engaged in preparation to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder
 - Other similar pursuits as appropriate, approved by the Building Leaders Team.

Award Amount:

Candidates may apply for up to \$1,000 per 12-month period.

Renewal:

Recipients may reapply for the award so long as they are currently enrolled in a qualifying educational program and making satisfactory progress. Total cumulative amount awarded to each candidate shall not exceed \$5,000.

Disbursement:

Checks will be made to the individual or the educational institution or program where they are enrolled. Individuals may be asked to provide receipts and verification of how funds were spent. Should an individual withdraw from their educational program for which the award was given, it is expected that the individual will return those funds to the Presbytery or submit an amended "Award Request" to the BLT for consideration of alternate plans.

Application:

Applicants should complete the attached application form and submit to the presbytery office. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling schedule by the Building Leaders Team within 60 days of submission. Additional documentation may be requested to support requests.

Cherokee Presbytery Candidates Aid Fund Application

Personal Information

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone: (Circle: Cell/Home/Work/Other) _____

E-mail Address: _____

Ecclesial Information

Home Church _____ Date joined: _____

If pursuing ordination, what is your Presbytery status? _____ Inquirer _____ Candidate

Educational Information

Name of Seminary/Institution/Program _____

Address: _____

Degree or Certification Pursued: _____

Expected Completion Date: _____

Award Request

Amount Requested: _____ for the Academic Year _____

Disbursement to be sent to: (candidate or educational institution/program)

In one - two paragraphs on a separate page, describe how you intend to use this award to further your preparation for ministry along with a breakdown of anticipated expenses.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: _____

Date Reviewed by BLT: _____

Amount Awarded: _____

Date of Award Distribution: _____

Signature of BLT Chair: _____

Appendix 2

Approved Providers for Psychological/Career Evaluation

Ministry Assessments “Candidates for Ministry Program” (<https://ministryassessments.com/>) can be completed in-person in Brookhaven, Georgia, or online.

Other similar programs may be utilized with approval in advance from the Building Leaders Team. Programs should include the use of recognized psychological and career related tests administered by a trained professional along with a formal review with the candidate and written report that can be provided to the Building Leaders Team.

Appendix 3

Cherokee Presbytery - Application Form for CRE Candidate

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Preferred Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Current Church Membership: _____

Date Joined: _____

Date of Ordination as Ruling Elder in the PC(USA): _____

Ordaining Congregation: _____

Describe Your Activities in the Life and Mission of the Church: (List churches to which you have belonged; dates of membership; church activities in which you participated; positions of responsibility you have held, etc. *Use additional paper, if necessary.*)

Describe Your Service and Experience as a Ruling Elder:

Educational Background: School, Location, Year Graduated/Diploma/Degree: (*start with High School*)

References: List the name, address, telephone, and occupation of three people (no relatives) who have known you for at least five years. One of these references should be a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA). One of these references should be beyond your current congregation.

1. _____
Name Relationship to you

Mailing Address

Phone(s) Email

2. _____
Name Relationship to you

Mailing Address

Phone(s) Email

3. _____
Name Relationship to you

Mailing Address

Phone(s) Email

_____ I hereby authorize those inquiring into my suitability to contact my references.
(Initial)

Statement:

“Why I would like to be involved in the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program.” In your statement, please describe which phases of service as a Commissioned Ruling Elder you believe will be most difficult for you and which will be easiest for you. Also, please describe your most meaningful religious experience and why it was most meaningful to you.

Appendix 4

Cherokee Presbytery Session Endorsement of CRE Candidate

NOTE: You should take this completed form, together with your "Statement" (previous page) to the moderator of your session. The minister and session will talk with you about your interest in the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program. The clerk of session will then forward your application form and statement, to the Presbytery's Building Leaders Team.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SESSION

As the Session considers recommending a person to be enrolled in the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program, the following are among the criteria that should be considered:

1. Is the person a committed Christian? Yes No

Comments:

2. Is the person an active and effective member of the Congregation? Yes No

Comments:

3. Does the person relate helpfully and positively to others? Yes No

Comments:

4. Is the person loyal to and enthusiastic about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? Yes No

Comments:

5. Does the person have strong leadership qualities? Yes No

Comments:

6. Does the person have good communication skills? Yes No

Comments:

7. Also, in considering your recommendation, are the Session and the Congregation willing to affirm and support this person in ministry? Yes No

Comments:

RECOMMENDATION

The Session of the _____ (Church)
in _____, Georgia, has met with _____,
(city) (name)

who is a Ruling Elder in this congregation and after due deliberation recommends this person for the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program and pledges its affirmation and support as this person embarks upon and continues in this ministry.

(date) Signed: _____
(Clerk of Session)

Appendix 5

Cherokee Presbytery Commissioned Ruling Elder Personal Reference

_____ has applied to participate in a training program which could lead to their becoming a Commissioned Ruling Elder serving within Cherokee Presbytery. This means they could perform certain pastoral functions within the church or one of its related ministries, as authorized by the Presbytery (e.g. preaching, teaching, planning and leading worship including weddings and funerals, administering the Sacraments, and moderating the Session).

As a reference, please complete this form and return it to:

- How long, and in what capacity have you known this individual?
- How have you observed them working in the life of the church? In the life of the Presbytery?
- Describe the particular gifts or skills they have for pastoral ministry.
- What attributes do they have that especially commend them to be a Commissioned Ruling Elder?
- Anything else you would like to share:

Name:

Address:

Date:

Appendix 6

Cherokee Presbytery Commissioned Ruling Elder Approved Training Programs

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary Christian Leadership Program

<https://moodle.dbq.edu/mod/page/view.php?id=301860>

Union Presbyterian Seminary Pathways to Learning and Leadership Online Courses

<https://www.upsem.edu/leadership-institute/pathways-learning-leadership-2/>

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Certificate in Ministry

<https://www.austinseminary.edu/academics/non-degree-programs/certificate-in-ministry>

Whitworth University Commissioned Ruling Elder Program

<https://www.whitworth.edu/cms/administration/church-engagement/commissioned-ruling-elder-program/program-content/>

Savannah Presbytery School of Laity Program (Two Year Program)

<https://www.savannahpresbytery.org/ministries/ministries-of-savannah-presbytery/school-of-the-laity/>

South Carolina Lay School of Theology at Presbyterian College (Lay Pastor Track)

<https://capresbytery.org/presbyterian-lay-school/>

Appendix 7

Cherokee Presbytery CRE Field Education Learning Goals and Evaluation

Goal 1: Practicing Theologian

1. Identifying the Learning Goal
2. Achieving the Learning Goal
3. Resources
4. Supervision Questions

Goal 2: Community Witness

1. Identifying the Learning Goal
2. Achieving the Learning Goal
3. Resources
4. Supervision Questions

Goal 3: Congregational Leader

1. Identifying the Learning Goal
2. Achieving the Learning Goal
3. Resources
4. Supervision Questions

Self-Evaluation: In 1000 words, please reflect on your experience of field education, your attentiveness and evaluation of your learning goals, and how you plan to utilize these experiences and learnings in your practice of pastoral ministry as a CRE.

Supervisor Evaluation

1. Describe and assess the CRE Applicant's learning, skill development, and growth during this internship as they relate to the goals and objectives stated in the Learning Goals.
2. Identify the CRE Applicant's professional development needs as they have emerged out of this internship.
3. Discuss your perception of the CRE Applicant's leadership style/gifts for ministry as they have manifested themselves in this internship.
4. Describe and assess your supervisory relationship with the CRE Applicant.
5. As you think back on the field education experience, what were some of the key ministerial/educational experiences that were incorporated into the process of supervision?