

PRESBYTERY of Grand Canyon
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
HANDBOOK with POLICIES and GUIDELINES
FOR MEMBERS

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PREFACE

PRESBYTERY of Grand Canyon INFORMATION

Welcome

Grand Canyon Presbytery is an interesting and exciting place in which to live and minister, combining breathtaking scenery with the challenges of growth and diversity. Our congregations are diverse, yet they seek always to be cooperative, accepting, and respectful of one another's cultures.

History

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon is the successor to the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church that sent missionaries into the Southwest and Arizona Territory in the 1850s to minister to the Native American and Hispanic peoples. The Presbytery of Arizona was established in 1888 by the Synod of Colorado. In 1912, the year Arizona Territory became a state, Arizona also became a Synod and three presbyteries were created: Phoenix, Southern Arizona and Northern Arizona. In 1971-72, the United Presbyterian Church re-united and the Synod of the Southwest was formed, serving Arizona and New Mexico. Four presbyteries emerged: Presbyteries of Santa Fe, Sierra Blanca, de Cristo and Grand Canyon.

Beginning in 2014, the Presbytery of Grand Canyon and the Presbytery de Cristo share the same executive, stated clerk and administrative staff. The area served by the two presbyteries covers all of Arizona, plus parts of New Mexico and Utah. There are also joint oversight committees for personnel and finance. This combined staffing arrangement is approved through 2019.

Ministry

As of 2017, Grand Canyon Presbytery has 54 churches, 6 chapels and 1 new worshipping community. Our mission heritage and Southwestern location provide the Presbytery with a rich multi-cultural environment encompassing Anglo, Hispanic, Asian-American, African-American, and Native American congregations. The Presbytery's churches and chapels serve small rural communities, major metropolitan areas, retirement and high technology areas as well as farming and ranching communities. The land area of the Presbytery, approximately 90,000 square miles, runs diagonally across Arizona from Yuma on the California/Arizona/Mexico border through the Four Corners area and extending to a Native American chapel in Utah.

Mission Goals and Objectives

After extensive study and prayer, the Presbytery adopted a new structure and ministry plan in early 2011. That design was completed by the adoption of the Implementation Team Report in January 2012. As stated in the Report:

This plan is intended to focus our energy into mission and action instead of organizational formalities. It is designed to encourage people to pursue their passion and calling and not into roles that simply sustain the organization. It is also intended to conduct necessary business as efficiently as possible. We

estimate this structure will take about 100 people to staff instead of over 200, as currently required. The central tension in this design is between establishing a leadership team that keeps us focused and acting on our vision and values with a flattened, decentralized decision making process and a more communal Presbytery culture. In connection with this we realize that unity must not be confused with uniformity. We understand that making substantial changes in the way we conceive of and do ministry will require continuing time and effort. These changes will not be accomplished simply by changing the organization chart of the Presbytery. Changing the way we organize ourselves is a necessary step.

General and Mission Funding

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon has a yearly mission and connection (operating) budget. The Presbytery is financially supported by local churches and investment income provided through an endowment fund.

Presbytery Vision

For the next season in our life and recognizing common bonds and the unique contributions of Presbyterian Reformed Theology, we seek to build better relationships, pay more attention to our congregations, encourage the development of networks of missional practice, be more flexible, explore new ideas and possibilities for ministry, recognize the common bonds God gives us, and spend more time in prayer. As such, we want to be known as a presbytery that supports, encourages and challenges our congregations and leaders.

Grand Canyon Presbytery commits itself to encouraging, among other habits of leadership, a vigorous spiritual life, a commitment to lifelong learning, creativity, and supportive collegiality. We seek to become a community of elders and ministers eager to share our gifts, skills, and insights with one another, both in our primary communities of service and with other communities in the Presbytery (congregations, etc.). Such sharing helps to weave the fabric of our connectional life.

Presbytery Core Values

- We recognize the need for ongoing Biblical/Theological study and reflection.
- We seek to balance connection to our roots in the Reformed faith with the call to being continually reformed.
- We are open to creative change as the Spirit and word prompt us.
- We recognize and celebrate the ethnic, cultural, liturgical and theological diversity that exists.

- We respect the variety of gifts and perspectives in our members, recognizing that we are all equal in Christ.
- We nurture spiritual vitality, life-long learning, creativity and collegial support in our leaders.
- We are open to the new thing God is doing among us, maintaining an attitude of flexibility in our operations, 110 activities, and programs.
- We treat the earth and all creation as sacred gifts of God.
- We cultivate an atmosphere of joy in our work, deliberation and fellowship.
- We affirm our unity in Christ without always being unanimous in perspectives and decisions.

We challenge one another to practice the way of Jesus, giving witness to Him as Savior and Lord and promoting social righteousness and justice in the world.

INTRODUCTION TO COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Commission on Ministry (COM) has been created by the Presbytery to fulfill certain responsibilities given to the Presbytery in *The Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The responsibilities of the Commission are described generally in Section G-3.0301 of *The Book of Order* and in Section B-5.0200 of the *Bylaws of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon*, and Section 11 of the *Manual of Administrative Operations*. Membership on the Commission is for a three-year period, with one additional term permitted.

The Commission shall be divided into three (3) equal classes, one of which is elected each year by the Presbytery. Term of service is three (3) years (full or partial) with an individual eligible to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms.

The Moderator shall be elected from within the Commission for a term of one (1) year, with the individual eligible to serve up to three (3) years.

Presbytery chose you to serve on its COM in recognition of your commitment to the Presbyterian Church and your mature understanding and judgment. The Commission's efficiency and effectiveness will be enhanced by your sympathetic Christian approach. At times the tasks confronting the Commission may seem trivial, tedious, or unimportant. At other times they may be confounding, complex, even traumatic, as problems demand solutions. But this should not cause you to become discouraged. Remember that the basic purpose of the Commission is to assist both ministers and churches to do the work of Christ more effectively.

Companion pieces to this Handbook are:

1. The *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
2. The *Presbytery of Grand Canyon Bylaws* and *Manual of Operations*
3. The 2011-2013 Advisory Handbook for Ministry Committees/Commissions published by the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Structures and procedures vary so much from Presbytery to Presbytery that it is imperative to digest this Handbook, which will outline for you this Presbytery's way of functioning as well as the policies which have been adopted to guide the Commission in its work.

LIAISONS AND HOW THEY FUNCTION

All churches in the presbytery are assigned Liaisons. COM leadership will determine which COM members will be assigned to which church as the liaison. Assignment usually is in relation to members' home location and/or familiarity with the church. Each liaison acts on behalf of the entire COM. All actions are to be reported to the COM Moderator to be included in the report to the full COM. Each liaison to a given church will work with Moderator of COM to have two other liaisons assist in Triennial Visits with churches, when the need arises. Each member of COM is expected to conduct all their work and contact with their assigned churches in a manner which will fully affirm the Vision Statement.

COM LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

The liaisons are responsible to meet with their churches through the Teaching Elder, Clerk of Session or representatives of the session on a monthly basis to see how things are going and ask if there is anything that COM or the Presbytery staff may do to assist them in their service to the congregation.

1. Help With Vacancies

The liaison will meet with and counsel the session of a church whose pastor is leaving, preferably before the pastor goes. The Liaison will:

- A. share presbytery's concern for continuing pastoral leadership,
- B. interpret policy and process concerning pulpit supply and interim pastoral option, and
- C. provide copies of COM policy papers on vacant pulpits and transitions.

In addition to the assignment of liaisons, the COM will, from time to time, appoint additional sub-committees or special ad hoc task groups.

2. Membership

- A. Provide for oversight of the continuing members of Presbytery, and guide the Presbytery (through COM) in the provisions of *The Book of Order* in determining eligibility for continuing membership.
- B. Interview all who seek to transfer membership to this Presbytery without call, or who seek to labor within the bounds of this Presbytery in service beyond our jurisdiction.
- C. Provide care and oversight to Ministers In Other Service, both within and beyond the jurisdiction of the Church.
- D. Provide care and oversight to members of Presbytery who are no longer engaged in validated ministry or fulfilling the requirements of member-at-large.

3. Salary/Pension

- A. Be trained and available to the members of Presbytery on matters related to the Retirement and Disability Benefits, and Major Medical provisions of the Board of Pensions.
- B. Be responsible to review and recommend any shared grants (medical) on behalf of members.
- C. Provide opportunities for retired members to participate in the work and fellowship of the Presbytery.
- D. Annually conduct a salary review of all members of the Presbytery serving in an approved call or contract, through a report required of the session

and/or employing agency. Review the adequacy of compensation, and consult with the member, session, agency, where deemed appropriate. Report to the March meeting of Presbytery all calls or contracts for the pending year.

- E. Recommend to Presbytery, through COM, the minimum compensation for all full-time, teaching elders in pastor positions.

4. Support During Divorce

One of the events in the life of a congregation when COM Cluster intervention is needed is a divorce by the pastor. The divorce of the pastor can often cause confusion for the congregation. Members do not want to be seen as "taking sides," so they avoid involvement. If the divorce is particularly difficult, conflict within the congregation often results. If a divorce occurs, the Cluster should provide:

- A. assistance to congregations by requesting to meet with the session and the pastor, assessing the nature of the problems, and assisting in planning strategy for dealing with congregational concerns;
- B. assistance for the clergy spouse by assessing the needs of the spouse and assisting in finding levels of support; and
- C. assistance for the divorcing clergy by assessing the needs of the divorcing clergy and offering support.

The intention is to offer support and make every effort to be balanced and fair. If, however, the Subcommittee hears allegations concerning the clergy person's sexual misconduct or other inappropriate behavior, it shall report such to the COM for appropriate action as outlined in *The Book of Order* and the Presbytery Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Child Protection Policy.

NOTE: When a COM member's church is to be discussed, that member is to be excused from the discussion unless intentionally requested to participate in it.

CHAPTER I – PRESBYTERY AND COM RESPONSIBILITIES

PRESBYTERY

There are seventeen (17) different responsibilities outlined for a presbytery in fulfilling its responsibility for the mission and government of the church in Section G-3.0301 of the *Book of Order*. The fact that the work of the COM is related directly to a majority of the overall presbytery responsibilities speaks to the importance of this Commission in the life, witness and ministry of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. The Commission members are encouraged to understand their work in light of the overall responsibilities of the Presbytery toward its members and congregations.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The primary purposes of the Commission on Ministry are:

- ☐ To serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders.
- ☐ To facilitate relationships between congregations, pastors, and the presbytery.
- ☐ To settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery.

The organization and responsibilities of the Commission are set forth in the Presbytery's Bylaws and Manual of Administrative Operations as follows.

(from the Bylaws) B-5.0200 Commission on Ministry. There shall be a Commission on Ministry consisting of twenty-seven (27) members equally divided between teaching and ruling elders who shall be elected by Presbytery. A quorum of the commission shall be fourteen members. The commission shall exercise all responsibilities contained in Form of Government G-3.0307, and the Manual of Administrative Operations.

a. The commission may act on behalf of presbytery in the following actions, and any others delegated in the Manual of Administrative Operations:

- (1) New moderators of congregations;
- (2) Calls issued by churches found in order;
- (3) Present calls for services of the members of this presbytery;
- (4) Dissolution of the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur;
- (5) Dismissal of ministers to other presbyteries;
- (6) Grant a minister from another presbytery, having a call or contract within the bounds of this presbytery, permission to labor within this presbytery's bounds;
- (7) Appoint administrative commissions for the purpose of ordination and/or installation;

- (8) Approve parish associate agreements between congregations and members of this presbytery; and
- (9) Approve requests for honorable retirement.

b. All actions of the commission pursuant to subsection “a” shall be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery and Presbytery Leadership Team.

(from the Manual of Administrative Operations) Part 11. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

- 1. The Commission on Ministry shall provide direct access at all times to all teaching and ruling elders in the Presbytery in all matters relative to the spiritual or temporal welfare of the churches that they hold office.
- 2. The Commission on Ministry shall recruit, train, and deploy liaison persons to work with Pastor Nominating Committees.
- 3. The Commission on Ministry shall receive and screen for approval Church Information Forms from Pastor Nominating Committees.
- 4. The Commission on Ministry shall provide background reference information to Pastor Nominating Committees when requested.
- 5. The Commission on Ministry shall interview potential candidates before a Pastor Nominating Committee arranges for personal interview.
- 6. The Commission on Ministry shall interview all who seek to transfer membership to the Presbytery.
- 7. The Commission on Ministry shall seek exit interviews with members leaving a pastoral relationship, including interims and stated supplies.
- 8. The Commission on Ministry shall visit and counsel with churches in which difficulties have been discerned.
- 9. The Commission on Ministry shall exercise oversight of churches without pastors in accord with the provisions in the Book of Order, and consult with the Presbytery Leadership Team regarding strategy in those particular churches.
- 10. The Commission on Ministry shall provide oversight for teaching elders not installed as parish pastors.
- 11. The Commission on Ministry shall be responsible for all matters relating to pensions, including major medical provisions.
- 12. The Commission on Ministry shall establish guidelines for salaries and remuneration of teaching elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and Certified Christian Educators, with an annual review and report to Presbytery concerning salaries and salary guidelines.
- 13. When a candidate has been called, and is to be examined by the Presbytery, the commission shall ensure that the candidate's Statement of Faith shall be distributed and placed in the hands of Presbytery prior to the examination.

Additionally, in fulfilling these responsibilities, the COM will coordinate:

- regular visits with each minister in active service, and report annually to the Presbytery; and visits with each Session at least every other year.

CODE OF ETHICS COM MEMBERS

1. I will normally keep confidential all information shared with or within the Commission on Ministry. I will not share it with colleagues, friends, spouse or others except as required by law, the *Book of Order*, or the operating rules of Presbytery.
2. When giving references I will confine my answers to matters on which I have direct knowledge and competence or that could be otherwise substantiated by reference to public records. I will not knowingly libel or slander a colleague in ministry.
3. I will be discreet in the way I conduct myself as a member of the Commission on Ministry. I will not knowingly take actions that would embarrass colleagues or signal others that "trouble" exists when they would not be entitled to that knowledge.
4. I will treat all my colleagues and particular churches of the Presbytery fairly and equally. I will, like a good mediator, attempt to balance the power in disputes.
5. I will be inclusive in my behavior with colleagues in governing body life and will try to empower them for full participation and service in the life of our church.
6. I will avoid conflicts of interest by offering to absent myself from deliberations of the Commission on Ministry when matters are introduced which pertain to my personal interests or the interest of my particular congregation or a congregation I have served in the past.
7. I will not use my relationships with other members of the Commission on Ministry to attempt to influence the outcome of matters which pertain to my personal interests or the interests on my particular church.
8. I will make myself available within reason to other ministers of the Presbytery who ask me to hear them out. I will warn them that the matters they share with me, may not be kept from secular authorities or the courts of the Church in some special areas such as child abuse and that they should therefore exercise discretion in what they say to me. I will refer them to the Pastor to Pastors (if there be one in the Presbytery) or to other qualified specialists in psychiatry or pastoral care as the situation demands.
9. I will actively listen to those who continue to share their needs and concerns with me after the above conditions have been met.
10. I will not accept remuneration or personal gifts from ministers or churches of the

Presbytery except when:

- a. Serving as a permanent or temporary member of the staff of the paying/donating church
- b. Serving as a session moderator of the paying/donating church
- c. Serving as an independent contractor to the paying/donating church
- d. Serving as a leader or staff-member of a workshop, conference, or seminar sponsored by the paying/donating church.

The foregoing policy shall not preclude the receipt of payments or gifts from a church when they represent reimbursement of expenses incurred or customary honoraria for services performed on behalf of the paying/donating church.

Any payments or gifts received from a church that do not conform with the above exceptions shall be immediately reported by me to the Commission on Ministry for disposition instructions which I pledge to obey.

11. I will respect the collective wisdom of the Commission on Ministry and its staff. In working with churches and ministers I will remember that I am an agent of the Commission. I will not act unilaterally unless that authority is given me by the Commission. I will fairly represent the position of the Commission on Ministry and will not present my own personal position or views as the position of the Commission when my position or views may be different from those of the Commission. I will not ignore, bypass or act contrary to the *Book of Order*.
12. I will conduct myself ethically in all the usual ways that Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders are expected to conduct themselves.

CHAPTER II - MEMBERSHIP IN PRESBYTERY AND REQUIREMENTS

Teaching elders have membership in presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and maintain their membership in accordance with G-2.0503.

MINISTER SEEKING MEMBERSHIP

The presbytery, through the Commission on Ministry, shall examine each teaching elder who seeks membership on Christian faith and views on theology, the Sacraments, and the governance of this denomination. Every teaching elder seeking membership in this presbytery shall have a call to a pastoral position within the presbytery, entering as validated ministry outside a congregation, validated beyond the jurisdiction, member-at-large, honorably retired or temporary.

CRITERIA FOR MINISTRY OF MEMBERS

The presbytery shall determine the teaching elders who shall be its members. In making this determination the presbytery shall be guided by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validation of ministries within its bounds. These criteria shall be based upon the description of the nature of ordained office found in G-2.0104, the standards for validated ministry found in G-2.0503, and the following criteria:

In addition to the “Criteria for Ministry of Members” found in G-2.0104 and G-2.0503, the following shall apply:

1. A member shall take the initiative to establish an active relationship with Presbytery evidenced by attendance at Presbytery meetings. Regular attendance shall normally be attendance to at least two of the four regular stated meetings each year; or request for excuse for any absences. Honorably Retired members are encouraged to attend meetings but are not required to request to be excused.
2. A member shall exhibit and implement willingness to serve in the commission, committee, and other structures of the Councils of the Church.
3. A member shall be
 - a. under documented and approved call or contract to a particular congregation or governing body position;
 - b. honorably retired; or
 - c. a member-at-large who, without intentional abandonment of ministry, is no longer engaged in an occupation that complies with all criteria in G-2.0403a;
 - d. entering a work defined in G-2.0503a for which the presbytery, through the Commission on Ministry, shall give its permission by validating it as a ministry “Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Church (meaning service in a calling other than to a congregation, but within the jurisdiction of the presbytery).”
4. The criteria for determining a validated ministry Outside a Congregation or Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Church shall be based on whether the proposed ministry meets all of the following standards.

A validated ministry:

- a) Is a ministry that serves others, aids others, enables the ministry of others and

relates to the service of people rather than to the production of goods or of profits.

- b) Is a ministry that makes active and effective use of the biblical and theological training that is required for ordination.
- c) Is a ministry carried out in accountability for its character, conduct and performance results to a management committee, board of directors or others responsible for the overall results of the total ministry program. (G-2.0503 does not suggest a “self-employed” validated ministry therefore self-employed ministers in private practice cannot be considered as having a call because they are not accountable to any organization.)
- d) Is a ministry carried out in accountability for its character and conduct and is answerable to the presbytery for agreed upon end results or activities with a face-to-face review of the ministry on a yearly basis.

- 5. Each previously approved Validated Ministry Outside a Congregation or Validated Beyond the Jurisdiction status shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Commission on Ministry to determine whether the above validated standards are continuing to be met. If these validation requirements are not maintained, COM shall request that the ordained member agree to become a member-at-large, if appropriate, or to be temporarily released from the exercise of ordered ministry, with the understanding there is nothing dishonorable about it, and a return to the requirements will readily re-open eligibility.

CRITERIA FOR MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- 1. Members-at-large of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon shall continually be actively seeking and willing to serve a minimum of 1/2 time position, unless restricted by family responsibilities, health or other justifiable reason approved by the Commission on Ministry.
- 2. The Commission on Ministry shall review each previously approved Member-at-Large status on an annual basis.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY PROCESSES FOR MEMBERS-AT-LARGE AND VALIDATED MINISTRIES OUTSIDE A CONGREGATION OR BEYOND THE JURISDICTION

COM will consult annually with all members-at-large and those in validated ministry beyond jurisdiction. Teaching elders in those categories shall provide an annual written report to the COM.

WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IF ONE OR MORE CRITERIA FOR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP CANNOT BE MET?

- 1. If one or more of the criteria cannot be met the continuing member should seek release from the exercise of ordained office until he or she receives a call to ministry which fulfills all criteria.
- 2. Restoration to the exercise of the office is possible without re-ordination by (a) application to and approval of the presbytery that granted release, (b) reaffirmation of ordination vows, and (c) resumption of a ministry that qualifies for continuing active membership in

presbytery. These steps provide for ease in movement and are in no way judgmental. They are permissive in that re-ordination is not necessary. People should be encouraged to use them.

3. If the Commission on Ministry has found that a member no longer meets the criteria for active membership; 1) it must advise the member in writing of its intent to withdraw validation as an Active Member or Member-at-Large and 2) place the minister on non-voting status. If the member refuses to seek release from the exercise of ordained office voluntarily or refuses to accept being placed on non-voting status, the member will be afforded the opportunity to appear before the Presbytery in a Stated Meeting to present their case for continuing active membership under this policy.

