

Commissioned Ruling Elders Why and When to Use or Be a CRE

As defined by the *Book of Order* “a commissioned ruling elder is an elder of the Presbyterian Church (USA) who is granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. The elder shall be instructed in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching.”

The CRE program is an expansion of the Church’s mission in a changing world. Commissioned Ruling Elders and Ministers of Word and Sacrament are partners in mission as we seek to bring the good news of Christ to an ever-changing culture.

When a presbytery, in consultation with a session or other responsible committee, determines that the strategy for mission in a local church requires it, and after additional instruction deemed necessary by the presbytery has been provided, a presbytery may authorize a commissioned ruling elder. The CRE program is intended to honor these principles of priesthood or ministry of all believers.

Commissioned Ruling Elders are commissioned by the Presbytery to a particular church which can be their own church or another church in the Presbytery. These are elders who sense God is calling them to new forms of service and who are willing to be trained and authorized by the Presbytery, working in partnership with teaching elders.

For CHURCHES in our Presbytery unable to call ministers of Word and Sacrament, a Commissioned Ruling Elder will provide pastoral care and preaching from our Reformed perspective.

For more information please contact the Presbytery Office Staff who will provide information or put you in touch with a member of the Presbytery Committee on Commissioned Ruling Elders. Brochures and forms are available and your questions will be answered.