



Certification for EPC Commissioned Pastoral Leadership

AN EPC & KNOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY PARTNERSHIP

Why This Certification?

Congregations across the EPC—especially smaller and rural ones—face growing challenges in securing pastoral leadership that fits their needs and resources. Commissioned Pastors are a proven way to meet this need.

The EPC/Knox partnership provides **trusted, affordable, online theological training** designed specifically for Commissioned Pastors. This certification equips Ruling Elders called to serve in this commissioned role with the biblical, theological, and practical foundations needed for faithful service.

Role of Ministerial Committees

Ministerial Committees remain the **gatekeepers** of the commissioning process. This certification:

- Gives MinComs a **clear training pathway** for Ruling Elders under consideration.
- Ensures consistency and quality through a Knox-developed curriculum designed with EPC leaders.

Suggested Commissioning Pathway

1. Assessment Phase

- Ruling Elder meets with MinCom for initial evaluation.
- MinCom may:
 - Recommend Foundations courses (short, non-credit introductions in Evangelism, Worldview and Apologetics).
 - Approve entry into Ministry Essentials.
 - Assign a mentor.

2. Ministry Essentials Certification | 1 year; self-paced, online

- Six courses (Reformed Theology, Hermeneutics, Homiletics, Church History, EPC Leadership, Ministry & the Church).
- Ministry Essentials Practicum alongside coursework.
- Successful Completion culminates in **Certification for EPC Commissioned Pastoral Leadership**.



KNOX

3. Initial Commissioning

- Upon satisfactory completion and MinCom review, candidates may be recommended for presbytery examination.
- Presbytery examination confirms readiness for service as a Commissioned Pastor.

4. Continuing Education

- Commissioned Pastors are encouraged to pursue continuing education with additional courses, such as those offered by Knox.
- Certification holders may receive **advanced standing** toward Knox certificates, the MA, or the MDiv degree—providing a path toward Teaching Elder ordination if pursued.

Suggested Flow At-a-Glance

MinCom Assessment → [Foundations courses (if required by MinCom)] → Ministry Essentials (6 courses + Practicum) → Certification → Presbytery Examination → Commissioning → Continuing Education

Partnership Strength

This initiative is a joint development to serve an emerging need, led by EPC leadership and Knox Theological Seminary. Our joint desire is to thoughtfully and creatively support and equip the church in a manner that ensures denominational alignment, academic integrity, and practical accessibility. The result is intended to provide:

- our Ministerial Committees with a process that ensures confidence and trust when recommending candidates, and
- our Commissioned Pastors with a foundation for faithful ministry