Membership Definitions and Other Provisions

LOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Every teaching elder shall ordinarily be a member of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon when his or her work is situated within the bounds of the Presbytery.

AUTHORITY TO LABOR

The authority for granting permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the presbytery is no longer required by the *Book of Order*. Presbytery of Grand Canyon requests that it be notified of any work performed within the bounds of this Presbytery, and that any teaching elder member of this Presbytery performing work in the bounds of another presbytery similarly notify COM.

MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Ministers of other denominations may be received by the presbytery as teaching elders in the PCUSA pursuant to G-2.0505 – Transfer of Ministers of Other Denominations.

The presbytery shall not waive any of the foregoing requirements except in extraordinary cases.

PRESBYTERY EXAMINATION

A team within the Commission on Ministry shall examine ministers from other denominations seeking membership in the Presbytery, and forward its recommendation to the Commission on Ministry. COM shall review the terms of call and determine whether the proposed member is appropriate for the particular call.

Pursuant to G-2.0506, the Presbytery may enroll a minister of another Christian church who is serving temporarily in a validated ministry in this church, or in an installed relationship under the provisions of the Formula of Agreement (*Book of Order*, Appendix C; G-5.0202), when the minister has satisfied the requirements of preparation for such service established by these provisions.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRACTING RELATIONSHIPS

There are two major categories to define Teaching Elders; first is their membership in the Presbytery and second is the contractual relationship of Teaching Elders and others to place of employment. The *Book of Order* does not present definitions of these two major categories in a clear breakdown and the subject is complicated further by the fact that contractual

relationships also apply to candidates and Commissioned Ruling Elders, as well. The following is the breakdown of the membership for the Presbyteries based on the 2013/2015 *Book of Order* (a total of 7 membership categories).

1. Validated Ministry (G-2.0503 a.)
 - a. Validated within a Congregation (G-2.0503 a. and G-2.0504 a.)
 - b. Validated outside the Congregation (G-2.0503 a.) To be reviewed annually
 - c. Validated beyond the jurisdiction (G-2.0503 a.) To be reviewed annually
2. Member-at-large (G-2.0503 b.) To be reviewed annually
3. Honorably Retired (G-2.0503 c.)
4. Failure to Engage in Validated Ministry (G-2.0508) To be reported to presbytery annually
5. Temporary Membership in Presbytery for a Period of Service (G-2.0506)

Within membership group 1.a., there are two primary means of contracting within Permanent “Installed” relationship.

1. First and the largest group is installed pastor with an indefinite term for the call.
2. Designated falls under this category. It is an installed position but is based on a specified term set by Presbytery with consultation with congregation. It can be converted to an indefinite time period.

Within the temporary “not installed” relationship group there are four (4) temporary classifications within contracting relationships which exist within the membership group 1.a. **for each presbytery** and are considered “**not installed**” positions.

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| Temporary & NWC | Presbytery works with sessions to find individuals to fill these positions. Generally, a Teaching Elder, inquirer, candidate, Ruling Elder, or Commissioned Ruling Elder can provide this service with specific criteria defined by the individual presbytery. |
| Interim Pastor | This position is selected by the session from a pool of candidates provided by the Presbytery. The contract period is 12 months or less. These positions can be renewed annually. |
| Interim Associate Pastor | This position is selected by the session from a pool of candidates provided by the Presbytery. The contract period is 12 months or less. These positions can be renewed annually. |
| Parish Associate | This is position agreed to between the installed pastor of a congregation and the parish associate with concurrence with the COM. When the installed pastor position is vacant, this position is automatically terminated. |

ROLLS

The stated clerk shall maintain a master membership roll, listing the names of all of the teaching elders who are members of the presbytery and who are validated within a congregation; listing the names of all of the teaching elders who are members-at-large, listing the names of all validated outside the congregation, listing the names of validated beyond the jurisdiction, listing the members that are Honorably Retired, listing members failing to engage in a validated ministry, and temporary for a period of service. This master roll may also include all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery who are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice and vote at all presbytery meetings. On or before December 31 of each year, the presbytery shall determine the category of membership of each member in accordance with the relevant sections of this chapter and cause appropriate record of such determination to be made.

RELEASE FROM MINISTRY AS A TEACHING ELDER (G-2.0507)

APPLICATION FOR RELEASE.

If a teaching elder concerning whom no inquiry has been initiated pursuant to D-10.0102 and D-10.0201, against whom no charges have been filed, and who otherwise is in good standing, shall make application to be released from the exercise of the ordained ministry, or if the presbytery takes that action pursuant to G-2.0508, the presbytery shall delete that person's name from the appropriate roll of presbytery and give that person a certificate of membership to a particular church. The presbytery shall retain a roll of persons so deleted with date of deletions, date of ordination, and place of ordination. No judgment of failure on the part of the minister is implied in this action.

DISCONTINUANCE OF FUNCTIONS

Release from the exercise of the ordained office of teaching elder requires a discontinuance of all functions of that office. The designations reverend, minister, pastor, or other similar terms shall not be used. The status of a minister who has been so released shall be the same as any church member.

DESIRE TO BE RESTORED

Should a person released under this section later desire to be restored to continuing membership in the presbytery, that person shall make application to the presbytery, and upon approval, the reaffirmation of ordination vows, and resumption of a ministry which qualifies that person for continuing membership in presbytery, the person shall be restored to the exercise of the ordained office without re-ordination.

TEACHING ELDER JOINING ANOTHER DENOMINATION

When a teaching elder of this church continues or accepts membership of any character in another denomination, except as provided in G-2.0503, the presbytery shall record the fact, delete the teaching elder's name from the roll, and take such other action of an administrative character as may be required by the Constitution.

PRESBYTERY of GRAND CANYON
Commission on Ministry

() Year
Application or Renewal for Validated Ministry Status
Application or Renewal for Member-at-Large Status

Date:

Personal Information

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Contact Phone Numbers:

Email Address:

Ordination

Do you desire to maintain your standing as a PCUSA ordained Teaching Elder (Minister of Word and Sacrament)?

Yes () No ()

What year were you ordained?

What presbytery ordained you?

Presbytery Standing

Having reviewed the guidelines in G- 0503a & b are you applying for:

_____ standing as a validated ministry? *(Please respond to the questions in Section A.)*

OR

_____ standing as a member-at-large? *(Please respond to the questions in Section B.) (Mark either A or B.)*

SECTION A (Validated Ministry)

1) What is the name and contact information for your employer?

2) What is your position title?

3) What is your employer's job description for that position?

- 4) What aspect of your work energizes you and what aspects of your work are your greatest challenges?
- 5) Please describe how your current work/ministry utilizes your ordination as a Teaching Elder and furthers the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Scripture, the Book of Confessions and the Book of Order?
- 6) Describe how your current work/ministry serves and aids others, and enables the ministries of others.
- 7) How does your work give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word?
- 8) What supervisory structure exists in your organization that encourages and monitors your professional development? Please describe.
- 9) Within what PCUSA congregation are you active? Please describe your involvement.
- 10) If you live within the bounds of Presbytery of Grand Canyon, in what ways have you participated in the life of the presbytery in the last year?
- 11) If you live outside the bounds of Presbytery of Grand Canyon, are you involved in any activities in the presbytery of your residence? If so, what are they?
- 12) Are you involved in any other ecumenical/ecclesiastical/religious activities? (teaching, ecumenical worship, weddings, funerals, etc.)

SECTION B (Member-at-Large)

- 1) What are your current circumstances that limit your ability to engage in a ministry as characterized by G-2.0503a?
- 2) In what local congregation are you active? Please describe your involvement.
- 3) Are there ways in which your life, apart from any institutional involvement, still manifests some of the characteristics of ministry listed in G-2.0503a? Please describe.

4) What has been your involvement in the life of Presbytery of Grand Canyon over the last year? Please describe.

APPLICATION FOR VALIDATED MINISTRY or MEMBER-AT-LARGE STATUS

I certify by my signature that the contents of this application/renewal of status are a true and correct representation of my current life situation.

Name (Please print)

Signature

+++++

Below are the Book of Order requirements in order to qualify for a **validated ministry**:

- 1) The ministry shall demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, The Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of the church.
- 2) The ministry shall serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others.
- 3) The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word.
- 4) The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served.
- 5) The ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA)) (G-5.0201)

When teaching elders are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the boards and agencies of those councils. The presbytery shall review annually the work of all teaching elders engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation. (G-2.0503a)

Below are the Book of Order requirements in order to qualify for **member-at-large** standing:

A member-at-large is a teaching elder who has previously been engaged in a validated ministry, and who now, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry, is no longer engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria in G-2.0503a. A teaching elder may be designated a member-at-large because he or she is limited in his or her ability to engage in a ministry fulfilling all of the criteria for a validated ministry due to family responsibilities or other individual circumstances recognized by the presbytery. A member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria in G-2.0503a as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation. A member-at-large is entitled to take part in the meetings of the presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of member-at-large shall be review annually. (G-2.0503b)

CHAPTER III – PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CONGREGATIONS DEFINED

Permanent and Temporary Pastor Positions

| TOPIC | PERMANENT | TEMPORARY |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Employment Relationship | Called and Installed | Not called, not installed |
| Membership | Permanent or Designated (Pastor-Co Pastor-Associate Pastor) | Interim, Temporary, Parish Assoc., or New Worshiping Community (Special Policy Interim to Installed) |
| Participants | Teaching Elders | Teaching Elder, Inquirer, Candidate, Ruling Elder, CRE, or HR |
| Decision Process | Congregation | Session and COM |
| Interviews | Pastor Nominating Committee -PNC | Session or PNC |
| Candidacy Distribution | Church Leadership Connection -CLC | CLC & Presbytery (COM &/or CPM) |
| Board of Pensions | Required | Optional |
| Period of Service | Permanent - Indefinite Designated - 2 year renewable or can convert to permanent with Congregation and COM Approval | 1 year and renewable COM Approval for renewal |
| Conversions | Associate Pastor may become Pastor with 3/4 vote of the Presbytery. BOO G-2.0504.c | Temporary TE may convert to permanent after 2 years of service as temporary with Congregational Approval and 2/3 vote approval by COM. |
| Special | | Parish Assoc. is contract between PA and Pastor. PA position ends if Pastor relationship ends service to congregation. |
| Ministers of other denominations | Full Communion with PC (USA) in accordance with BOO G-2.0505 or G-5.0202 | Credentials provided to session for approval by session and COM. |

INSTALLED AND CALLED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

Permanent Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor (see Book of Order G-2.0502, G-2.0504)

The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor shall be elected by the vote of the congregation and the relationship between them shall be established by the presbytery. The call extended to a pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor shall be approved by the presbytery and cannot be changed or dissolved except by consent of the presbytery, at the request of the pastor or associate pastor, or at the request of the church by action of the congregation. The call may be for an indefinite period or for a designated time.

Designated Pastor

A designated pastor or co-pastor is a teaching elder installed (permanent) in a pastoral relationship for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the call. Designated terms may be renewed or converted to an indefinite period, by vote of the congregation and approval of the presbytery (G-2.0504).

Ordinarily Cannot Immediately Succeed the Pastor

A teaching elder installed as associate pastor, or one who is employed in a temporary pastoral relationship of any kind, is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor. A teaching elder employed in a temporary associate pastor relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next called associate. This rule may only be waived when there are exceptional circumstances and with approval of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Presbytery, pursuant to G-2.0504c .

TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

When a church does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with approval of COM, should obtain the services of a teaching elder, commissioned ruling elder, candidate, or ruling elder of this denomination in a temporary pastoral relationship. When a congregation employs more than one pastor, or a pastor and one or more associate pastors, and there is a vacancy in one of these positions, it may obtain the services of a teaching elder, commissioned ruling elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued by the congregation and no formal installation shall take place. **Any position without a call and installation is Temporary.**

A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery (G-2.0504b).

Interim Positions

An interim pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor is invited by the session of a church without an installed pastor to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and fulfill pastoral duties for a specified period not to exceed twelve months. An interim only serves while the church is seeking a pastor, co-pastor or associate. The establishment of the interim relationship is described in further detail in a subsequent section of this Handbook. The session may not secure or dissolve a relationship with an interim without the concurrence of the presbytery through its COM.

Inquirer, Candidate, or Ruling Elder as Temporary Supply

When a church is without a pastor or when the pastor is unable to perform pastoral duties, the session, after obtaining the approval of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the church through its COM, may secure the services of an inquirer, candidate, or ruling elder to serve as temporary pastor. Appropriate guidance and supervision for such a ruling elder, inquirer or candidate serving as temporary supply must be assured by the COM. In the case of inquirers and candidates, the relationship must also be approved by the inquirer's or candidate's Commission on Preparation for Ministry.

Ministers of Other Churches

Ordained ministers of other Christian churches may be employed by the session of a particular church in a temporary pastoral relationship, provided such ministers present to the presbytery credentials of good standing in the ecclesiastical body to which they belong, and provided that presbytery gives its approval to the temporary pastoral relationship. Ordained ministers of other churches may not serve in installed positions unless their membership has been approved for transfer to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as described in Chapter II of this Handbook and G-2.0505, or their membership is in a denomination in full communion with the PC (USA) pursuant to G-5.0202.

Parish Associate

A parish associate is a teaching elder who serves in some validated ministry other than a local parish, or is a member-at-large, or retired, but who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches in keeping with ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Such persons, if already qualified as continuing members of presbytery, may serve as parish associates. The parish associate shall be responsible to the pastor, as head of staff, on an "as needed, as available" basis and with or without remuneration. A parish associate may not be called to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor of a church unless at least six months have elapsed since the end of the parish associate relationship.

The designation of parish associate shall be made under the supervision of COM at the request of a particular church session and installed leadership, the consent of the parish associate, and the approval of COM on behalf of the presbytery. No formal call shall be involved. Any change in relationship must be approved by the COM. Ordinarily no more than one parish associate will be related to a particular church.

The COM shall review the designation once each year to ensure

- (1) that the time and energy required as a parish associate will not interfere unduly with the work of the person in his or her principal function;
- (2) that installed leadership of the particular church be protected in its effective functioning;
- (3) that the parish associate continue to meet the criteria for continuing membership in the presbytery.

The agreement between a session and parish associate shall be terminated whenever a pulpit becomes vacant. Due notice will be provided by the session to the parish associate and to COM.

To ensure the original definition of the parish associate position, note the following requirements:

1. The prospective parish associate shall already be qualified as a continuing member of presbytery (shall not become a member of presbytery in order to serve as parish associate).
2. The position shall not be that person's major source of income.
3. A church may ordinarily have only one parish associate at any given time.
4. The parish associate may not be considered for associate pastor or pastor position.
5. The parish associate position must not become a back door into a full time, de facto assistant pastor position, thus bypassing search, call, congregational approval, etc.)

Other Contract Positions

A teaching elder may be hired by a Session for a temporary contract position called by some name such as visitation pastor, youth minister, music minister, associate for senior adults, or other position specific title. Regardless of title, such positions are subject to review and approval by the Commission on Ministry, and shall be limited to one-year renewable contracts.

Table for Pastoral Service

[A table is included on the next page to differentiate between permanent and temporary pastoral positions, requirements, approvals, nominations, service periods, and BOP benefits to serve as a general guide in reviewing options for pastoral service in congregations.](#)

GUIDELINES FOR NEGOTIATING A PASTORAL CALL

The following material is provided to assist in the search, selection and contracting for Installed Pastors.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The COM shall implement the denomination's policy of equal employment opportunity by urging the PNC to communicate with, seek to interview, and hear preach at least one minority or one woman candidate, and that it shall be a matter of Presbytery policy that no call shall be approved unless the Presbytery is assured that at least one candidate in that category has been communicated with, interviewed, and heard. The PNC shall send a letter to the COM indicating the steps taken to implement this policy, and COM shall present it to Presbytery when a call is brought for approval.

Serious intent requires that the PNC certify the following steps 1, 2, and 5, and either 3 or 4 as minimal indication of "serious consideration":

1. The PIF has been read, studied and reviewed.
2. A tape or sermon, service, or personal comments has been heard.
3. A face-to-face interview has been held, with whole committee if local; with at least two if elsewhere.
4. A shared amplified phone call interview with the whole committee.
5. Full and sufficient inquiry with Presbytery staff or COM Chair, etc., either within candidate's location or within this Presbytery.
6. Indicate on MIF steps planned in order to meet EEO Policy.

Comparable steps to the above may be proposed by the PNC

VACATION POLICY FOR PASTORS

The terms of call for a pastor's vacation time shall be at least one month, no fewer than 30 calendar days, including no less than four Sundays – scheduling to be negotiated with the local church.

CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICY

The calling to the work of professional ministry requires the sharing of energy, insight, and dynamic leadership. In order to fulfill this calling, to help teaching elders deepen and strengthen their spiritual life, and to help them improve vocational skills, continuing education is encouraged.

With the goal of supporting professional clergy in their effort to provide spirit-filled leadership, the following guidelines for continuing education are recommended:

- I. Training of new members of Presbytery of Grand Canyon

GOAL: To welcome and assimilate new members into the Presbytery, providing opportunities for team building, personal support, networking, and education in the areas of Presbyterian polity, the organizational structure of the Presbytery, the mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and issues involving the local church and the connectional system.

II. Study Leave

The terms of the call for clergy in the Presbytery of Grand Canyon shall include a provision for two weeks of study leave annually, which can be accumulated up to six weeks in a three-year period, with the approval of the session, or agency governing body. Churches shall include financial assistance for study leave for teaching elder's calls. Calling agencies are encouraged to include financial assistance.

The shape and scope of continuing education varies greatly among the clergy of our Presbytery, and includes degree programs, independent study, seminars, and various ministry related events. Use of programs of institutions related to the Presbyterian Church (USA) is to be preferred.

It is the expectation of COM that clergy will be accountable to their churches/agencies in sharing the benefits of study leave, so that the study will not be seen as additional vacation, and the benefits to the organization can be clearly understood. Study leave shall not be considered as part of a termination package at termination of employment, and unless specifically designated as such in advance by the employing agency or church, shall not be taken at the end of a ministry.

COM commends the following guidelines for study leave:

1. Study leave is designed for leadership development and effectiveness in ministry for the church. Skills, knowledge, and experience should directly benefit the church and the teaching elder, stimulating, energizing, and equipping the leader for further service.
2. Guidance about the choice of study should be sought from within the church; e.g. through the counsel of the session, and colleagues in ministry.
3. Study leave should be carried out with a definite plan to accomplish specific goals that will enhance ministry for the sake of Jesus Christ and the church. The plan should be presented in writing to the session, or governing board of the calling agency, and a report made to that Group, when the study has been completed. When appropriate, plans should be made for sharing the benefits of the study on a wider base. (Sermons, classes, study groups, long- range planning, etc.)
4. Unused study leave shall not be paid upon dissolution of the pastoral contract.

FAMILY LEAVE POLICY

- A pastor is entitled to up to six workweeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons:
- the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
- the placement with the pastor of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
- care for the pastor's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
- a serious health condition that makes the pastor unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job.
- The pastor's position will not be filled during the Family Leave, except on a temporary basis, and Board of Pension dues will continue to be funded by the employer congregation during the leave.

GUIDELINES FOR PASTOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

- A sabbatical of three months should be offered with eligibility beginning within the seventh year of service.
- Sabbatical leave is provided in addition to regular vacation and study leave.
- The pastor should continue to be paid during the sabbatical.
- The pastor and the session should develop a clear plan about when the sabbatical will be
- The pastor should report back to the session at the conclusion of the sabbatical with specific attention to how the sabbatical contributes to the pastor's practice of ministry.
- Sabbatical leave should be granted to all called members of the pastoral staff.
- Budget monies may be put aside yearly toward the sabbatical so that in the year that it is taken, money will be available for pulpit supply and other pastoral duties as will need to be fulfilled.
- The Commission on Ministry is available to assist churches in planning sabbaticals.

PASTORAL CALL

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

(For Pastor or Associate Pastor)

The _____ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
(Name of Church)
of _____
(City/State)
belonging to _____ Presbytery (PIN _____)

being well satisfied with your qualification for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interest of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls you,

(Name)

to undertake the office of

of this congregation, beginning _____, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

That you may be free to devote full-time (part-time) to the ministry of the Word among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you the sum of \$ _____ a year in regular monthly payments. Further, we promise to provide you the following: (Those agreed upon are to be filled in.)

