



For: Leaders called specifically to ordination of Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

For: Leaders called to serve, typically within a specific congregation or community.

For: Leaders called to create or serve New Worshipping Communities.

This process is traditionally concurrent with a 3-year Master of Divinity seminary degree, while the leader is in relationship with a congregation of Heartland Presbytery, and prepares leaders to be ordained to any PCUSA congregation.

This process commissions leaders who are without a traditional seminary degree to preach and lead worship, administer the sacraments, perform weddings, and participate in the life of the presbytery.

The NWCC walks with leaders to the hoped for creation of their community, and resources as a liaison to the broader denomination for support.

Inquirer Phase

At least 1 year
In this phase, a leader becomes "under care" of home congregation, and receives endorsement by the Session. Leader will meet with CPM and receive a liaison who will support throughout the ordination process. A number of forms and personal writing will be required here.

Requirements

Year 1
Be ordained as a Ruling Elder in the PCUSA.
Complete a psychological evaluation or Discerning Missional Leaders Assessment.

Seed Phase

12 - 18 Months
Leader has spent time in prayer, discernment, and research regarding the call to address spiritual and/or physical needs of a community. A full vision is not yet expected at this phase, but experimentation should be underway. Leader will complete the PCUSA 1001 NWC Seed Grant Application, and meet with NWCC for endorsement.

Candidate Phase

At least 1 year
Leader will complete a psychological evaluation, continue to meet with Session and CPM, and complete additional forms and personal writing. To enter this phase, the leader must appear before presbytery for questions regarding sense of call.

Years 2 - 4
Complete 9 - 10 (pre-selected) online courses through:
• Dubuque Theological Seminary
• Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
• Union Presbyterian Seminary
Complete a Field Education experience.

Investment Phase

18 - 24 Months
Leader has completed the Discerning Missional Leaders Assessment, made reasonable progress towards community creation, demonstrated the ability to gather leaders, maintain financial records, maintain a healthy spiritual life, and is participating in the NWCC Discerners Group. Leader will complete the PCUSA 1001 NWC Investment Grant Application, and meet with NWCC for endorsement.

Certified Ready to Receive a Call

This phase is typically entered near the end of the M.Div. degree. 1 Unit of CPE, a Field Education experience, and all ordination exams have been completed. A Personal Information Form and additional paperwork will be completed. After CPM endorsement, leader can begin searching for a congregation of call.

Commissioning

Elders called to existing Heartland congregations will be commissioned by the Commission on Ministry, with evaluation and contracts renewed yearly.
Elders called to serve New Worshipping Communities within Heartland Presbytery will be commissioned by the New Worshipping Communities Commission, with evaluation and contracts renewed yearly.

Growth Phase

18 - 24 Months
Leader has created a NWC, is engaged in an on-going relationship with a 1001 NWC coach, and is supporting other leaders through the NWCC Discerners Group. Leader will complete the PCUSA 1001 NWC Growth Grant Application, and meet with NWCC for endorsement.

Ordination

Ordination happens when a congregation decides to call the leader into service. The leader will be evaluated by either the calling presbytery, or Heartland Presbytery.

Where to begin:

I feel called to ministry...

▶ I'm prepared to study full-time (for 3 years), or part-time (for 5-6 years) in seminary, take ordination exams, and potentially move to a new community for a call as pastor!

START WITH CPM!

▶ I don't really know what I'm being called to, but I know I'd like to figure that out while at seminary...

▶ I'd like to stay right where I am. My congregation/community doesn't have a pastor, and I'm feeling called to serve here in that way...

START WITH CRE!

▶ My community has been worshipping without an ordained leader, but we need to administer the sacraments. Can I lead worship without going away to seminary?

▶ I have an idea...I see this need in my community, and feel called to meet that need with a project I'd like to create

START WITH NWCC!

▶ Actually, I've been doing this thing in my community, and it feels like Church. Is it possible Presbyterians might call this Church too, and walk with me while I create it?



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This guide is meant to help inform potential new leaders and their communities of the possible pathways into church leadership here in Heartland Presbytery. This guide is in no way exhaustive, and further research and conversation is necessary as calls are discerned. This is simply meant to be a starting reference point, or a somewhere-along-the-way reference point, as the Spirit summons our next church leaders.

A Joint Project of:
Commission on Preparation for Ministry
Committee on Commissioned Ruling Elders
New Worshipping Communities Commission