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Salary | \$ _____ |
| Housing Allowance | \$ _____ |
| Utilities Allowance | \$ _____ |
| Automobile Allowance | \$ _____ |
| Expense Allowance | \$ _____ |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Book Allowance | \$ _____ |
| Medical Insurance | \$ _____ |
| Moving Costs | \$ _____ |
| Study Leave Allowance | \$ _____ |
| Other (specify) | \$ _____ |

Vacation of _____
(Time period)

Study Leave of _____
(Time Period)

All EEO Requirements have been met _____ Yes _____ No

and we will pay regularly in advance to the board responsible for pensions a sum equal to that requisite percent of your salary which may be fixed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for participation in its pension plan during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in this call to this church. We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation. In addition, we promise to provide:

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this _____ day of _____, 20____

.....
Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended a call to _____
for ministerial services, I do certify that the call has been made in all respects according to the rules laid down in the Form of Government and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

CERTIFICATION OF THE CALL

BY THE CHURCH'S PRESBYTERY

1. ACTION OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

This call has been reviewed by the Commission on Ministry. The Commission recommends that

Presbytery approve (not approve) this call.

Date of Action _____

Chairperson

2. ACTION BY THE PRESBYTERY

This call was approved by the Presbytery of _____

Date of Action _____

Stated Clerk

3. ACCEPTANCE OF THE CALL

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of Acceptance _____

Signature

Instructions for use of the form, "Pastoral Call"

Prior to the congregational meeting to call a pastor or associate pastor, four copies of the Call for Pastor or Associate Pastor should be completed. It should specify all and only those allowances and amounts which are undertaken as part of the Call. If the Call is for less than full-time, the precise terms of the contract should be indicated.

All four copies of the Call should be signed by those persons elected by vote of the congregation to prosecute the Call, as well as by the moderator of the congregational meeting.

All copies are sent to the Presbytery. If the Presbytery finds the Call in order, it informs the person being called.

The Stated Clerk of the Calling Presbytery sends one copy to Clerk of Session for the church's record and retains one copy for the Presbytery's record.

INSTALLATION AND ORDINATION SERVICES APPROVED GUIDELINES

1. Ordination and Installation is an Act of The Presbytery. (G-2.0701, G-2.0805, W-4.4000)

The Administrative Commission for this act shall be established by the Presbytery, in consultation with the person being ordained/installed.

- The Moderator of the Presbytery (the Moderator-Elect or the Moderator's designee) shall serve as Chairperson of the Commission.
- Members of the Commission shall be members of this Presbytery. The Commission shall consist of at least three ruling elders representing three different churches in the presbytery and three teaching elders. Ecumenical participation or participation of Teaching elders and/or elders from other presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may be participants on a corresponding basis; however they would be in addition to the participation as outlined above.
- Teaching elder and/or Ruling Elder members of the Commission shall give the Charge to the Teaching elder and Charge to the Congregation.
- The Commission shall convene 30 minutes prior to the start of the service.
- Others may be invited to participate in the service at the request of the person being ordained/installed, upon approving action by the Presbytery.
- The date, time and place of the service of ordination/installation, shall be established by the Presbytery in consultation with the person to be ordained/installed and the Session of the congregation where the ordination/installation is to be held.
- The Commission on Ministry has been granted the authority on behalf of the Presbytery to approve Administrative Commissions for Ordination/Installation.

2. The Service of Ordination/Installation

To facilitate the participation of members of the Presbytery, the service of ordination/installation shall be held at a time other than Sunday morning.

- The format for the service shall ordinarily follow, or be an adaptation of, the service for ordination/installation as found in the Book of Occasional Services. The person being ordained/ installed should draft an order of worship and submit it to the Moderator of the Presbytery for approval, at least two weeks prior to the date for the service.
- *The assignment of parts of the service to participants shall be included in the draft of the order of worship.*
- *The format for the service shall provide that the Moderator (or designee) give a Welcome prior to the Call to Worship.*
- The person who is to deliver the sermon should be asked to do so by the person to be ordained/installed, in consultation with the Moderator of the Presbytery, at the earliest possible date.
- Those who are to deliver the "charge to the teaching elder" and "charge to the congregation" shall ordinarily be members of this Presbytery.

- The person being ordained/installed in consultation with the Moderator of the Presbytery shall be responsible for notifying participants of their respective parts in the service.
- Ordinarily, musicians for the service will be those of the congregation where the service is to be held.
- The selection of music, including hymns to be sung, is the prerogative of the person being ordained/installed, in consultation with the musician(s) for the service.
- The production of a worship bulletin shall be responsibility of the church where the service is being held.
- If Communion is to be included in the service, arrangements will be handled by the church where the service is to be held, in consultation with the person being ordained/installed and the Moderator.
- An offering shall be received for the Presbytery Seminary Student Aid Fund
- Red is the suggested color for paraments and vestments for this service.
- The Moderator (or the one serving in place of the Moderator) shall preside at the "laying on of hands (ordinations)/welcome (ordinations and installations), the prayer and the declaration of ordination/installation."
- Other teaching elders of the Presbytery are encouraged to attend the service, robe with a red stole, participate in the processional, the laying on of hands (ordinations)/welcome, and recessional.
- Other teaching elders in the community may be invited to attend the service, robe with a red stole, participate in the processional, the laying on of hands (ordinations)/welcome, and recessional.

3. Reception

Following the service, it is customary to have a reception for the person who has been ordained/installed. Refreshments are generally provided by the congregation where the service is held.

4. Invitation to Services of Ordination/Installation

It is customary that an Announcement / Invitation be sent to the churches within the presbytery inviting participation at the Service of Ordination / Installation. The Presbytery Office shall supply a set of mailing labels to churches hosting services of Ordination / Installation so that the Presbytery will be encouraged to take part in these services.

MINUTES FOR ORDINATION AND/OR INSTALLATION

A secretary shall be appointed, to complete the minutes and return them to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Commission appointed for the ordination and or installation (circle appropriate) of _____ as _____ of _____ Church, met at the _____ church, in _____ (City and State) on date: _____

The following were present as members of the commission:

Teaching Elders

| | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 2. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 3. _____ | Church: _____ |

Ruling Elders

| | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 2. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 3. _____ | Church: _____ |

Guest

| | |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 2. _____ | Church: _____ |
| 3. _____ | Church: _____ |

The meeting was opened with prayer by _____ and _____ was elected Moderator and _____ was elected Secretary.

In conformity with the *Book of Order*, _____ preached a sermon. _____ presided, recited the presbytery proceedings, and propounded the constitutional questions. _____ asked the congregational questions. The charge to the minister was delivered by _____, the charge to the congregation by _____.

The minister and the congregation having answered these questions in the affirmative, _____ was duly ordained and or installed. The presiding officer read the formal declaration of ordination and installation. After prayer and the singing of a hymn, the benediction was pronounced by _____

The minutes were read and approved and the closed with prayer.

The Administrative Commission was dismissed at the Benediction of the worship service.

Secretary: _____

It is the policy of the Presbytery to make a special offering at ordination and installation services for the purpose of a scholarship fund for inquirers and candidates for ministry from the Presbytery.

TEMPORARY PASTOR AGREEMENT

At the request of the _____ Church, the Presbytery hereby appoints _____ to be a Temporary Pastor for a period of _____, beginning _____, 20____, subject to 30 days notice for termination. A description of duties and services expected is attached. It is clearly understood by all parties that the Temporary pastor and the church subscribe to the policies of the presbytery regarding a Temporary relationship. Further, it is understood that the Temporary pastor is ordinarily not eligible as a candidate for the position of pastor, associate pastor, or designated pastor and is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor or as outlined in established procedures.

The _____ Church will provide the following support for the ministry:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Salary | _____ | Study Leave | _____ |
| Housing | _____ | Moving | _____ |
| Travel | _____ | Vacation | _____ |
| Medical/ Pension | _____ | Other | _____ |

ENDORSEMENT TO THIS AGREEMENT

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. By the session | Name: _____ | Date: _____ |
| | Signature: _____, Clerk of Session | |
| 2. By the COM | Name: _____ | Date: _____ |
| | Signature: _____, Moderator | |
| 1. By the Presbytery | Name: _____ | Date: _____ |
| | Signature: _____, Stated Clerk | |
| 2. By the Temporary Pastor | Name: _____ | Date: _____ |
| | Signature: _____, Pastor | |

Parish Associate

Position and Terms of Engagement

The purpose of the Parish Associate is to minister in the name of Jesus Christ and witness to him as Savior and Lord in the Church and community; and to provide a pastoral presence and care to the congregation.

The Parish Associate shall report to the Installed Pastor.

The following are the responsibilities of the Parish Associate:

1. Assist in pastoral duties as necessary including worship leadership, administering the sacraments, praying with and for the congregation, teaching, funerals, and memorial services, counseling members and assisting with other visitation.
2. As workload permits, respond to other requests for specialized services for worship and care ministry.
3. Support a team concept of ministry to promote the entire ministry program of the congregation.
4. Participate as needed in pastoral and program staff meetings and retreats, and committee meetings as requested.

Terms of this position of Parish Associate shall be in accordance with requirements outlined in the Commission on Ministry Handbook.

Engagement Agreement – Installed Pastor

| | | |
|-------|-----------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Name | Signature | Date |

Engagement Agreement – Parish Associate

| | | |
|-------|-----------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Name | Signature | Date |

This Engagement Agreement is approved by the Session of _____
Name of Church
on this day _____ by _____ .
Date Clerk of Session

Send completed form to the Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

CHAPTER IV – CARE OF THE CONGREGATION DURING A PASTORAL VACANCY

Presbyterians believe that pastors and congregations are brought together through a call from God. This call is confirmed as the pastor, the church, and the presbytery each says "yes" to the relationship. This three-way partnership is acted out throughout the pastoral call process with the presbytery, often through COM. The COM is an active participant with a congregation as they seek a new pastor.

The COM is intensively involved when a church is without a pastor. This is also an opportune time for church transformation issues to be raised and the expertise of the appropriate committee to be solicited. Many presbyteries find it helpful to utilize a team approach where a cluster of COM members go together to work with a church. Collaboration between the session and COM can be very constructive in the following situations:

- When a small church is stretched to support a full-time pastor
- When a church is considering an addition to staff
- When the community is changing and the church is declining or growing
- When the church seeks transformation following a serious conflict
- When it may be appropriate for the church to seek a designated pastor to work with them on transformation

During the time of a pastoral vacancy the COM

- Appoints one of its members (liaison) to work closely with the church through the entire vacancy process
- Appoints a Moderator of the session
- Presbytery Pastor provides names of potential Interim Pastors or other Temporary Pastors
- Approves a Church Information Form (MIF) mini study developed by the session
- Approves a formal Church Information Form (MIF) developed by the Pastor Nominating Committee
- Does presbytery to presbytery reference checks on candidates before they visit
- Meets with the "finalist" candidates
- Examines selected candidates for suitability for the church and membership in the presbytery
- Requires the Presbytery to conduct background (including criminal) checks and credit checks

Results of background and credit checks will be used by the PNC as additional information, along with reference checks in considering and interviewing candidates. All information gained through such checks shall be destroyed for all but the pastor-

elect, whose documents will be sealed and kept in the church personnel files.

A chart showing the various stages of the Pastor Search Process is shown on the following pages.

Other Resources to Consult

Office of Vocation "On Calling a Pastor" – Church Leadership Connection- available for free download

GA- COM Handbook

ENTERING AN MIF: **www.pcusa.org/clc** and as found at the end of this chapter.

PASTORAL TRANSITIONS (OVERVIEW)

Phase 1 - Saying Goodbye

| Discernment Work/Issues | Congregation | Presbytery |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Gratitude & Grieving | Congregational Meeting to dissolve relationship Provide times to Cry & Celebrate...and say Thanks | Appoints a Liaison from COM (Commission on Ministry) Offers assistance when asked Conducts exit interview w/ pastor |
| Preparing for Interim Leader | Session conducts Search – appoints search team, prepares papers, interviews candidates recommended by Presbytery, selects | Reviews paperwork, provides a short list of candidates to interview |

Phase 2 - After Interim is in place: Reflecting, Exploring, Declaring

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Adjusting to new leader | Session & congregation works with Interim pastor in new beginnings | |
| Engages in ongoing ministry | Explores next developmental steps of ministry | |
| Declares renewed sense of vision & direction | Conducts a mission study with help of Interim leader | Provides resources for mission study work |

Phase 3 - Searching

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Stage 1 - Preparation | Congregation elects PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee) PNC & Session prepare paperwork (MIF) (Church Information Form) | COM liaison assists PNC in process COM approves MIF before submitting to CLC for advertising |
| Stage 2 - Active Search | PNC advertises, screens, reference checks and conducts face to face interviews | COM liaison assists PNC in process Presbytery Pastor conducts references BEFORE any face to face contact |
| Stage 3 - Identifying Candidate | PNC/Session negotiate terms Congregation elects Candidate | COM liaison accompanies |

Phase 4 - Welcoming

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Gratitude & Grieving | Session & Congregation say goodbye to Interim Pastor | Conducts exit interview |
| Getting Started | Session works with pastor in new beginnings | Welcomes new colleague in ministry |

PASTOR SEARCH PROCESS OUTLINE

| OCAP* | Local Church Responsibilities | Presbytery / COM Responsibilities |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| II-1. | 1. Pastor consults COM about dissolution | Exit interview arranged by COM cluster. Liaison present, or receives copy |
| II-2. | 2. Pastor meets with session regarding dissolution. a. Session calls Congregational Meeting b. Session makes arrangements for personnel during vacancy. c. Board of Pensions vacancy dues discussed (must continue for 1 year when installed pastor or associate leaves or until new Pastor arrives). d. Session / Pastor certify all financial obligations are met. e. Pastor leaves | COM liaison attends. The Pastor presides but may invite another minister to preside. G7.0306 Record according to Book of Order languages Same representative (Liaison) outlines process that lies ahead. Liaison also attends congregational meeting. |
| II-3. II-5.. | 3. a. Session arranges for mission study; provides guidance and funds for Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) b. On receiving COM approval of the Mission Study, session requests permission to call a congregational meeting to form a PNC | Representatives from COM cluster (liaison) assist. COM partners approve mission study within 2 weeks |
| II-5.. | 4. <i>Session calls meeting of Congregation to elect PNC. Election of alternates is not appropriate.</i> | New Moderator moderates. Liaison attends. |
| II-5. | 5. Congregation elects PNC. Chair, vice-chair, secretary chosen. Date for first meeting set. | |
| III-1. | 6. First meeting of PNC. Session attends for the first half-hour to clarify roles. | Liaison explains task and presents forms for Ministry Information Form (MIF), EEO, and PdC's Examination for Membership Policy along with statement to be signed by candidate |
| III-2. | 7. PNC completes MIF in coordination with session | Liaison maintains contact. |

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| III-2. | 8. Session approves MIF | COM cluster approve MIF within 2 weeks after it is submitted. Then files MIF with Presbytery & Louisville. |
| III-3. | 9. PNC meets with Liaison for training with respect to reading Personal Information Forms (PIF), interviewing, EEO, etc. | Liaison trains PNC |
| III-4. | 10. PNC receives PIFs, evaluates them and prioritizes names of candidates | Liaison suggests rating system. Meets with PNC frequently. |
| III-5. | 11. PNC requests preliminary clearance for 3-5 candidates from Presbytery Executive or COM before in-person interview. PNC advises candidates to be interviewed face to face or electronic interviews using Skype or similar technology to provide Statement of Faith and Biographical Summary two weeks prior to interview of any format. Provides PIFs and other documents to Liaison in advance. | Presbytery Pastor does reference checks, and reports results to Liaison. PNC conducts background and credit checks, and bears cost of same. |
| III-6,7. | 12. PNC sets up interview for final clearance with candidate in Arizona, giving COM cluster a 2 week's notice and provides COM Liaison with required documents. PNC asks Presbytery Office Manager to arrange for neutral pulpit(s). | COM cluster interview candidate PRIOR to candidate preaching in accordance with Interview Guidelines found in Chapter IX, and make recommendation to COM and informs PNC chair of the results of its interview. |
| III-4,5,6,7 | 13. For each of the three "Local Church Responsibilities" immediately preceding (III-4,5,6&7) reference Excerpt from On Calling a Pastor found in Appendix 1 for more detail of recommended procedures and variations available. | |
| III-8-10. | 14. PNC selects one candidate to present to the Congregation. Arranges for travel, meals, and accommodations. Candidate preaches for Congregation | |
| IV-1-2. | 15. Session calls a congregational meeting to act upon the nomination and presents the CALL. Moderator presides. | Liaison reviews terms, reports to COM if candidate is accepted by congregation action. COM acts upon the Call, and reports to Presbytery. |

| | | |
|-------|---|--|
| IV-4. | 16. Pastor-elect, Session, PNC suggest names for Installation Commission. | Liaison brings names and date of Installation to COM for recommendation to the presbytery. |
| IV-4. | 17. Church hosts Installation | Presbytery installs new Teaching Elder during Worship. |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>IV-4. PNCs are urged to schedule ordination and/or installation of clergy at such time and in such fashion that allows and attracts the largest attendance of both congregation and presbytery colleagues. COM discourages holding such services concurrent with regular worship hours. We urge PNCs and sessions to go to greater lengths to raise the level of expectation as to the importance of this Service of Worship in terms of the welcoming and bonding which it establishes between pastor, congregation, and presbytery. We suggest linking the service with a complementary gathering activity, such as a potluck supper, etc. COM will not recommend competing Ordination or Installation Services of different Pastors on the same day.</p> | | |
| | 17. Session encourages freedom of new Pastor to attend retreat. | Presbytery provides orientation for new Pastor in Presbytery Retreat. |
| | 18. Session hosts meeting for six-month review | COM, through COM cluster provides six-month review of new Pastor and Session |

*On Calling A Pastor

Guidelines For Electing A Pastor Nominating Committee

I. ***The Book of Order Statement (G-2.0801 and 2.0802.)***

When a congregation has a vacancy in a pastoral position, or after the presbytery approves

the effective date of the dissolution of an existing pastoral relationship, the congregation shall, with the guidance and permission of the presbytery, proceed to fill the vacancy in the following manner. The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee that shall be representative of the whole congregation. The committee's duty shall be to nominate a pastor for election by the congregation.

II. Guidelines (Not directly a part of *The Book of Order*)

1. Session meets to set date and time for congregation to meet and elect pastor nominating Commission (PNC).
 - a. Public notice required on two successive Sundays.
 - b. Session can recommend size, though final authority rests with congregation.
2. Nominations for PNC might best be made through church officer nominating Committee, for the following reasons:
 - a. Committee is already established and Moderated.
 - b. Committee is representative of the congregation.
 - c. Committee is familiar with nominating process.
 - d. Committee likely knows the membership and the groups that need to be represented, as well as their race, ethnic origin, sex, and marital status.
3. Nominations Committee should provide a mechanism for receiving input of names from the congregation. Persons nominated should be contacted to ascertain if they will serve.
3. Nomination Committee's slate should be representative of the whole congregation.
5. Ballots should be prepared in advance, with space for nominations from the floor, as well as names placed by the Committee. Care must be taken that persons nominated from the floor are present and agree to serve, or have so consented in advance.
6. PNC meets briefly following meeting to elect its own moderator (or a convener for first meeting), and set day and time of first meeting. COM liaison should be present to provide guidance.

Accelerated Option for Retirement Transitions Policy – 2.0

Purpose

To allow for the option of an accelerated timetable for pastoral transitions in instances when a retirement date is known in advance, and it is discerned by the COM, working cooperatively with the Session, there exists sufficient congregational health that a formal interim pastorate is not required.

Participants and Their Roles

1. COM cluster liaisons: asking questions, offering organizational assessment, facilitating dialogue and discernment with the Session, and making a recommendation to the full COM
2. Session: reporting, responding to questions, participating in dialogue and discernment with the COM, and leading the mission study, if an accelerated transition is approved.
3. Staff: reporting and responding to questions.
4. Congregation: reporting, responding to questions, and participating in the ordinary PNC process.

Procedures

1. *Timetable*

- a. This policy will be acted upon by COM upon request of the Session. Ordinarily the request should be made at least nine months in advance of the forthcoming retirement date in order to provide sufficient time to complete the work and fulfill the requirements of this policy. Under no circumstances will an accelerated transition be authorized if the retirement date is less than six months out.
- b. “Gap” requirement: There shall be a gap between the end of the current pastor and the beginning of the new pastor’s service. This gap shall be no less than six weeks. Period. Full stop. The presbytery can assist the Session in recruiting retired teaching elders, validated ministers, and at-large ministers to provide pulpit supply during the gap interval.
- c. Sessions and congregations are cautioned to be aware the Pastor Nominating Committee process proceeds at its own pace, and COM cannot promise the date by which this accelerated process will be complete. It may be necessary for congregations to employ a short-term interim for three to six months if the pastoral search process is

taking longer than expected. The COM can help congregations recruit gap interim candidates, who will often be retired pastors.

2. Pastors' Absentee Role in the Process

- a. Before an accelerated pastoral transition will be considered by COM, understanding and acceptance of the presbytery's "Covenant of Closure" must be affirmed by the current pastor, Session, and the congregation.
- b. In addition to the Covenant as written in the COM Handbook, further affirmation must be agreed to by all parties that the pastor will have no role in the writing of the mission study, selection of the PNC, writing of the Ministry Information Form, or selection of her or his successor. In order to ensure compliance with the pastor's absentee role in the accelerated transition process, the above shall be affirmed by all parties, including the congregation at a duly called meeting.
- c. Violations of this covenant shall void COM's permission to conduct an accelerated pastoral transition.

3. Congregational Self-Study and COM Interview

- a. The Session shall oversee the creation of a congregational self-study (Appendix A). The congregational self-study will require the cooperation of elders, staff, and the congregation, although Sessions are reminded the pastor is not to participate in this work.
- b. The work of the congregational self-study is extensive, with much of the information appropriate for inclusion in the mission study that follows at a later date. Sessions are encouraged to discuss how work will be divided, delegated, and implemented. The congregational self-study includes questions requiring narrative responses, gathering of factual and numerical data, as well as opportunities for Session and the congregation to be in discernment and dialogue together. The discernment and dialogue may occur as a congregational retreat, a Town Hall gathering(s), or some other format appropriate to the congregation's practice. Ultimately it is left to the Session to decide the best means for gathering and reporting the information in the congregational self-study.
- c. When the congregational self-study is complete and submitted to the COM, a COM interview will be scheduled. The COM interview will include two or more COM members, ordinarily the cluster liaisons, who will interview the current pastor, other staff, the Session, and deacons if applicable. The COM liaisons will also attend a Sunday morning service(s).

- d. Following the COM interview, the COM liaisons will draft and submit a report to the full COM and copy the Session. The report will seek to address the need to discern the “interim issues” that may be necessary for a healthy transition and to distinguish between ordinary organizational concerns (e.g. “we need to do a better job with stewardship” or, “we don’t recruit volunteers very well”) and issues that need to be solved before a new leader can come and function well (e.g. “pastor X was something of a control freak,” or, “our committees don’t really function”).
- e. The report will include the following:
 - i. Five strengths of the congregation
 - ii. Five questions or potential areas of concern
 - iii. A recommendation regarding whether to move forward with an accelerated transition or to affirm a traditional interim process. The recommendation shall explain why the COM liaisons are making their recommendation.
- f. The report shall be submitted to the full COM at least one week in advance of their plenary meeting, with a copy to the Session. Session members shall be invited to attend the COM to present their perspective.

4. *Mission Study, PNC and MIF*

- a. If COM votes to approve an accelerated pastoral transition process, the Session may move toward the drafting of a mission study. The mission study process will be led by members of the Session, with support and consultation from the COM liaisons. The ordinary process outlined in the COM Handbook is appropriate for use in this situation.
- b. It should be noted the information collected for the congregational self-study is similar to information ordinarily collected for a mission study. It is appropriate to use the congregational self-study material in the mission study. However, caution should be observed not merely to repeat the answers from the congregational self-study, as a strong mission study includes additional discernment regarding mission, vision, and ministry.
- c. The ordinary process for electing a pastor nominating committee, writing a ministry information form, and selecting a pastor shall be used, with appropriate care taken to ensure the current pastor does not participate in any of these processes. The COM liaison will facilitate these processes in accordance with the COM Handbook.

Appendix A: Congregational Self-Study

() Indicates a required response.*

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

1. Write a brief history of your congregation (maximum four pages). Include those events that contributed to periods of growth or decline in the number of people participating. Write in a factual style. Avoid the temptation to puff the story for public relations and the temptation to inject personal commentary regarding past problems.*
2. Write a brief history of pastors and a brief summary of the significant contributions and challenges that occurred during the pastor's tenure.*
3. List dates and provide descriptions for any building construction, major renovation, land acquisition, existing debt, or leasing of facilities. List the amount of acreage you own, lease, or rent, the square footage of building(s), and number of parking spaces (distinguishing between off-street and street parking).*
4. Write a summary of your congregational structure including the individuals or groups who are responsible for program decisions, budgeting and financial oversight, buildings and grounds, and any other major interests of the congregation. List committees, task forces, program teams, etc. and explain how these relate to the Session. Provide a chart that reflects your current organizational structure.*
5. Provide a description of the Pastor's current role and responsibilities as the Session understands it to be.*
6. Provide a list of all full and part-time program staff positions for the last ten years, or from the beginning if founded more recently. Give the dates for people's tenure and state the real reason why individuals left. (Leave out the pertinent specifics only where required by law.)
7. Provide a list of all people who oversee specific areas of service. List the number of positions for which they are responsible in their oversight. State whether these people are full-time, part-time, or volunteer staff.
8. List any formal ties or major informal ties to other organizations or associations. State how the congregation views and interacts with such groups.

DEMOGRAPHY

1. Prepare a chart and graph for each of the following items for each year over the last 10 years, or entire history if founded more recently.*
 - a. Number of members or regular participants
 - b. Average attendance of your weekly worship services
 - c. Average weekly attendance of all your groups and classes combined
2. List the total receipts and total expenditures for each of the last 10 years or for your entire history if founded more recently.*
3. State the total number of contributors to the congregation during the last fiscal year and the average amount given per contributor during the last fiscal year. (Churches may define “contributor” as they choose; please indicate how you define your term.)*
4. Estimate the average age of the people participating in the regular activities of your congregation. State how this was determined.
5. State the percentage of people who attend your worship services who also attend some group meeting such as a class, support group, or service team. Count each individual only once.
6. Prepare a list of the number of current members or regular participants who got involved:
 - Prior to 2000
 - From 2001-2010
 - From 2011-present
7. Without listing names, state the amount given by each of the top ten contributors of record in the last fiscal year. Total these amounts and state the percentage of giving this total represents in relation to total contributions. State the same information for the second ten contributors of record.

COMMUNITY STUDY

1. Write a brief overview of the area and community in which the congregation is located or which the congregation serves.*
2. This overview should include about one paragraph on each of the following features:*

- a. History
 - b. Population
 - c. Income levels
 - d. Education levels
 - e. Social, ethnic and religious diversity
 - f. Age distribution
 - g. Growth/decline trends
 - h. Other characteristics you deem significant
3. This overview should also briefly describe the square mile that surrounds the primary location of the congregation.*

BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

1. List the core values and/or basic beliefs of the congregation. How do people connect to Christ through your ministry?*
2. List other important commitments or practices that characterize the congregation, such as:*

 - a. Covenants or Codes of Conduct
 - b. Key Social Issues
 - c. Political Positions
 - d. Regular Activities
 - e. Significant Voluntary Financial Commitments

DOCUMENTS

1. Please send copies of the following documents (if you have them):*

 - a. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (or “Constitution”)
 - b. Last two annual reports
 - c. Last two annual budgets and financial statements
 - d. Sample bulletin and/or newsletter
 - e. Other printed documents you deem helpful in providing insight into your congregation

SELF-STUDY GROUP

1. After the self-study information has been compiled, the Session shall involve the congregation in a discussion of the following questions. After gathering congregational input, the Session shall provide the Session's consensus perspective to each question:.*
 - a. What are the three greatest strengths of this congregation, listed in priority order?
 - b. What are the three most significant weaknesses of your church, listed in order of the greatest need first?
 - c. What three changes would you like to see made in your church, listed in priority order?
 - d. What is most needed for you to be prepared to receive, welcome, and embrace a new pastor's ministry?
2. List the names of the people who were primarily responsible for the gathering, organizing, and distributing data for this congregational self-study.*
3. List the names of the people who were primary authors of this congregational self-study.*



Church Leadership Connection

On Calling a Pastor



*A resource for
pastor nominating committees
and mid councils,
prepared by
Church Leadership Connection
and the Office of the General Assembly*



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202
800.728.7228 x8550

March 2015

On Calling a Pastor

A Manual for Churches Seeking Pastors

*This is what GOD says, the God who builds a road right through the ocean,
who carves a path through pounding waves,
The God who summons horses and chariots
and armies—they lie down and then can't get up;
they're snuffed out like so many candles:
"Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history.
Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new.
It's bursting out! Don't you see it? (Isaiah 43:16- 19 - The Message Bible)*

As you begin the journey to find new pastoral leadership, the next few months will be exciting, tedious, joyful, spiritually fulfilling, frustrating, inspiring, lengthy, and purposeful. The process is one of discernment and will challenge the congregation to listen closely for the will of God for its mission and ministry in this new stage of the congregation's life.

This is a new step of faith that will bring your congregation together around the common goal of identifying who God is calling to serve your congregation. This manual is designed to be a resource for those who are on this journey. We suggest that you use this resource to guide you through the call process. The policies and procedures of your presbytery will always take precedence over this manual. Therefore, it is important for the session, presbytery, and the PNC to stay in regular contact with one another so that everything may be done "decently and in order" from the time of a pastor's departure all the way through the calling and installing of a new pastor.

This resource is formatted into a PDF that may be read online or downloaded and printed. It also includes videos that expand several topics. Topics that include videos are indicated with an icon. Click on the icon to link to the video online at www.pcusa.org/clc. Web pages where appropriate are provided with helpful links for further resourcing. Leadership Competencies case studies are provided for group activity and discussions in Part Five.


Each section of the manual builds upon the next to walk you through the call process: demonstrating the denomination's theology of call and the role of each partner in the call process, inputting your form into the CLC system, and providing words of wisdom to increase the likelihood of you making the best ministry match possible.

Those who would benefit most from having this manual are sessions, presbytery liaisons, PNCs and others who support congregations in the midst of transition.


As you embark on this journey, we pray that you will know the power of God's presence each step of the way. When you finally find the person whom God has called to be your new pastor, we hope you will be a blessing to the world in your ministry together.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Office of the General Assembly
Church Leadership Connection (CLC)
Mid Council Ministries

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PART ONE — Introduction to Calling a Pastor

Acronyms Used in This Resource

A number of acronyms are used in the call process. To help you become familiar with the most common acronyms, we have listed them below.

| | |
|-------|---|
| | <i>Book of Order</i> |
| | F — Foundations of Presbyterian Polity |
| | G — Form of Government |
| | W — Directory for Worship |
| | D — Rules of Discipline |
| MIF | Ministry Information Form |
| CLC | Church Leadership Connection |
| EP/GP | Executive/General Presbyter |
| PIF | Personal Information Form |
| PNC | Pastor Nominating Committee |
| COM | Committee/Commissions on Ministry |
| CPM | Committee/Commissions on Preparation for Ministry |

Video Introduction

- ❖ On Calling a Pastor Video Introduction
<http://www.pcusa.org/ocap> 
- ❖ Spiritual Resources for the Journey

The most important resources you will need on this journey are the spiritual resources of Scripture and prayer. During this journey, be deliberate about spending time together with God's word and in prayer, not simply as bookends to a meeting but as an important part of listening for God's spirit. Here are a few resources that may be helpful on your journey:

| <i>Scripture Passages About Call:</i> | | <i>Other Scriptures:</i> | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Genesis 12:1–9 | Abram | Genesis 32:22–32 | Jacob wrestles with God |
| Genesis 24:1–61 | Rebekah | Isaiah 52:7 | The purpose of preaching |
| Exodus 3:1–12 | Moses | Nehemiah 2:12 | God's mission |
| 1 Samuel 3 | Samuel | Nehemiah 1:4–11 | Bathe your work in prayer |
| 1 Kings 19:1–18 | Elijah | Ezekiel 37:1–14 | The valley of dry bones |
| 1 Kings 19:19–21 | Elisha | Joel 2:28 | Women and men are called |
| Esther 4:1–17 | Esther | Matthew 20:26 | Servant leaders |
| Isaiah 6:1–13 | Isaiah | Matthew 22:14 | Many are called but few are chosen |
| Jonah 1 | Jonah | Matthew 28:16–20 | The Great Commission |
| Matthew 4:18–22 | The disciples | Matthew 6:25–34 | Don't worry |
| Luke 1:26–55 | Mary | Jeremiah 3:15 | Pastors after God's heart |
| John 1:43–51 | Philip and Nathanael | Acts 1:8 | Empowered by the Holy Spirit |
| Acts 1:15–26 | Matthias | 1 Corinthians 12:4–27 | Diversity of gifts |
| Acts 9:1–19 | Paul | Ephesians 4:12 | Equipping the church for ministry |
| Acts 16:14–15 | Lydia | | |
| Revelation 3:14–22 | The churches | | |



Other Resources:

- ❖ The *Book of Order*, especially the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Chapters 1–3
- ❖ The *Book of Common Worship*, especially Daily Prayer

God Calls Women and Men to Serve as Pastors

"In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community."

(*Book of Confessions*, Brief Statement of Faith, 10.3, Lines 29–32)

"The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church."

(*Book of Confessions*, Brief Statement of Faith, 10.4, Lines 58–64)

Beliefs in Practice



Openness

F-1.0404 Book of Order

In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God's mission in the world. In Christ, the triune God tends the least among us, suffers the curse of human sinfulness, raises up a new humanity, and promises a new future for all creation. In Christ, Church members share with all humanity the realities of creatureliness, sinfulness, brokenness, and suffering, as well as the future toward which God is drawing them. The mission of God pertains not only to the Church but also to people everywhere and to all creation. As it participates in God's mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks:

a new openness to the sovereign activity of God in the Church and in the world, to a more radical obedience to Christ, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work;

a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity;

a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world; and

a new openness to God's continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be more effective in its mission.

Connectionalism

Presbyterians as members of the Body of Christ live out our faith through connectional polity. The polity of the church provides a denomination-wide PC(USA) framework in which we confess together our creeds and our acts of faith. In a connectional system, decisions made by one body affect the body as a whole. Each governing body supports, guides, and holds accountable the other bodies in a faithful attempt to live out our faith as confessed in scripture and our *Book of Confessions*.

Teaching Elder Defined

G-2.0501 Book of Order

Teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament) shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). They may serve in a variety of ministries, as authorized by the presbytery. When they serve as preachers and teachers of the Word, they shall preach and teach the faith of the church, so that the people are shaped by the pattern of the gospel and strengthened for witness and service. When they serve at font and table, they shall interpret the mysteries of grace and lift the people's vision toward the hope of God's new creation. When they serve as pastors, they shall support the people in the disciplines of the faith amid the struggles of daily life. When they serve as presbyters, they shall participate in the responsibilities of governance, seeking always to discern the mind of Christ and to build up Christ's body through devotion, debate, and decision.

Ordination Standards

G-2.0104b Book of Order

Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.







PART TWO — Teaching Elders as Pastors

Types of Pastoral Positions

The types of pastoral positions are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. Pastoral relationships with congregations can be either “installed” or “temporary.”

Installed Pastoral Relationships

Installed pastoral relationships are typically for an indefinite period. However, an installed pastor may be called for a designated term as determined by the presbytery, in consultation with the congregation. Calls with a predetermined end date may be renewed for an additional designated term or changed, with the approval of the presbytery and congregation, to an indefinite call.

Temporary Pastoral Relationships

- ❖ Session invites for service with presbytery concurrence
- ❖ Teaching elder, PC(USA) or other; PC(USA) candidate, or ruling elder
- ❖ Titles determined by presbytery
- ❖ Up to twelve-month terms, but may be renewed

“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0504b)

Succession Restrictions

Ordinarily an associate pastor is not eligible to become the next installed pastor of the congregation he or she is serving. In the same way, a temporary pastor is not ordinarily eligible to become the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor (*Book of Order*, G-2.0504a-b). If a presbytery determines that in its mission strategy it is advisable for a teaching elder currently serving as associate pastor or temporary pastor, to be permitted to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor, the relationship shall be established by a three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present and voting (*Book of Order*, G-2.0504c).

Ministers of Other Denominations

The *Book of Order* affirms the ecumenical commitment of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), particularly in Chapter Five of the Form of Government: Ecumenicity and Union. This section outlines our relationships with other denominations and holds that the basis of these relationships is to give visibility to the unity that exists in Christ.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has authorized and directed the formation of covenants, agreements, and statements of purpose with other Christian bodies that address, among other things, the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of ministers. Such agreements are said to place us in correspondence with one another.

The PC(USA) is in a relationship of correspondence, meaning the church maintains a relationship with the highest council or governing body with the following:

- ❖ Churches with which the PC(USA) has had historical relations outside the United States, as recognized by the General Assembly.
- ❖ Churches that are members of the ecumenical bodies (for example: the World Council of Churches, World Communion of Reformed Churches, National Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together, etc.) in which the PC(USA) holds membership.
- ❖ Churches with which the PC(USA) has formal ecumenical dialogue approved by the General Assembly.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion or covenant relationship with those churches so recognized by the General Assembly. These relationships exist as a matter of ecumenical agreement.

Covenant of Agreement Partners



A minister of another Reformed Church as a part of the Formula of Agreement may be permitted to serve a PC(USA) congregation under the Orderly Exchange Process. Ministers of Formula of Agreement denominations (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ) under “Orderly Exchange” may serve as an installed or temporary pastor of a PC(USA) congregation by invitation from a PC(USA) presbytery (regional mid council).

For more information see:

- ❖ Advisory Opinion for Receiving Ministers of Other Denominations <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/ecclesial-and-ecumenical-ministries/ecumenical-and-agency-relationships/correspondence-and-pcusa/>
- ❖ Formula of Agreement <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/ecumenical-formula-agreement/>
- ❖ Under Covenant Agreement Between the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/kpca_pcusa_orderly_exchange_w_out_pif_revised\[1\].pdf](http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/kpca_pcusa_orderly_exchange_w_out_pif_revised[1].pdf)
- ❖ Highlights to calling ministers under the Formula of Agreement (the Process for Orderly Exchange) <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/summary-guidelines-employment-ministers-other-deno>

Ministers of Other Christian Churches

Ministers of other denominations that are not a part of the Formula of Agreement churches may serve PC(USA) congregations on a temporary basis if their service meets the mission strategy of the presbytery. Refer to your presbytery for guidance on this issue.

Immigrant Fellowships and Congregations

Immigrant fellowships and congregations often have particular needs for pastoral leadership that may be difficult to fill. When the presbytery determines that its mission strategy with one of these fellowships or congregations requires it, the presbytery may recognize the ordination of a minister in good standing in another denomination. If the minister lacks the educational history required of our candidates, the presbytery will then provide educational opportunities as necessary and prudent for the minister's successful ministry in the presbytery. Immigrant fellowships and congregations must work closely with the presbytery to secure appropriate pastoral leadership and to ensure that they are following the constitutional process described in G-20505a (1) for calling an immigrant pastor.

Leadership Options for Small Congregations



- ❖ PC(USA) Teaching Elders — Called to serve smaller congregations as part-time pastors in installed and temporary positions.
- ❖ Bi-Vocational/Tentmakers — PC(USA) teaching elders who serve as pastor and also work in other employment that may be ministry related or not. When considering a tentmaker pastor, it is important to remember that the person must divide his or her time among multiple employers. The pastor will be restricted in the number of hours he or she has available to work for the church. These individuals are members of the presbytery and serve as all other teaching elders except in their hourly commitment to the congregation.
- ❖ Supply/Temporary Pastors — Teaching elders and candidates serving as temporary supply pastors. The specific title of the position may differ among presbyteries. These contract positions are made with the session with the approval of the presbytery. The contract positions are for twelve months and can be renewed annually with presbytery approval. (For more information, see G-2.504b.)
- ❖ Small Church Residency Program — Open to first-call pastors who are PC(USA) candidates for ministry and have been certified by their presbyteries as ready to negotiate for service. This program pairs small, underserved congregations in a variety of ministry settings with recent seminary graduates who are interested in answering God's call to serve where there is need in the PC(USA), specifically in small-membership congregations. For more information see:

— <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/residency/about-program/>


— Video — www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/residency/videos/ 

On Calling a Pastor

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- ❖ Ruling Elders Commissioned for Particular Pastoral Service (CRE) — Ruling elders may be commissioned to a particular congregation for a specified term that should not exceed three years. However, the commission can be renewed. Ruling elders who seek to serve as CREs must meet the training and examination of their presbytery. The commission of CREs is limited to their presbytery of membership. For more information, see G-2.10.

Raising Up New Leaders Video — <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clp/> 



PART THREE — The Call Process

"...The question before us could be framed thusly: 'God, whom are you selecting/calling at this time to lead in this church? Show us your choice.'"

— Selecting Church Leaders,
The Alban Institute, 2002

"Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission in the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. Christ alone rules, calls, teaches, and uses the Church as he wills." (Book of Order, F-1.0202).

Presbyterians believe that God uses committees, papers, procedures, and our polity, sprinkled with a generous measure of prayer, Scripture, and worship, to help you discern who it is that God is calling to be your pastor. This call is confirmed as the pastor, the church, and the presbytery each say "yes" to the relationship.



This three-way partnership is acted out throughout the pastoral call process, with the presbytery having the primary responsibility for oversight of the process. "... No pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery" (Book of Order, G-2.0502).



PART THREE – The Call Process

During the time of transition between pastors, a congregation is invited to engage in a spiritual discernment process to discover or reconfirm its call to ministry—what God wants the church to be and do in the next phase of the congregation’s life. Your presbytery may ask your congregation to engage in a mission study that involves Bible study, prayer, and an honest and thoughtful look at your congregation and community, as a way to discern the ministry direction in which God is leading you.

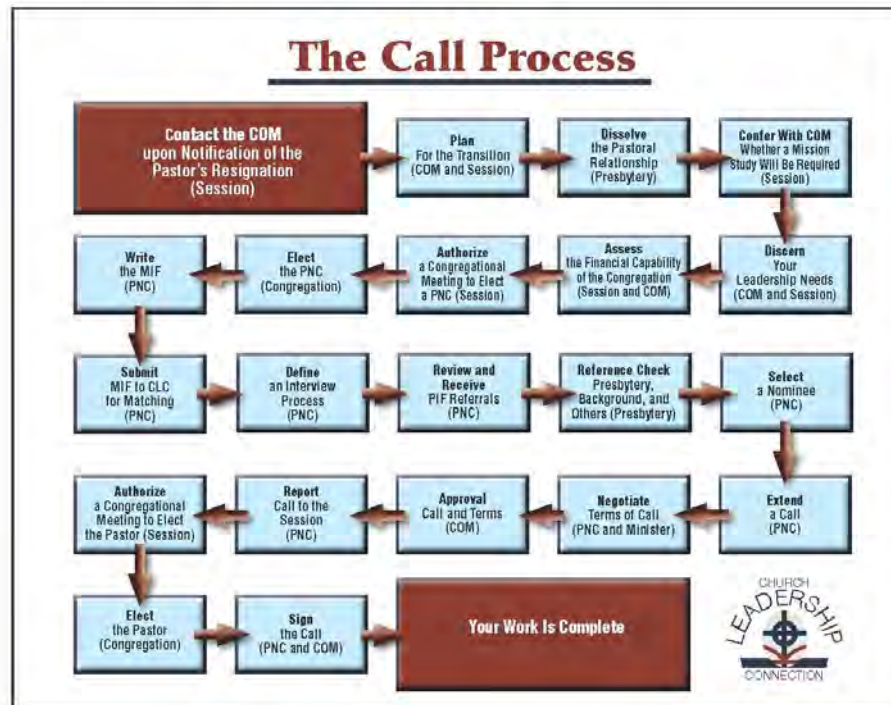
Once this becomes clear, the pastor nominating committee (PNC), in consultation with the presbytery, begins the discernment process of discovering who God is calling to be the pastor in this next chapter of your congregation’s life and ministry.

Polity and the Call Process



The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) call process reflects the way our ministry is governed today. Our church polity is representative, and this form of government is seen throughout the call process. To understand how our polity is distinct from that of other denominations, see this short video on Denominational Polities at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>.

Below is a suggested call process. It describes the role of each partner in the process: the presbytery, COM, session, PNC, pastor, and congregation. For additional information, view the video, The Call Process, at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>.



Book of Order References — Call and Installation

| | |
|----------|---|
| G-2.07 | Ordination |
| G-2.0801 | Pastoral Vacancy |
| G-2.0802 | Election of a Pastor Nominating Committee |
| G-2.0803 | Call Process |
| G-2.0804 | Terms of Call |
| G-2.0805 | Installation Service |

Presbytery as a Participant in the Pastoral Call Process**Presbytery's Role**

The presbytery will be your companion in the search process, often through someone who will serve as your liaison. Your presbytery liaison will provide you with guidance, resources, and other services as you go through the pastoral search process. In many presbyteries, the liaison will help you to assess your leadership needs, financial health, and the type of pastoral leadership you need such as full-time, part-time, bi-vocational, installed, or temporary. It is wise to consult regularly with your presbytery liaison not only for advice and guidance but to keep him or her informed, especially at key times in your pastoral search process.

The presbytery will work closely with the pastor nominating committee (PNC), which has been elected to present a pastor or associate pastor nominee to the congregation. The presbytery has the responsibility to guide and participate in the decision of the PNC. The presbytery will provide the PNC "counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0803).

Each presbytery is unique and will have its own procedures and policies regarding the search process, which supersede any procedures found in this manual. Therefore, it is important for a congregation seeking a new pastor to be in regular contact with the presbytery.

Key Times for Presbytery Involvement

There are several key times in the call process when it is particularly important for presbytery to be involved with your congregation.

When Your Pastor Announces His or Her Departure. As your current pastor prepares to leave, presbytery has the responsibility to dissolve the pastoral relationship, appoint a moderator for your session, and provide you with guidance about pulpit supply.

During the Pastoral Vacancy. Presbytery has the responsibility to assist the session with issues related to pastoral vacancies, including securing temporary pastoral leadership; assessing congregational finances, including costs associated with a pastoral search and pastoral compensation; engaging in a congregational mission study (if required); approval of the Ministry Information Form (MIF); and nominating and electing a PNC.

Working with the Pastor Nominating Committee. Presbytery has the responsibility to guide the PNC through the pastoral call process, providing training, oversight, and assistance. Presbytery will also have a role in reference and background checks for the finalists being considered. Presbytery must examine the PNC's finalist for presbytery membership and concur with the PNC's final decision before a call can be issued.



When the New Pastor Is Called. Presbytery has the responsibility to ensure that the call to your new pastor is in order and that the appropriate actions are taken by the congregation and presbytery.

When Your Pastor Is Ordained and/or Installed. The call process for your new pastor is completed at a service of ordination and/or installation that is organized and conducted by the presbytery, often through the work of a presbytery-appointed administrative commission.

As Your Pastor Ministers with You. The presbytery remains your partner in this pastoral relationship. Some presbyteries assign a permanent liaison to each congregation in the presbytery who will visit often and participate in special occasions, while other presbyteries assign representatives to visit with you periodically. Don't hesitate to call your presbytery if you need extra support or guidance.

Other Participants in the Pastoral Call Process

The Session

The session's responsibility is to set a positive and reassuring tone during the pastoral search process. This includes assisting the congregation in coping with the departure of the pastor, carrying on with the ministry of the congregation, and looking forward to the next stage of the congregation's life together. During this process the session should meet regularly with the moderator appointed by the presbytery in order to continue to fulfill its responsibilities for the congregation's worship life, Christian education, pastoral care, fellowship, mission, and administration. Session responsibilities, in consultation with presbytery, include:

- ❖ Securing guest preachers and providing for pastoral care during the immediate vacancy;
- ❖ With concurrence of presbytery, finding and contracting with temporary pastoral leadership for the longer vacancy period;
- ❖ Providing for and participating in a congregational mission study, if appropriate or required by the presbytery;
- ❖ Providing a process for the congregation to elect a PNC, including suggesting the number of PNC members;
- ❖ Calling a congregational meeting for the election of the PNC;
- ❖ Budgeting funds for the PNC to cover search expenses;
- ❖ Determining the financial compensation available for your new pastor, including moving costs;
- ❖ Reviewing and approving the completed MIF in order that the clerk of session may attest to it in CLC;
- ❖ Praying regularly for the PNC;
- ❖ Calling a congregational meeting when the PNC is ready to present its nominee to the congregation;
- ❖ Preparing for the new pastor's arrival by attending to such details as manse renovation, moving, and welcoming;
- ❖ Arranging for the ordination and/or installation of your new pastor in consultation with the presbytery.

The Moderator of Session

During a pastoral vacancy, the presbytery will appoint someone to moderate the session and congregational meetings. In many instances, the temporary pastor working with the session will be appointed to serve as moderator. The moderator's responsibilities include helping the session fulfill its responsibilities for the congregation's life and ministries.

The Temporary Pastor

The temporary pastor provides pastoral leadership during the congregation's search for the next pastor. The presbytery can help the session determine if the church needs a temporary pastor and what responsibilities the temporary pastor will have. An interim pastor is a temporary pastor who has special expertise and training in working with congregations in the midst of a pastoral transition. The temporary pastor's responsibilities often include:

- ❖ Worship leadership, including preaching and administration of the sacraments;
- ❖ Providing pastoral care;
- ❖ Serving as moderator of session (when appointed by presbytery) and working with the session to provide for the life and ministry of the congregation;
- ❖ Administrative work, including supervision of other staff persons;
- ❖ Supporting the work of the PNC, but not being directly involved with their work;
- ❖ Assisting with the congregational mission study (with presbytery approval);
- ❖ Helping the congregation prepare to welcome the leadership of a new pastor.

The Pastor Nominating Committee

The pastor nominating committee (PNC), representative of the whole congregation and elected by the congregation, has the ultimate responsibility for nominating a minister to the congregation for election as the next pastor or associate pastor. Over a number of months, the PNC will journey through the pastoral search process, seeking to hear the call of Christ and "to participate in God's own choice" for your next pastor. In the pastoral call process, the PNC's responsibilities include:

- ❖ Completing the congregation's MIF and submitting it to session and presbytery for approval;
- ❖ Entering the approved MIF online with Church Leadership Connection (CLC);
- ❖ Receiving, reading, and evaluating Personal Information Forms (PIF) in a spirit of prayerful openness to the movement of God's Spirit;
- ❖ Regularly providing reports to the congregation on the pastoral search progress;
- ❖ Narrowing the field of prospective pastors through listening to sermons, reference checking (by both the PNC and the presbytery), and phone or video conference interviews—all while sharing, listening, and praying together;
- ❖ Interviewing face-to-face the "short list" of prospective pastors, providing for a welcoming and hospitable visit to your church community;
- ❖ Arranging with the presbytery for the necessary examinations and approvals of your finalists;
- ❖ Selecting one nominee to present to the congregation and negotiating the terms of call;
- ❖ Obtaining presbytery approval of the call;
- ❖ Presenting the nominee to the congregation for its vote;
- ❖ Following the affirmative vote of the congregation, signing the pastoral terms of call for the new pastor;
- ❖ Notifying Church Leadership Connection (CLC) when a call has been extended and accepted.





The Congregation

The responsibilities of the congregation, while few, are no less important than those of the other participants in the pastoral call process. The responsibilities of the congregation include:

- ❖ Continuing to support the ministry of the church through prayer, participation, and financial support during the time of pastoral transition;
- ❖ Electing the PNC;
- ❖ Praying regularly for the PNC;
- ❖ Electing the new pastor and approving the terms of call;
- ❖ Welcoming the new pastor as the ministry begins.



PART FOUR — The Transition



Dissolving the Pastoral Relationship

When a pastor announces his or her acceptance of another call for service or his or her retirement, the congregation often experiences a variety of emotions: sadness, anger, betrayal, or even relief. It is important that the exit of the pastor is handled well for the benefit of all concerned. Congregation members and the pastor need time and opportunity to celebrate their ministry together and say goodbye. It is important that the exit time be neither so short that goodbyes do not get said nor so long that everyone is ready to move on before the actual departure date. A good ending is the foundation of a good new beginning for the next pastor.

The minister will inform the presbytery and the session and shortly thereafter share the news with the congregation. The session calls a congregational meeting to act on the minister's request that the relationship be dissolved. The congregational action becomes a recommendation to presbytery, which will vote to dissolve the pastoral relationship. The pastoral relationship between a pastor or associate pastor and a church is dissolved only by presbytery.

Resources for Congregations in Pastoral Transition

Beginning Ministry Together: The Alban Handbook for Clergy Transitions. Roy. M. Oswald, James M. Heath, and Ann W. Heath, The Alban Institute, 2003.

A Change of Pastors ... And How It Affects Change in the Congregation. Loren B. Mead, The Alban Institute, 2005.



Planning for Transition

The transition between pastors is a valuable time for congregations. It is an opportunity to reflect on your congregation, its community context, and its ministry in the present and future. It may also provide the opportunity to experience different styles of pastoral leadership and to work on particular issues facing the congregation. The session, the presbytery, and the PNC (once it is elected) work together to make the transition time constructive. Plan your transition with your ministry context and vision for ministry in mind. Consult with your presbytery and other key leaders to discern how to use the transition period for spiritual renewal, understanding your call to ministry today, reorganizing, and future ministry planning.


Next Steps in Ministry

WHO ARE WE?

WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BE?

WHERE IS GOD CALLING US TO GO?

Having a good understanding of the above questions will help you decide the type of leadership you will need in your new pastor. The answers to the above questions will also help you communicate your ministry narrative to prospective pastors discerning a call to your congregation. For more information see the video on Mission Studies at

<http://www.pcusa.org/ocap> 

As presbyteries work with congregations during their search for a new pastor, the goal is to assist them in making the best match possible. Making a good match begins with having a clear picture of who the congregation is and who God is calling it to become. Presbyteries take a variety of approaches to what is often called a "mission study." Some presbyteries use a particular approach that all of their congregations must follow. Others make suggestions with regard to several instruments that can be employed for this purpose. Still others recommend that, in most cases, it will be much more beneficial to wait until the new pastor arrives to do an in-depth study so that the new pastor can be a part of that process. In such cases, the presbytery may suggest a much shorter process than the traditional mission study.

Here are some questions that your presbytery committee, working with churches in pastoral searches, might want to ask as it determines what suggestions it might make.

1. How long has it been since the last pastoral search?
2. Have there been significant changes in the size or financial capabilities of the congregation since the last search?
3. Are there significant changes in the community the congregation serves? Are there new immigrants, has there been a gain or loss in population, has there been an economic boom or bust?
4. Does the congregation have the energy level to conduct an in-depth study?
5. Is there a trained interim pastor in place? If so, does this person do a mission study as a routine part of his or her service as an interim/transitional pastor?
6. Has there been significant conflict in the church?
7. Did the last pastorate end precipitously?

There may be other questions that your presbytery's committee would like to ask to help determine the kind of guidance it will give with regard to a mission study.

Research Services, a ministry of the PC(USA), provides helpful and free online resources to congregations engaging in a mission study. These resources are available at www.pcusa.org/research/help and include:

- ❖ *Research Strategies for Congregations*. A compilation of tools that can be used to help you understand the people in your church and community, including information on congregational surveys.
- ❖ *Ten-Year Trends in Your Congregation*. Data from your congregation's annual statistical report for the most recent ten years with graphs and comparisons.
- ❖ Zip Code Statistics — www.zip-code.com
- ❖ City Data — <http://www.city-data.com>

Assessing Your Finances



A critical step before searching for a new pastor is a financial assessment. The session, in conversation with the presbytery, should determine whether there will be sufficient funds to adequately support the pastor you call.

- ❖ It is important to not only to have the resources to call a pastor but to also have the financial resources to carry out ministry through education programs, mission outreach, per capita, presbytery missions, spiritual formation, building upkeep, and other personnel.
- ❖ Moving cost should be budgeted into your financial assessment.
- ❖ Cost for conducting your pastoral search (interviews, in person visits, and neutral pulpits) should also be included.



Compensation Package

Consider a compensation package that is appropriate for a pastor with the skills and experience you are seeking as well as for the cost of living in your community. A conversation with your presbytery, a review of the current Board of Pensions Clergy Effective Salaries, and a look at similar church positions listed on the online CLC “Opportunity Search” may be helpful in assisting you to make that determination. Most presbyteries have established minimum “effective” compensation guidelines that must be met for pastoral positions within the presbytery. Be sure you know the current presbytery guidelines.

The manse, if you have one, is an important part of the compensation package. On the Effective Salary Form, the value of your manse should be calculated into the Terms of Call.

See the Board of Pensions resource at <http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/pln-103.pdf> for a full definition of Effective Salary.

The compensation package should also include a budget for medical, death, disability, and pension coverage for your pastor through the Board of Pensions. Most presbyteries also require that terms of call include continuing education allowances, SECA (social security off-set), and mileage reimbursement as minimum additions to the salary package.

For part-time calls, your obligation for effective salary and other benefits is determined by the number of hours worked and whether the pastor is in an installed call. Consult your presbytery COM (representative) for guidance in understanding your salary requirements.



Electing a Pastor Nominating Committee

In the PC(USA) call process, the congregation gives authority to search for a pastor to a pastor nominating committee (PNC). Once the PNC is elected, the other members of the congregation and the session have no role in determining who will be the next pastor until the PNC is ready to present its nominee to the congregation for a vote.

The presbytery has a responsibility to work with the PNC members, to advise them, and to evaluate the nominee they select to present to the congregation. The presbytery is authorized by our *Book of Order* to be partners with you in your discernment process.

The presbytery may have recommendations for the session regarding the number of members for a PNC and the process of electing a PNC. Often congregations will use the congregation's nominating committee to propose a slate of nominees for the PNC. In considering nominees for the PNC, the congregation's nominating committee should strive for a PNC that is representative of the whole congregation. It should consider church members of integrity who are

- ❖ knowledgeable about the church and community and about Presbyterian theology and government;
- ❖ spiritual leaders within the congregation and are active in the life and work of the congregation;
- ❖ able to make a significant commitment of their time, energy, and very best wisdom;
- ❖ willing to accept this as a task of spiritual discernment, not being easily influenced by personal desires or congregational politics, but rather listening for the voice of God
- ❖ able to honor confidentiality.

The congregation must give careful and prayerful attention to the election of persons to serve in this important role.

The Process for Electing a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)

Steps:

1. The presbytery authorizes the congregation to elect a PNC.
2. The session recommends the number of persons to serve on the PNC.
3. The nominating committee or another designated committee prepares a slate to be voted on by the congregation at a meeting called by the session.
4. A congregational meeting is held to elect the PNC.
5. The PNC is elected and commissioned for its work.







PART FIVE — Searching for a Pastor

The Work of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)

Getting Organized

As members of the elected committee, get organized and map out what you will need, what you will do, and the timetable you hope to follow.

Scheduling PNC Meetings

In consultation with your presbytery liaison, plan for your first meeting. The presbytery liaison often leads this orientation meeting, so it will be essential for all of your members to be present. The presbytery may also ask the session to be present for the first part of the meeting.

Suggestions for Your Work



Plan to set regular meeting days, times, and places, making certain that all PNC members will be available and that your presbytery liaison will be able to attend. Many PNCs, wisely, decide to meet every week. Regular and frequent meetings are a major factor in helping to move the call process along. If you will be meeting at the church building, be sure the room in which you will be meeting is adequate for your confidentiality needs. Some PNCs choose to meet away from the church building due to the number of other church activities going on during their scheduled meeting time.

Understanding Your Work

As your committee begins working together, a number of points should be discussed by your committee:

- ❖ Set regular meeting times.
- ❖ Include time for prayer and scripture.
- ❖ Build consensus and unity.
- ❖ Gather materials, Bibles, and other resources.
- ❖ Review the video on the call process.
- ❖ Establish a covenant of agreement among the PNC and hold one another accountable to the terms of your covenant.



Confidentiality



Maintaining confidentiality within the PNC is of the upmost importance. Maintaining confidentiality ensures that the identities of the prospective pastors your PNC is considering are protected. Maintaining confidentiality within the PNC is an issue of integrity, trusting God in the process, and spiritual leadership.

It is often noted that the news that a prospective pastor is seeking or considering a new call travels fast. To respect the discernment of prospective pastors, work to uphold within the PNC a covenant of confidentiality that honors the integrity of the call seeker and the committee. This means that information about prospective pastors and all conversations, deliberations, and perceptions should not go beyond the members of the PNC, your presbytery liaison, and the EP/GP. Therefore, only certain people and groups have the right to know information about the pastors under consideration at specific times in the call process. As you maintain confidentiality in your process, you will ensure the integrity of the work of the PNC, keeping it free from outside influence or interference.

Selecting Leadership

You may find it helpful to identify leaders with specific responsibilities to help facilitate the work of the PNC. These leaders may include a chairperson or co-chairs, secretary, and/or Internet communicator.

The role of the chairperson or co-chairs might be to

- ❖ encourage discussion of various viewpoints rather than discourage them;
- ❖ delegate responsibility and see that tasks are carried out;
- ❖ ensure that decisions reached are the consensus of the group;
- ❖ communicate with the presbytery, CLC, candidates, and prospective pastors.

The role of the secretary might be to

- ❖ be responsible for correspondence to and from the committee;
- ❖ keep the minutes of meetings;
- ❖ perform other duties as determined by the PNC.

The role of the Internet communicator might be to

- ❖ enter your approved MIF online with CLC;
- ❖ send and receive confidential communication to and from prospective pastors;
- ❖ access and/or download from CLC all referred PIFs.

Ideally, the internet communicator would be your PNC chairperson or co-chair, but if she or he is not comfortable with the Internet, or if you just want to share the work of the PNC, another member of the committee could assume this role. Be sure that this person has access to the Internet on a regular basis and an e-mail account where confidentiality can be maintained. Access through a church office computer is not recommended unless complete confidentiality can be assured. All mailings and e-mails should go only to PNC members and not through others who are not PNC members. The church office address is not the best place to receive mail, so decide the primary mail and e-mail addresses your committee will be using for all communication.



Using the Church Leadership Connection (CLC)

CLC Mission Statement

To help search committees and call seekers with a high likelihood of "fit" to make an initial connection, relying on them to go deeper in exchange of information, conversation, and discernment.

Foundational Principles for CLC

- ❖ The call is a process of spiritual discernment that involves the call to an individual confirmed by a calling body
- ❖ CLC is a tool in this broader call process
- ❖ CLC is a web-based system that provides global access and visibility
- ❖ CLC policies are in compliance with the *Book of Order*
- ❖ CLC policies do not supersede the authority of mid councils but work in partnership to support presbytery mission
- ❖ CLC adheres to values of fairness and openness

Who Can Use the System

Who May Enter a Personal Information Form (PIF)?

- ❖ PC(USA) teaching elders in good standing
- ❖ PC(USA) candidates for ministry who have been certified "ready for examination for ordination, pending a call"
- ❖ Christian educators, deacons, ruling elders, and lay professionals who are members of a PC(USA) congregation
- ❖ Ministers of other denominations who are transferring their membership to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and have completed the requirements for transfer except for the call


Who May Enter a Ministry Information Form (MIF)?

- ❖ PC(USA) congregations
- ❖ PC(USA) Joint Congregational Witness (Union Churches)
- ❖ PC(USA) educational and theological institutions
- ❖ PC(USA) conference centers
- ❖ PC(USA) General Assembly agencies
- ❖ Other entities, such as hospitals, nursing homes, and retirement facilities with official ties to the PC(USA)

Writing the Ministry Information Form (MIF)

Your Ministry Narrative Through the MIF



The congregation's Ministry Information Form provides a narrative picture of the mission and ministry of the congregation and its sense of call. Prospective pastors will use the form to help them discern whether God is calling them to serve your church. The MIF should be used to express your ministry context, demographics, history, theology, values, leadership needs, and expectations. Well written MIFs clearly communicate the above and will ensure the best referrals. Use the matching features of the forms to specify your requirements for the position. We highly recommend that you fully review the Calling Organization Tutorial at (<http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/ministry-information-form2/>)  as a part of your PNC training.

The MIF consists of Part I and Part II. Part I asks for general information about your congregation. Each church is assigned a login and password. Your login will begin with a letter, followed by two numbers, then followed by your five-digit PC(USA) church PIN number (e.g., P0150639). Other information on Part I asks church size, racial ethnic composition, average worship attendance, church school attendance, curriculum, presbytery, community type, clerk of session contact information, and whether the congregation qualifies to participate in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program.

Part II of the MIF asks for more in-depth information about your congregation and includes narrative questions. *Responses to each narrative question are limited to 1,500 characters, including spaces and punctuation.*

In Part II you will need to select the following:

- ❖ Position type and experience requirements (*no experience, first ordained call, up to 2 years, 2–5 years, 5–10 years, or above 10 years*). Your MIF will be matched with all persons who have this level of experience and above.
- ❖ Employment status (full-time, part-time, open to both, or bi-vocational)
- ❖ Language requirements
- ❖ Statement of Faith (this is an optional requirement that will provide a written statement of a person's theology)
- ❖ Training/Certification (Interim/Transitional Ministry Training, Interim Executive Presbyter Training, Certified Christian Educator, Certified Business Administrator, Conflict Mediator, Clinical Pastoral Education Training, or Other)
- ❖ Deadline date (CLC does not recommend entering a deadline date unless you believe it to be absolutely necessary. If you enter a deadline date, know that ten days after that date your MIF will be purged from the CLC system. To continue your search process once your form is purged you will have to reenter your MIF)

The following information explains matching criteria, leadership competencies, call and fit, and other information that will help you in the search process. The following pages walk you through the MIF form and provide information on matching criteria, leadership competencies, call and fit, effective salary, narrative questions, and other information that is included on the MIF form.

Establishing Matching Criteria

The CLC system matches for positions and not individuals. Matches are made based upon position type, experience level, salary, language, geographical choice, and leadership competencies. Optional matching criteria include statements of faith, being open to call seekers in your presbytery, and optional links (sermons, blogs, and education samples). The matching criteria you establish will be used to match the congregation with prospective pastors with compatible leadership competencies, theology, and gifts.

Additional Matching Criteria

Illustrated below is an example of the basic matching criteria you will establish in the MIF Part II. Your MIF will be matched with prospective pastors that have selected similar matching criteria.

| | |
|--|--|
| Select a Position to be Filled: | Position Type * Head of Staff (who supervised one teaching elder and other staff) Experience Req. -Select- Specify title if a Youth Director (Non-ordained) Coordinator Solo Pastor |
| Employment Status: * | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Full-time <input type="radio"/> Part-time <input type="radio"/> Open to <input type="radio"/> Bi-vocational Head of Staff (Multi-Staff Pastor: who supervised two or more teaching elders and other staff) Head of Staff (who supervised one teaching elder and other staff) Associate Pastor (Christian Education) Associate Pastor (Youth) Associate Pastor (Other) Pastor (church planter, new church development, new worshipping community) Pastor (Transformation/Redevelopment) Pastor (Interim) Pastor (for a designated term) Pastor (Other Temporary i.e. Supply, Student) Pastor, yoked/pastor Vocational/ Tentmaker Co-Pastor Executive Pastor Evangelist or Mission Pastor Chaplain Certified Business Administrator Clinical Pastoral Education Training |
| Training/Certificate Requirements: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interim Ministries <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Church Executive <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Mediator <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Executive <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Business Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Pastoral Education Training |
| Other Training: | |
| Language Requirements: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> Taiwanese <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian <input type="checkbox"/> Creole <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Swahili <input type="checkbox"/> Burmese <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian <input type="checkbox"/> Laotian <input type="checkbox"/> Thai <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Twi <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language |
| Other Language: | |
| Statement Of Faith Required: | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Clergy Couples (are you open to a clergy couple?): | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| Deadline date for this MIF, if any: | <input type="text"/> (Optional) |

Example of the online MIF selecting the position title.



PART FIVE – Searching for a Pastor

| | |
|--|---|
| Select a Position to be Filled: | Position Type: * [Select] Experience Required: [Select] Specify title if appropriate: [Select] |
| Employment Status: * | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Full-time <input type="radio"/> Part-time <input type="radio"/> Open to both <input type="radio"/> Bi-vocational (able to provide employment through outside partnership) |
| Training/Certificate Requirements: | <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Ministry Training <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Christian Education <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Mediator Training <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Executive/Predbyter Training <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Business Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Pastoral Education Training |
| Other Training | [Text Box] |
| Language Requirements: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> Taiwanese <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian <input type="checkbox"/> Greek <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Swahili <input type="checkbox"/> Burmese <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian <input type="checkbox"/> Lao/Lao <input type="checkbox"/> Thai <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Twi <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language |
| Other Language | [Text Box] |
| Statement Of Faith Required: | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Clergy Couples (are you open to a clergy couple?): | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |
| Deadline date for this MIF, if any: | [Text Box] (Optional) |

Example of the online MIF selecting the experience requirements.

Optional Matching Criteria Example

| Need to Match? | Criteria | Value To Match |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Employment Status | Full-time |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Experience Level | 2-5 years |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Maximum Salary | \$65,000 |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Language: | English |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Statement Of Faith: | Statement of Faith is required |
| <input type="radio"/> YES <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO | Narrative Search: | (enter phrase) [Text Box] |
| <input type="radio"/> YES <input checked="" type="radio"/> NO | Optional Links:(i.e. sermons, lesson plans, articles, blogs, assessment results available, etc.) | Optional Links are required |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> NO | Actively Seeking: | Actively Seeking is required |

This is a screen shot from CLC matcher's page showing matching possible criteria.

Leadership Competencies



A competency is defined as a behavior or set of behaviors that describes performance in a particular working context. Competencies offer, make up, comprise a leadership blueprint that includes demonstrated ability, training, experience, measurable wisdom, and gifts and talents.

The MIF form includes competencies in four areas: Theological/Spiritual interpreter, Communication, Organizational Leadership, and Interpersonal Engagement. On the MIF form you are asked to select up to ten competencies as a part of your matching criteria. Definitions for the competencies can be accessed by clicking on the word as it is listed on the form.

In preparation for completing your MIF, we recommend that the committee use the case studies below to understand how leadership competencies contribute to the search process.

Case Study Exercise

This exercise should be done in small groups. Each group should read the case study and decide, based upon the mission needs of the congregation, what leadership competencies are needed in the next pastor. Each group should choose up to ten competencies to be listed on the MIF. The exercise will provide practice in selecting competencies that are compatible with the values of the congregation and its mission for ministry. Choose a reporter to briefly explain the case study and your selected competencies to the larger group. You will have thirty minutes for this exercise.

Case Study One — Twenty-First Century Presbyterian Church

Mission Statement: *“Living out the love of Christ by embracing people where they are!”*

You are a member of the Twenty-First Century Presbyterian Church PNC. The committee was elected three weeks ago with nine members—four women and five men. The congregation is in a gentrified neighborhood in San Francisco. On average the congregation has 600 people in worship. Currently the congregation has three worship services on Sunday. Twenty-First Century Presbyterian Church is a forty-year-old congregation with a history of activism, justice-making, community witness, strong stewardship, and multiculturalism. The new head-of-staff pastor will supervise two other teaching elders, a Christian educator, and three musicians. The budget of the congregation is \$ 1,500,000. The former pastor was heavily involved in local politics, community development, and mentoring in underserved communities. Additionally, the congregation’s officers are actively involved in the ministry of the presbytery. The new pastor is expected to follow in the previous pastor’s footsteps. The Reverend Did Everything Right resigned after twelve years of service for medical reasons. Who should they call?



Case Study Two — Transitioning Presbyterian Church

Mission Statement: *“Committed to Christ, Diversity, and Mission. Preparing people for a relationship with God, one another, and the community, sharing the word through scripture, worship, and fellowship.”*

Transitioning Presbyterian Church is a congregation that is moving from a pastoral-size church to a program-size church. Over the last three years, the congregation has had a burst of new energy. The average worship attendance rose to 250 people. Last year thirty-five adults were baptized. Recently, the officers attended an Evangelism and Church Growth Conference and have been implementing a monthly “sharing your faith event” in the community. If the truth is told, it is the laity of the church that has inspired this grass-root change in the congregation. Unfortunately, the present pastor of twenty-five years could not keep up with the enthusiasm of the congregation. He announced last Sunday that he was resigning and moving on. With mixed feelings of excitement and grief, the congregation is ready to look for a new pastor. Members are hoping for a person who can share their vision and help them make the leap from a pastoral-size church to a program-size church. Who will God send? What gifts would they need to be effective in this call?

Case Study Three — Faithful Presbyterian Church

Mission Statement: *“We are a community loving Christ, building disciples, serving all.”*

Faithful Presbyterian Church is a congregation in a rural area. The congregation is 100 years old with many of the charter members’ families currently serving as officers. Ten years ago, the town almost died when the mill left the area. The residents that remained stayed because they could not leave. The congregation has some financial challenges, but they are able to sustain a pastor paying the minimum terms of call. Their last pastor left during the economic downturn in the area. The pastor’s family was a two-income household. However, finding full-time employment in the town is almost impossible. A couple of years ago two factories opened in a neighboring town, employing 2,500 people. The growth is just what the town needed. However, with the growth came different people: Spanish and African immigrants. Faithful Presbyterian Church is fifteen miles from this improving town. As they look for a new pastor, language fluency is important as well as a person who is comfortable working with different cultures. Who should they call?

Questions to consider:

- ❖ What leadership competencies did you choose?
- ❖ How do the chosen competencies address the leadership needs of the congregation in the study?
- ❖ How has this exercise helped you to think about your congregation’s leadership needs?

Effective Salary

On the MIF you will need to enter the minimum and maximum effective salary for this position. Effective salary includes salary and housing allowance/manse value combined (for pastoral positions). The minimum salary will be displayed on your MIF. The maximum salary is not displayed but is used for matching purposes only. For a full definition of Effective Salary see the reference below.

Board of Pensions Definition:

<http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BookletsandPublications/Documents/pln-103.pdf>

Special Programs to Support Pastors with Educational Debt and Those Serving Smaller Congregations

There are special programs to support pastors with educational debt and those who are serving smaller congregations. On the MIF the COM should indicate when approving your form if your congregation is eligible to participate in the educational debt and special programs for those serving smaller congregations. For more information see the links below:

- ❖ Transformational Leadership Debt Assistance (TLDA) <http://www.Presbyterianmission.Org/Ministries/Financialaid/Transformational-Leadership-Debt-Assistance/>
- ❖ Seminary Debt Assistance and the BOP <http://www.pensions.org/plansandprograms/assistanceprogram/pages/pastors-vocational-leadership-needs.aspx#seminary>

Ministry Information Form Narrative Questions

1. What is the congregation's or organization's vision for ministry? Additionally, describe how this vision is lived out.
2. How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency?
3. How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?
4. Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.
5. For what specific tasks, assignments, and program areas will this person have responsibility?

Resources for writing and submitting the MIF can be found at <http://www.pcusa.org/clc> under Calling Organizations.

Instructions for completing the MIF

Users Guides for the PNC chair and clerk of session

Download forms in PDF and Microsoft Word formats




Choosing a Pastor

Call and Fit



The phrase call and fit refers to the person with the right experience, gifts, and credentials for the position. To say a person has the right fit for a position means that the person also has compatible theology, values, ministry goals, economic needs, and chemistry, as well as the right disposition to serve a particular congregation.

Choosing the right person to serve as pastor is the ultimate goal for the PNC. Making this choice will take patience, good process, and spiritual discernment. The person you might assume is the right person for the call could well be the wrong person to serve the congregation at this time. Understanding where the congregation is in its life cycle will help you discern the type of leader you need. Additionally, having a good understanding of the congregation's history, cultural context, demographics, finances, mission, and vision for the future is important in choosing new leadership. We strongly encourage you to be open to God's call as you make your choices among prospective pastors.

As you discern who God might be calling to serve the congregation, please keep in mind the biblical understanding of call. It is Christ who heads the church and calls women and men of various ages, backgrounds, and experiences to serve as pastor. For more information see the video *Call and Fit* at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>. 

Twenty-First Century Leaders

Twenty-first century leaders are often thought of as those who have prepared for doing ministry in this day and age. It means that leaders are adaptive, flexible, and prepared to lead the modern-era church into a postmodern ministry. Strong interpersonal skills, emotional and spiritual fitness, and the ability to communicate a vision, lead change, empower others for leading, and serve in the midst of ambiguity are some of the characteristics needed for twenty-first-century pastors.

Calling Candidates for Ministry

For information on calling a candidate for ministry as your pastor, see *Book of Order* requirements in G-2.0607. In summary, the *Book of Order* requires that the presbytery of care grant permission for candidates to begin negotiating for service. It is important to make sure that all requirements have been met and that the presbytery of care has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination as a teaching elder pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a teaching elder shall include: a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassion, spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment; a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university; 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 satisfactory grades, together with the examination papers 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.

For more information see the video "Calling First Call Pastors" at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>. 

Receiving Referrals

Within the CLC system you can specify how you would like referrals to be received through the system and who receives the referrals. Some presbyteries require that referral reports are received by the executive presbyter (EP) and the committee on ministry (COM) moderator in addition to the pastor nominating committee (PNC) chair. Consult with your presbytery liaison concerning the protocol for your presbytery.

Members of your congregation and presbytery may suggest names of prospective pastors to the PNC. Communicate to the congregation the mechanism by which they can suggest names of prospective pastors to the PNC. Be sure to communicate to the congregation that while you appreciate their suggestions of prospective pastors, you will be unable to share with them the current status of any suggested prospective pastors in order to honor the confidentiality of the process.

Self-Referrals Through CLC — Individuals, through the CLC system, can self-refer their PIF to the PNC for consideration using the Opportunity Search List. These refers are from individuals who sense a call to your congregation. Some of the self-referrals will match your search criteria and others will not. The PNC should discern the merit of all refers and decide whether to engage in further conversation with call seekers.

Attestation Assurance — When a PIF of prospective pastors or candidates for ministry comes through the CLC system, you can be assured that the PIF has been attested to by a teaching elder's presbytery stated clerk or a candidate's presbytery of candidacy. If you receive a PIF apart from the CLC system, you will need to ascertain whether that PIF has been attested to by the appropriate person. You should not consider a PIF until proof of such attestation is provided. It is the prospective pastor's responsibility to provide you with the attestation. Simply let the individual know that their PIF will not be considered until such attestation is provided and set the PIF aside. If you have any questions about whether a PIF you receive may be considered, check with your presbytery liaison or EP/GP.

A Word About Possible PIF Differences — PIFs entered in the CLC system have limitations that PIFs completed outside of the system and then sent directly to you may not have. Note that within the CLC system, PIFs have character limitations. A PIF sent to you outside of the CLC system may have longer answers to the narrative questions than found on PIFs entered with CLC. Your PNC may have to deal with the issue of "comparing apples to oranges" if you receive PIFs with more lengthy answers and different format than those received through the system.

Acknowledging Receipt of a PIF — Prospective pastors whose PIFs have been matched with your MIF and those who have self-referred their PIF to you would like to know that you have received their PIF. Please acknowledge receipt of all PIFs and keep prospective pastors informed of their status, including whether they are being considered.

PNC Access to PIFs

A PNC chairperson or any other PNC member should never "pre-screen" or discard PIFs that have not been shared with the full committee. Determine how your committee will make available all received PIFs to PNC members.





Ministers from Other Denominations — Ministers from other denominations, including ministers from our Formula of Agreement partner denominations, have been known to send PIFs or resumes directly to PC(USA) PNCs for their consideration. If you receive a PIF or resume from a minister from another denomination, consult with your presbytery before considering the application or engaging in conversation with ministers of other denominations.

Reading and Screening Personal Information Forms

PNC Access to PIFs

Every member of the PNC needs access to every PIF received by the PNC.

Evaluating PIFs

All PIFs should be prayerfully considered and thoroughly evaluated. As you read each PIF, give attention to the source of the referral (matched or self-referred, suggested name from someone, etc.), to the “fit” of the prospective pastor to the church, and to God’s “still, small voice” speaking to you.

Your PNC will need to determine how you will evaluate PIFs. Check to see whether your presbytery has any recommendations. If your presbytery does not have a recommended process, you are free to create your own, making it as complex or as simple as you choose.

A Suggested Process:

- ❖ Each PNC member reads all the information in a PIF and ranks the PIF 1, 2, or 3:
 - 1 for those in whom you are very interested
 - 2 for those in whom you have some interest
 - 3 for those you do not want to consider further
- Keep in mind that PIFs referred through computer matching are selected based on the compatibility of the information your committee has submitted in the MIF and the statement of preferences, experience, leadership competencies, and financial needs of each person as submitted in their PIF. PNC members would be wise to keep notes to be shared with the rest of the committee about why they ranked a PIF a particular way.
- ❖ If your committee receives two copies of a PIF, take a closer look at this individual because these PIFs have come to you from two different sources: self-referral and computer matching. This means that from both the computer matching point of view and the prospective pastor’s point of view his or her skills, interests, and experience match those for which your church is looking.
- ❖ After all PNC members have had a chance to read and evaluate a PIF, carefully review and evaluate the PIF together as a committee. Allow each member to share reasons for the particular ranking and listen attentively to one another.
- ❖ Reach some kind of consensus on the PNC ranking for each PIF.
- ❖ If your PNC is interested in a prospective pastor who is unable to sign the PIF sexual misconduct statement in the affirmative, turn the matter over to your EP/GP (executive/general presbyter) or presbytery, who will provide you with guidance.
- ❖ Set aside those prospective pastors the PNC has rated 3. If you are sure that you will not be returning to these PIFs, notify them with an affirming letter that they are no longer being considered.

- ❖ Contact your higher ranked individuals to determine whether they are interested and available to consider your position.
- ❖ Repeat the process until all PIFs have been read and evaluated and the interest of your higher ranked prospective pastors has been ascertained.
- ❖ Once a prospective pastor's interest has been ascertained, you may want to move right into asking for a sermon and checking references. How many prospective pastors will this be? There is no magic number, although your presbytery liaison may have a suggestion. Much depends on your position, the prospective pastors, the consensus of your PNC, and the movement of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ Share the names of those you are interested in with your presbytery liaison and EP/GP. Make sure you know and follow your presbytery's screening process for those under consideration.

Requesting Additional Materials

You may want to request additional materials from prospective pastors to help you in your discernment process.

Sermon Videos. Most PNCs ask prospective pastors for a sermon video. For positions with primary responsibilities for preaching, viewing a sermon is a must. These may come to you in a variety of formats. In evaluating sermons, remember that you are evaluating the content of the sermon. Determine your process for viewing, circulating, and evaluating sermons.

Supplemental Questions. For positions in a unique ministry setting or situation, you may wish to make use of supplemental questions. Use supplemental questions if you need more in-depth and thoughtful answers to questions than can be adequately answered during a phone or face-to-face interview. If you use supplemental questions, ensure that all members of the PNC have access to a copy of each prospective pastor's responses.

Other Material. You may choose not to get bogged down in requesting other supplemental material but prospective pastors have been known to send — unsolicited — supplemental material that may include church newsletters, bulletins, published articles, and newspaper clippings. Decide how you will handle this material.

Web Sites. Some individuals you are considering may direct you to church or personal web sites for additional information. While you can get information about a prospective pastor this way, be careful that your impressions of an individual are not formed simply from the impressiveness (or lack thereof) of the web site. Remember that you are searching for a pastor with the gifts and skills listed on your MIF, and web design and technology might not be one of those skills.







Establishing an Interview Process

The PNC's interview process should be consistent to ensure fairness and due diligence. Interviews are an opportunity to learn more about the person to help you discern call, fit, and a shared vision for ministry. Questions used in the interview should be consistent for all candidates. Specific questions raised by the Personal Information Forms (PIF) should also be included in the interview process and may differ among candidates. Below is a list of potential questions you may want to use.

- ❖ Describe your passion for ministry.
- ❖ Tell us about your call to ministry.
- ❖ How do you achieve personal growth in ministry?
- ❖ How have you challenged the congregations you have served to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ?
- ❖ What feeds your soul?
- ❖ How would you describe your leadership style?
- ❖ What ministry situations frustrate you most?
- ❖ When facing a problem, what questions do you naturally ask?
- ❖ Describe your greatest strengths and abilities.
- ❖ How do you work with diverse theological perspectives within the congregation?
- ❖ How do you see the denomination's future? (Long-term and short-term.)
- ❖ Tell us about your family traditions as they relate to the faith.
- ❖ How do you prepare for weekly worship?
- ❖ What are your spiritual disciplines?

It is important to note that the purpose of interview questions is to gain the information needed to assess a person's fitness to serve. While any question may be allowable, you are encouraged to think deeply about what information is most pertinent for your discernment. For more information, see the video on *Appropriate Questions for Interviews* at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>. 

Reference Checks

Reference checks are a must in any pastoral search. Consult your presbytery for specific requirements before engaging in in-person interviews and moving too far along in your selection process. Below are the types of reference checks you will engage in during the search process. For more information, see the video resource, *Reference Checks*, at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>. 

- ❖ **Presbytery-to-Presbytery Reference Checks.** Your presbytery checks with the prospective pastor's presbytery of membership for additional information about his or her practice of ministry.
- ❖ **Primary Reference Checks.** Primary references are those references that a prospective pastor has listed on his or her PIF. There can be up to six references for each PIF.
- ❖ **Secondary Reference Checks.** Secondary references are persons who are not listed by the prospective pastor but are suggested by others or contacted because they are thought to have knowledge of the individual. Secondary references should only be contacted when the prospective pastor has given permission. Under no circumstances should a PNC contact members of a prospective pastor's present congregation without her or his permission to do so. Discuss with your presbytery liaison the presbytery guidelines for contacting secondary references.

- ❖ **Background Checks.** Background checks are assessments of a prospective pastor's character and fitness for employment. They may include checks of employment, credit, criminal, and motor vehicle records. Many presbyteries require background checks at certain times in the call process for the protection of the congregation. Check with your presbytery liaison to learn your presbytery's requirements. If this position will involve work with children, your state will probably require you or your presbytery to do a background check on the person you call. Check your state law.

Meeting Prospective Pastors Face-to-Face



It is in time spent with prospective pastors that PNCs recognize the experiential nature of the call process as they attend to "the chemistry between people" and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

In order for a PNC to evaluate prospective pastors fully, it is necessary to meet face-to-face, engage in conversation, and participate in worship together. It is in time spent with prospective pastors that PNCs recognize the experiential nature of the call process as they attend to the chemistry between people and the movement of the Holy Spirit. As PNCs meet prospective pastors face-to-face, they would be wise to remember the Presbyterian balance between "ardor and order" or "heart and head."

By the time you are ready to meet face-to-face with prospective pastors, you should be able to convey a sense of clarity and harmony as a PNC. If you are not able to do this, you may want to take some time as a committee to get to such a place.

Visiting Prospective Pastors in Their Ministry Setting

Some PNCs, or a small delegation of the PNC, elect to visit prospective pastors in their current ministry setting, including attending worship. If your PNC decides to visit prospective pastors, do so only with the permission of the prospective pastor. If the prospective pastor feels it is unwise for you to visit the church he or she is currently serving, a face-to-face interview in your own area should be arranged.

When visiting the church of a prospective pastor, keep the following in mind:

- ❖ Before going, become thoroughly familiar with the prospective pastor's PIE.
- ❖ Confirm the time of worship and that the prospective pastor will be preaching that particular Sunday.
- ❖ Visit discreetly. Especially in smaller congregations, it is difficult to conceal the identity of a PNC. Do what you can to arrive, sit, and leave separately or in pairs. Do not introduce yourselves to church members as members of a PNC!
- ❖ Arrange to meet the prospective pastor in the afternoon if you want to hold an interview or have informal conversation at the time of your visit. Do not expect to do so immediately following the service.
- ❖ If only a portion of the PNC is visiting, engage only in an informal conversation rather than a formal interview. Take notes on your visit so that on your return you will be able to give a full report to the other members of the PNC.



Hosting Prospective Pastors in Your Community

Invite prospective pastors in whom the PNC is most interested to meet with you in or near your own community. This gives your committee extended time with prospective pastors so you can get to know them better and, continue to discern whom God is calling to be your next pastor.

If a prospective pastor should decline your committee's invitation, understand that this is part of the discernment process. You may need to hear a "no" from several prospective pastors in order to hear the "yes" from the one of God's own choosing.

When you extend an invitation to the prospective pastor to meet with you in your community, also extend the invitation to the pastor's spouse, if there is one. Most married prospective pastors wish to include a spouse in visiting a community and meeting with a PNC, because their spouse's impressions will be part of their own discernment process.

Always coordinate any prospective pastor's visit with presbytery. Your presbytery can help arrange a "neutral pulpit" somewhere in your area that provides an opportunity for the prospective pastor to lead worship while you are present without sacrificing the important confidentiality of the search. Your presbytery may also want to interview the prospective pastor while he or she is in the presbytery. If so, make sure to schedule this time with the presbytery.

The PNC should make the arrangements for the visit, in consultation with the prospective pastor and the presbytery, including arranging for transportation, housing, and meals. It is expected that the congregation will cover the costs of hosting a prospective pastor meeting with you in your community.

If at all possible, host prospective pastors in your community only one or two weeks apart. If too much time passes, both the PNC's memory of earlier interviews and the interest of an earlier interviewee may fade.

Practicing Hospitality

Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. (1 Peter 4:9-10)

PNC members, as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God," will need to use their gifts and talents to provide hospitality to prospective pastors who will be your guests during their time in your community. Such hospitality, which includes an availability and openness to your guests' needs, will need thoughtful and careful planning on the part of the PNC.

Hospitality is not about how lavish you are (first-class tickets and five-star hotels) but about all the ways you welcome and host a prospective pastor. The hospitality you show (or fail to show) will shape impressions of the kind of hospitality a pastor might expect from the congregation as a whole and will have a direct impact on a prospective pastor's discernment process.

Hospitality in the biblical sense raises the expectation that God will play a role in the guest/host encounter. Knowing this, PNCs should be ever attentive to God's presence in the midst of your time with your guests.



PART SIX — Calling a New Pastor

Choosing the Nominee and Extending the Invitation to Call



As your PNC prays together, shares perceptions and insights, and listens to one another, it will, hopefully, become clear to you who God is calling to be your next pastor. The PNC should strive to make this decision both unanimously and enthusiastically.

The entire PNC will want to look again at the financial information on the MIF and come to a preliminary decision on the total effective salary you are willing to offer your nominee. Be sure that the terms of call meet presbytery minimum requirements. The PNC cannot negotiate a total effective salary beyond the amount allocated by the session. If there is a need to do so, session approval must be obtained.

Extending the Invitation

Contacting Your Chosen Nominee. When the PNC has reached a final decision and has received presbytery approval to call your chosen nominee, the PNC chairperson should phone the chosen nominee and invite him or her to be the nominee presented to the congregation. Be sure that you let the person know why he or she was chosen by the PNC, and tell him or her about the enthusiastic response of the committee. You should also be prepared to share the amount of the total effective salary that you will be offering.

The person whom you have chosen may be ready to respond immediately, or he or she may need time to talk with family, spiritual advisors, and/or mentors to consider all of the aspects of this call and to listen again for God's voice. If he or she asks for this time, it is important to give it. If that is the case ask, "How soon can you let us know?" or "Would it be possible to hear from you by one week from today?" Except in unusual circumstances, one week should be sufficient time in which to expect a response.

When the Nominee Accepts the Invitation. When your chosen nominee accepts your invitation, notify your presbytery. Do not reveal your final decision to the session or congregation until the presbytery has given its final clearance. If presbytery has not already examined your selected nominee, they will need to do so before you present the nominee to the congregation. Confirm with presbytery your next steps so that they will be done "decently and in order."

Discuss with your chosen nominee the terms of call, effective date of the call, and the tentative schedule for the next steps, which will include approval by the presbytery, a congregational meeting to call the pastor, dissolution of the nominee's current position, and the installation service. Coordination with all the involved parties will be key. There are additional steps in the process if your chosen nominee is a candidate for ministry yet to be ordained. Your presbytery and stated clerk can help you work out a timeline in coordination with the nominee's presbytery of candidacy.



Negotiating the Terms of Call

When a nominee has accepted your invitation, you will need to negotiate with the nominee the specific terms of call. Once you have agreed upon the total effective salary, the nominee may suggest how he or she would like it to be allocated. Be sure that the terms of call include all other applicable items such as vacation, continuing education, all reimbursable expenses, moving costs, sabbatical leave, military service leave, and any other presbytery requirements. If you have questions about compensation, your presbytery liaison should be able to advise you.

These agreed-upon terms of call are necessary before your presbytery can approve the call of your new pastor. The congregation will also need to approve these terms of call at the time it calls the new pastor. Usually a "Pastoral Call Form" is provided by your presbytery stated clerk.

Examination for Membership in the Presbytery

Presbyteries differ in their process of examining ministers for membership in the presbytery. Consult with your presbytery to understand their specific guidelines.

Presenting the Pastor Elect

Preparing to Present Your Nominee to the Congregation

There are a few final details that must be arranged before you present your nominee to the congregation:



Step 1 Obtaining Presbytery Approval

As one of the partners in the call, the presbytery has a responsibility to examine and approve your nominee for presbytery membership and to approve the terms of call. Make sure that you have presbytery approval to present your nominee to the congregation.

Coordinating with Session

It is important for the PNC to coordinate with the session in scheduling the congregational meeting to call a new pastor. Session has the responsibility to call the congregational meeting to hear the report of the PNC, to give adequate notice to the temporary pastor for his or her departure, and to arrange for any pastoral coverage between the temporary pastor's departure and the arrival of the new pastor.

Step 2**Preparing a Report for the Congregation**

The congregation needs to be informed about the nominee the PNC has selected. Your written report to the congregation might include something of the process the PNC followed including the number and kinds of PIFs reviewed. A brief biographical sketch of the nominee, taken from the PIF with revisions suggested by the nominee, will help the congregation to know the pastor elect more intimately. The terms of call should also be included. It is recommended that this report be mailed or e-mailed to members of the congregation a few days before the congregational meeting. Care should be taken to be sure that the identity of the proposed pastor not be shared with the media and that the information is not used in a way that could compromise the pastor with his or her present congregation, which at this point will normally be unaware of the pastor's plan to leave.

Presenting the Nominee to the Congregation

Depending on the tradition and preferences of the congregation and/or presbytery, the PNC nominee may preach and conduct all or part of the worship service prior to the congregational vote, or the PNC may simply report and the congregational vote be taken with results being communicated to the nominee.

The PNC has the responsibility to share with the congregation what it has learned about the nominee. Generally speaking, the more you can do to facilitate these introductions the more enthusiastic will be the support of the congregation for the PNC's work, and the easier it will be for the pastor's transition as he or she begins ministry with you.

The PNC chairperson should prepare, in advance, the formal motion on the PNC recommendation for the congregational meeting, checking with the moderator and clerk of session to be certain it conforms to the presbytery processes and guidelines. During the congregational meeting, the PNC chairperson should make the motion and then be ready to speak to the motion by presenting personally or through members of the PNC the reasons for selecting this nominee. This should include something of the nominee's background, experience, and abilities. On occasion questions will be raised by members of the congregation. A PNC that has done its work well will be able to answer these questions with ease. After the PNC report and congregational discussion, the congregation should be ready to vote on whether to concur with the report of the PNC to call the pastor and to vote on the terms of call.

Step 3**Signing the Call**

Following the election of the pastor, the call papers are signed by designated persons. The next steps in the process include the ordination and/or installation of the new pastor—a task of the presbytery—and the PNC's completion of its work.

Finishing Your Work

Following the election of the new pastor by the congregation, the PNC has a few last details to finish:

Notifying CLC of a "Call Pending"

The PNC chairperson needs to notify CLC of the call of your new pastor. This can be done through the CLC online system using the PNC chairperson's password and entering the information under "Admin." "Notify of New Call." Please provide the MIF number, the PIF number (if there is one), the pastor's full name, and the effective date of the call. The PNC chairperson can also notify CLC by phone, e-mail, or fax.





Notifying Remaining Prospective Pastors

If you have any other prospective pastors that have not yet been notified that they are no longer being considered, each one needs to be contacted, thanked for their consideration, and informed that a nominee has been chosen. This communication should be written with compassion and grace. If you are notifying prospective pastors electronically, remember to correspond with them individually rather than by mass e-mail messages. It is important to continue to honor confidentiality and good process.

Disposing of PNC Materials

Information and references regarding your pastor-elect should be sealed and kept in the church's personnel files. All remaining PIFs and supplemental material should be destroyed or returned to each prospective pastor. Any notes and references should be destroyed. These materials cannot be reused and should not be passed on to other PNCs.

Sharing Agreements with Session

The PNC chairperson should inform the session of any agreements the PNC may have made with the pastor-elect, such as starting date, moving details, financial arrangements, time away for prior commitments, travel expenses for house-hunting, or planning for renovation of the manse. Once this information is passed along, the session assumes the responsibility for the ongoing work with the pastor-elect.

Understanding Your New Role

Once the PNC has completed its work and has been dissolved by vote of the congregation, the PNC is no longer a committee. However, PNC members often find that the relationships forged during the pastoral search process turn into lifelong friendships. While you are no longer an official committee required to meet, you may wish to spend some time together to reflect on the journey you have been through and to celebrate and give thanks to God for the successful completion of your work.

With the dissolution of the PNC, there is no longer an official connection between you and the new pastor. Certainly, each member of the PNC will want to pray for the new pastor as he or she begins ministry with you. You will want to extend hospitality and provide for a ready welcome as he or she arrives in town. However, the new pastor's official relationship is now with the congregation and session.

The installation of your new pastor will complete the call process that has brought a new pastor to your congregation. Plan to attend this service of worship as your final act as a committee. Your presence will not only be a show of support for your new pastor, it can also be an opportunity to worship God, who faithfully guided your committee through the pastoral call process.

As all the tasks above are completed, the PNC's work concludes. Your good work will greatly impact the future of the congregation as it continues to fulfill God's call for its mission and ministry. With grace and joy the Church Leadership Connection office celebrates with you as you enter a new phase in your congregation's history. May God richly bless you and your new pastor!



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CHAPTER V - INTERIM PASTOR SEARCH PROCESS

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INTRODUCTION TO INTERIM MINISTRY

When a pastor or associate pastor relationship is vacated, the COM shall counsel with the session of the church as to the need for ministry until a new pastor is installed. Ordinarily, the interim pastor will be approved by the presbytery (through its COM), in consultation with the Session. The interim pastor may be designated Moderator. The interim pastor shall guide the congregation in ministry, enable clarification of directions, and prepare for the arrival of the new pastor, conducting the work of a pastor. The interim has no relationship with the PNC about the selection of a pastor. The interim will work closely with the presbytery to address the needs of the congregation. The interim cannot be considered as a candidate for the pastor position, unless there are exceptional circumstances and with approval of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the presbytery, pursuant to G-2.0504c.

To implement the presbytery's policy on interim pastorates, the presbytery requires that all interim pastors endorse the "Interim Pastor Agreement" contract and agree to abide by the policies and guidelines of the presbytery.

It is the policy of the presbytery to ordinarily require that an interim pastor be a member of the presbytery and those accepting assignment to an interim pastor position who are not already members of the presbytery are expected to request transfer of membership and be received into the membership of the presbytery.

The presbytery requires interim pastor candidates to have completed one of the following: (1) Interim pastor experience, (2) Interim Level I training within the last five years, or (3) a commitment to take Interim Level I training within the first year of interim service.

INTERIM PASTOR SELECTION PROCESS

Friends in Christ: We recognize that a pastoral transition brings lots of questions and one of our important goals is to help you secure an interim pastor as quickly and smoothly as possible. Here is the procedure we use.

1. The Session meets to discuss its desire to have an interim pastor, as soon as it learns that the current pastor will be leaving. The current pastor is not to have any comment on this matter. A member of the Commission on Ministry, usually the liaison, will be present to discuss the appropriateness of having an interim pastor and to educate in general terms about the transition time in a congregation
 - a. The clerk of Session contacts the Presbytery Pastor and indicates whether you will be seeking a full-time, half-time or other part-time position.
2. The Session names a search team for the interim and determines its composition:
 - a. The entire Session
 - b. A select number of Session members
 - c. A combination of Session members and other members from within the congregation
 - d. A search team representative of the congregation (similar to a PNC).
3. The search team prepares a brief (3-5 pages) Interim Search Description that introduces the church and its current ministries and explains the position description and salary being offered. This brief document provides a summary of what interim pastor candidates can expect and should include the following:
 - i. Description of the congregation: membership, budget, worship attendance, key ministries
 - ii. Job Description
 - iii. Outline of contract
 - iv. Expectations of interim accomplishments
 1. To assist in the preparation of this document, **Appendix A: Interim Tasks and Goals**, is provided to give Sessions an overview of interim ministry and common, appropriate goals and expectations for the interim period.
- b. The session reviews the brief document and approves it
- c. The search team chair sends the approved brief document to the Presbytery Pastor (who will distribute it to the COM liaison)

4. ...in the meantime.... The Presbytery Pastor will begin identifying potential candidates for the interim position. The Presbytery Pastor will collect Personal Information Forms on each candidate and perform governing body reference checks. The goal will be at least 3 persons to present for the search team's consideration.
 - a. IF the search team wishes to advertise the interim position on its *own*, or if it receives an unsolicited PIF, it is understood that any candidates it identifies will be reviewed first by the Presbytery Pastor and Commission on Ministry for pre-approval. NO contact (email, telephone, face-to-face) will take place until the Presbytery Pastor forwards the pre-approved list of names and paperwork.
5. Interim Pastor Search Team receives PIFs from Presbytery Pastor
6. Ordinary Process of Selection:
 - a. Review PIFs
 - b. Interview by whole Search Team
 - c. Check references on PIF
 - d. Listen/watch tapes of sermons
 - e. Prioritize
 - f. Notify COM liaisons so that COM interview can be set up while the person is in town, if necessary
 - g. If desired, bring in others – congregation pays for reasonable expenses*
 - h. Choose person, negotiate contract. COM liaison may be present if you wish.
 - i. Presbytery provides basic contract. Congregation and interim pastor may add or specify details.
 - j. Present choice to Session for approval.
 - i. The search team is the decision-making body in the selection of a candidate. However, if a church has more than one pastor the search team may set up a confidential, informational meeting with the continuing pastor(s) to introduce the candidate prior to presentation to the Session for approval.
 - ii. To ensure confidentiality, Personal Information Forms for the selected candidate should not be distributed outside the search team without the permission of the candidate and should be limited to the pastor(s) and members of the Session.
 - k. Have COM liaison forward all paperwork to the presbytery office.

7. Set starting date.
8. Obtain COM approval.
9. Inform other candidates quickly.
10. Session informs the congregation. Congregation does not vote on candidate. It is a Session contract.
11. Prepare for an exciting time of growth during your interim experience.

*Reasonable Interview Expenses:

- Coach airfare for candidate. The congregation chooses whether to pay for spouse. Overnights in local motel of your choice – congregation arranges.
- Meals during the trip
- Mileage to and from home airport
- Rental car if needed – distance from airport to your town – congregation determines

Make arrangements clear before person comes. Prepaying ticket, motel keeps you in budget.

We have reviewed the Presbytery's procedures and understand the process:

Clerk of Session/date

Search Team Chair/date

COM Liaison/date

INTERIM PASTOR AGREEMENT

At the request of the _____ Church, the Presbytery hereby appoints
_____ to be Interim Pastor for a period of
_____,

beginning _____, 20____, subject to 30 days notice for termination.

A description of duties and services expected is attached. It is clearly understood by all parties that the interim pastor and the church subscribe to the policies of the presbytery regarding an interim pastor relationship. Further, it is understood that the interim pastor shall not be a candidate for the position of pastor, associate pastor, or designated pastor and is not eligible to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor.

The _____ Church will provide the following support for the ministry:

| | | | |
|------------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| Salary | \$ _____ | Moving | \$ _____ |
| Housing | \$ _____ | Vacation Time | _____ |
| Study Leave | \$ _____ | Study Leave | _____ |
| Travel / Mileage | \$ _____ | | |

ENDORSEMENT TO THIS AGREEMENT

By the Session on _____, 20____ by _____
Clerk of Session

By the COM on _____, 20____ by _____
COM Chair

By the Presbytery on _____, 20____ by _____
Stated Clerk

By the Interim Pastor on _____, 20____ by _____
Interim Pastor

COVENANT OF CLOSURE: PASTORAL ETHICS WHEN LEAVING A CHURCH

The Rev. _____; the _____ Church of _____, and the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery having discussed the importance of making a clean break for a pastor who is leaving a church, enter into the following covenant:

1. The Rev. _____ agrees

- a. not to involve him/herself in any leadership or advisory role (public or private) in the church;
- b. not to intervene, support or give advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement or dispute;
- c. not to officiate in any special events in the lives of former parishioners or of the congregation, including weddings, funerals, baptisms, worship leadership, church anniversary activities, etc. unless expressly invited by the Moderator of the Session;
- d. to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the congregation;
- e. to recognize that some conflicts make it unwise for a prior pastor to return to visit a previous congregation, and as a matter of professional courtesy, to establish an understanding with the new Moderator of Session regarding subsequent visits to the church, attending worship or attending a special event;
- f. to refrain from giving opinions or direction regarding church business that could undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation and a new pastor;
- g. in the event that the departing pastor continues to live in the area and does not begin service to another church, he/she will not normally attend congregational events for at least one year, or at least one year after a new pastor is installed. After this period, in consultation with and invitation by the session and the current pastoral leadership, the departing pastor may resume worshiping and fellowship within the congregation, provided that the requirements above continue to be observed; however,
- h. if the departing pastor has family, (spouse, children, grandchildren) who remain active in the former congregation, in consultation and with the approval of the current pastoral leadership, he/she may be attend isolated "special events" in the life of the relative, e.g., baptism, ordination, marriage, Christmas programs, always being careful to observe the criteria contained in this agreement.

It is understood that this policy does not affect or require the termination of friendships with individuals in the former congregation.

2. The Session and members of the _____ congregation agree
 - a. not to initiate pastoral or professional contact with previous pastors;
 - b. to respect the terms of the Covenant of Closure agreed upon by The Rev. _____ outlined above;
 - c. to interpret the terms of the Covenant of Closure to the congregation; and
 - d. to incorporate this agreement in the Session minutes.

3. The Presbytery's Commission on Ministry shall
 - a. interpret this Covenant of Closure to the Session of _____ Church;
 - b. be the Presbytery's agent in reminding the parties to this Covenant of Closure of the principles of the Covenant in the event any transgressions are reported to it;
 - c. note this agreement in the minutes of the Commission on Ministry; and
 - d. consider setting aside portions of this policy if requested by a departing pastor and the session of the former congregation.

I understand these policies and agree to abide by them.

Pastor

Date

Clerk of Session

Date

Name of church

City

Commission on Ministry representative

Date

APPENDIX A: INTERIM TASKS AND GOALS

Five Development Tasks of Interim Ministry

The major agenda of an interim ministry period centers on five developmental tasks first spelled out by Loren Mead in a monograph entitled *The Developmental Tasks of the Congregation in Search of a Pastor* and then elaborated on in his book *Critical Moment of Ministry: A Change of Pastors*.

1. *Coming to Terms with History* – It is important for congregations to know their history so that they can appreciate their heritage and at the same time be aware of the issues and concerns that need to be resolved in order to move freely into the future.
2. *Discovering a New Identity* – Identity is the task of understanding "who we are now in our present context and what it is we understand God is calling us to be." It is the task of developing the vision to which a congregation is being called.
3. *Shifts of Power/Leadership Changes* – In most congregations over a period of time the leadership begins to take on much of the style and values of the previous pastor. When that pastor leaves, there is often a time when persons who have been in leadership rethink their commitment and determine whether or not they want to continue in leadership positions. Other persons often find the interim time an opportunity to take leadership roles. This is an opportune time to empower those who are out of power and to welcome leadership gifts from all parts of the congregation.
4. *Rethinking Denominational Linkages* – Congregations often are not aware of the support and resources they receive from their middle judicatory and national denominational structures. That relationship is normally more visible while the structures of the church beyond the congregation are engaged in working with the congregation in moving through the interim period and seeking to find the right pastor to call. The transition time helps raise the awareness of a congregation to its denominational heritage, ministries and resources.
5. *Commitment to New Leadership and to a New Future* – When a congregation has developed a shared vision of its future and has sought to call a pastor to help lead it in moving into that future, there will probably be a new commitment both to that new leader and to that new future.

Seven Additional Tasks of Interim Ministry¹

Thirty-three interim pastors identified seven agenda items most often dealt with in their interim experiences in addition to the normal developmental tasks of history, relationship to the denomination, leadership issues, establishing a new identity, and commitment to new leadership.

¹ Terry Foland, IBT Vol. 9, No. 1, page 3, September 1996

1. *The Necessity to Rebuild the Congregational “Infrastructure”* – That is, the administrative structures, processes, procedures, and “know how” efficiency. Joan Mabon, a Presbyterian interim minister, offered the observation/ theory that there is generally a three-year period of neglect to the infrastructure by the exiting pastor. One year of trauma or feeling of rejection, one year of struggle with a decision to stay or go, and one year of attention given to the search for a new position. With those concerns preoccupying the pastor there is unintentional but certain neglect of the administrative functions of the pastor. This seems like a reasonable theory—but of course we have no hard data to substantiate it; perhaps we will sometime soon.
2. *Evaluation of and Removal of Staff Members if Necessary* – Congregations seem to be more willing to deal with this difficult issue with the Interim Pastor’s leadership than with an installed pastor. The Interim Pastor will not have to live with consequences, and the new pastor won’t have to “hassle with” that problem in the start-up months of a new ministry.
3. *Financial/Stewardship Issues* – Often giving is down when a pastor leaves due to disillusionment, unrest, conflict, or disappointment around the pastor who has just terminated. Basic stewardship education and fresh efforts to secure financial commitment to the church can often be more readily received from interim ministerial leadership.
4. *Conflicts of Issues or Congregational Agenda* – An Interim Pastor can usually be more objective and have less personal vested interest in the outcome of such conflict and be more able to help facilitate some decision-making processes. It is a desirable goal that such conflict is resolved prior to the calling of the new pastor.
5. *Interpersonal or Intergroup Conflicts* – Again, an Interim Pastor will probably be able to serve as an objective third party mediator since he/she will not be concerned about long-term relationships with the individuals or groups who are in conflict. The principals involved can more readily focus on the issue rather than the question of “is the pastor on my/our side.”
6. *Getting Closure with the Previous Pastor* – Formal farewell is one thing. Weaning a congregation from the previous pastor is another. The Interim Pastor can help congregations understand this issue since he/she is not the future clergyperson with whom lack of closure is apt to be a lingering problem.
7. *Communication Improvement* – Among other things often neglected as a pastor begins to “look elsewhere” are the communication channels with the congregation. A natural interest and concern held by most members during the interim period makes this a prime time to enhance communications processes.

Appropriate Goals for the Interim Period

1. *To Maintain the Viability of the Church* – The ongoing vital program that is expected of a lively

congregation consists of pastoral duties plus the Christian activities of the laity. Continuing the needed programs already underway and efforts to help make them more meaningful are the responsibility of an interim leader.

2. *To Resolve Feelings of Grief* – Pastoral visitation and group meetings involving personal, direct contact with individuals, and intentional expression of interest in their feelings, more often than not, will provide healing catharsis.

3. *To Reinforce the Ministry of the Laity* – Encouragement of participation and leadership by lay persons is vital. The interim period is a particularly good time to develop lay leadership. A member of the laity may accompany the pastor when home communion is administered. Many responsibilities in the church may be carried out by lay persons rather than a pastor.

4. *To Clarify the Mission of the Church* – Congregations need to be reminded that Christians are here to serve, not only to be served. The interim may be the voice of the larger Christian community at a time when the church is turned inward to its own needs. The minister teaches by example, by preaching, and by formal training.

5. *To Deal with Special Needs of the Church* – Every church is different. As a result of diagnosis, the interim will learn of specific problems in the congregation. Through knowledge of techniques in conflict management and tactful suggestions by the “outsider” (the disinterested person, the interim minister), beneficial changes may be affected.

6. *To Emphasize Fellowship and Reconciliation* – Opportunities for encouraging Christian fellowship are many. For example, arranging for a coffee hour before or after worship service is helpful. The incorporation of “congregational concerns” during a worship service can be a time of real sharing.

7. *To Strengthen Denominational Ties* – The interim minister personally maintains a good relationship with the denomination and encourages the local church to participate in denomination-wide activities and programs.

8. *To Increase the Potential for a Successful Ministry by the Next Regular Pastor* – The interim minister is future-oriented. The interim minister is concerned with the coming of a new pastor and is helping to prepare the congregation for the arrival. In addition, he or she communicates with the new pastor information that might be helpful.

Examples of Inappropriate Goals for the Interim Minister (and an explanation why)

1. *Grow the church* – this goal depends on too many factors outside of the control of the interim pastor, including the demographics of the congregation, neighborhood, willingness of members to invite others, etc. Sessions should avoid listing their “hopes and dreams” for the congregation as an expectation for the interim pastor (this includes the perennial church request to “attract young families.”)
2. *Cultivate a culture of...* – this goal is too global. Whether one desire a culture of evangelism, a missional culture, or a culture of tithing, or some other kind of culture, it is important to remember that a Session can change a program overnight but “church culture” changes over time. Be realistic about what can occur in a congregation over a 12 - 18 month time frame.
3. *Have scheduled office hours* – this goal is too specific and should be an ordinary expectation of professional ministry. Other examples of too specific are “preach sermons” and “visit the sick.” These actions are more appropriate for inclusion in the job description but are not helpful if included in the Interim Search Document as expectations of what a Session hopes the interim pastor will accomplish in, with, through, and for the congregation.

CHAPTER VI - CONTENT OF A CONGREGATIONAL MISSION STUDY

A mission study is the telling of the congregation's story. It takes into account its history, the lives of its members, the community in which it is located, and the hopes for the future. The power of a good study is in narrative. Every study needs to include the following in some manner.

1. **MISSION STATEMENT:** A concise, specific statement generally supported by the whole congregation, which captures a vision of the faithful and calls the congregation to respond to God in the immediate future. A vague paragraph of religious platitudes of the “one size fits all Christian churches” sort is not helpful. This MISSION STATEMENT may be used to introduce the study or as a logical summation at the end.
2. **A word “picture” of the congregation** - an accurate description of the church should include:
 - a. **How do we encounter Christ?** Tell what you believe, where and how members experience Christ in their lives. Describe how the church helps people encounter Christ.
 - b. **Who is our community?** God calls us to minister in and to a community. How do you define community? Draw a narrative “picture” of the community in which the church is located. It is important that this “picture” not be drawn exclusively from the congregation’s point of view. Do not forget to investigate current trends in the congregation and community which will have an inevitable impact in the near future. Support this picture with information from demographic studies, maps, charts, or other documentation and one-on-one neighborhood contacts and interviews.
 - c. **What are our gifts?** God has given each church a variety of unique, definable gifts. (See I Cor. 12.) Congregational gifts may include financial assets, the physical plant, skills of members, opportunities and/or abundance in areas such as worship, education, or fellowship. Make a list of all of the gifts God has blessed the church with including those discovered in items a, b, and c above.
3. **What is the ministry of the church and what are the expectations for the future?** This may include:
 - a. **How Christ calls us to ministry.** A mission study must address specific needs of the congregation that are consistent with the mission statement. Give specific examples and programs that show how you minister to your

community in the name of Jesus Christ. These may be in the nature of outreach (some form of proclamation), or an “in house” building up of the Body of Christ in some manner (e.g. a deacon’s plan to support elderly members through a transportation program).

- b. **How can we use our gifts?** God has planted you in a particular context with gifts, people, assets and tools to do a specific work. How will God use the gifts that are already in your hands to do a new and mighty work? Examine your context, gifts, membership and other assets and ask how these gifts can be used for mission. Be creative.
- c. **Expectations for the future** - that is, a Vision Statement. What do you want to happen?” What are your three to five year goals? How will you make it happen? (strategies)

4. Supporting documentation. Maps, site plans, charts, budgets, lists of community services or attractions or schools, graphs, and statistics may all be used to validate and/or clarify the descriptions of the community and congregation.

- a) Good narrative prose, well edited and supported, is essential.
- b) Items of humor and illustrations can enhance the study.
- c) Painful honesty, combined with constant prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit by the Commission responsible for the study, and continual communication with the congregation and session, will make it a significant contribution to the life of the church.
- d) A Mission Study is not a marketing document!

POSSIBLE EXPLORATIONS FOR WRITING A MISSION STUDY*

Because each church is unique, each church approaches the writing of a statement in its own way. Included here are some models and samples that may be helpful. These are not intended to be formulas but merely suggestions and stimulators for your own ideas. Any of these may work well for a first draft and then be developed.

BASIC MODEL *Begin writing phrases, sentences, and words which respond to the following:*

- Who have we been? Who are we now? How are we unique as a community of faith?
- How does our setting affect who we are?
- What are we doing now? Why do we do what we do? How do we do what we do?
- Where do we want to go from here? What is God calling us to?
- What are our hopes for congregational life and outreach into the community and world?
- How are we going to get there? What processes will we employ? Who will be involved?

Develop paragraphs. What themes seem to emerge that might shape the statement?

MODEL #2 *Respond to these questions. Some questions may require more than one sentence to answer. Arrange answers in paragraphs.*

- Who are we as a unique community of faith?
- How has God shown special care for us as a community of faith?
- What kind of community of faith do we feel God is calling us to be?
- What do we hope to do in order to fulfill our calling?

MODEL #3 *Complete each sentence with several words, phrases, or sentences.*

- We, the members of _____ are a people:
 - Passionate about...
 - Our passion is reflected in...
 - Whose spiritual gifts as a community are...
 - Our spiritual gifts are reflected in...
 - Surrounded by people who and needs that...
 - Our response to these needs is...
- As a unique expression of Christian community, we intend to honor this passion, use these gifts to serve these people and needs by...

MODEL #4 *Describe a COMPELLING CAUSE that is connected to a CONCRETE GOAL that will be fulfilled by focusing energy and effort, prayer and perseverance on the TWO VITAL BEHAVIORS that are most likely to create MOTIVATION and SKILL DEVELOPMENT that will lead the congregation to accomplish the goal and fulfill the cause.*

- Example 1 – Focus on Evangelism
 - *Compelling Cause:* People need to encounter Jesus Christ and a personal invitation to church is the most effective way for that to happen, as 50% of friends will say yes to a personal invitation.
 - *Concrete Goal:* (YES, this is concrete) FPC members will invite 100 friends to come to church with them during Lent; (NO, this is not concrete) We will begin to emphasize the importance of invitations.
 - *Vital Behaviors for Evangelism:* We will (a) print business cards that can be used when inviting a friend and (b) guide / teach / practice a script to build members' comfort level when inviting a friend.

- Example 2 – Focus on Adult Discipleship
 - *Compelling Cause:* People encounter Jesus Christ in the Word and experience deep, personal transformation; this is especially true in groups as adult learners go deeper when in community.
 - *Concrete Goal:* (Yes) We will have 75 new people participate in adult study groups between Labor Day and Thanksgiving; (NO) We will make a push for more adult education.
 - *Vital for Adult Discipleship:* We will create all of our adult Bible studies so that they (a) use a user friendly, completely intuitive format, and (b) are time limited groups that respect people's busy schedules.

- Example 3 – Focus on Missional Ministry
 - *Compelling Cause:* People encounter Jesus Christ through the faith community living as a reflection of God's light and love, while attractional models of church fail to engage our culture.
 - *Concrete Goal:* (YES) We will create six, new missional initiatives between Labor Day and Memorial Day; (NO) We will try to be more missional.
 - *Vital Behaviors for Missional:* We will (a) create operational clarity by defining the term "missional" and what is meant by "missional ministry" in sermons, lessons and printed material toward the goal of

95% comprehension among our members, and (b) encourage our members to create and initiate their own projects by redesigning the way we budget for mission such that all missional projects that include three or more members will be funded by the church.

MODEL #5 *Describe your mission in terms of Identity in Christ, which inspires Motivation to understand why something is important, which leads to live a particular way.*

- We are...
 - Therefore we do Member Care BECAUSE...
 - Therefore we INTEND to do member care in this way...
- We are...
 - Therefore we Worship and Celebration BECAUSE...
 - Therefore we INTEND to worship in this way...
- We are...
 - Therefore we do Education BECAUSE...
 - Therefore we INTEND to educate in this way...
- Continue “We are...” for: outreach, mission, prayer, stewardship, leadership, etc.

MODEL #5A *Another congregation structured the statement by titling sections:*

- Who We Are
- Who We Are Becoming
- Why We Desire to Become Who We Are to Be

- What We Are to Do
- How We Are to Do It
- Why We Desire to Do What We Are to Do

MODEL #6 *Appreciative Inquiry*

- Appreciative inquiry seeks to discern a congregation's call through conversation about their history and identity that focuses on strengths, blessings and hopes. For a review of the Appreciative Inquire process, please see pages 46-49.

*Models are stolen...errr, "borrowed" (and adapted) from the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, with thanks!

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY PROCESS STEPS

Key to success is high participation in a positive, well-implemented church-wide event.

The Basic Process Is as Follows:

1. Send the Session the first two chapters of "Memories Hopes and Conversations" to read. It is important they have a good concept of what it is about.
2. Review and reinforce the concepts, and then lead them through the exercise as a Session.
3. Having done the exercise, the Session should appoint a few of their number to form a team.
4. Those elders, formed as a team of sufficient number and strength, will:
 - a. Plan
 - b. Promote
 - c. Implement a church-wide event
5. If the team does a great job in all three of these tasks (this is crucial), the desired effects will be:
 - a. Clarity about themselves,
 - b. Be energized toward their shared future.
 - c. A background of confusion and malaise about future prospects will be replaced by a positive and hopeful outlook that continues into the next phases of transition.

A good process takes the needed time at each step. Solid work will reap commensurate rewards.

Implementation of Church-Wide Event

Tables: 6 – 8 people per table. Each table should have the following resources:

- Interview question sheets for each person
- Pens/pencils
- Colored crayons and markers (lots)
- A LARGE newsprint-size “Post-it”

Interviews: Use “Memories, Hopes and Conversations” sheet on the next page

“In front of you there is a sheet with three questions on it. Break into pairs for mutual interviews. You will take turns responding to each question, while the other listens and takes notes. Each person will have 8 minutes to respond to the first question, so the first question will take 16 minutes.”

“Take a moment to think about the first question. Decide who will respond first, while the other person listens and takes notes. In 8 minutes, we will let you know it is time to trade places and let the other person respond while you take notes.”

“In 8 minutes I will let you know when it is time to move on to the next question. The next two questions will take 6 minutes for each person – 12 minutes per question.

Appreciative Inquiry: Memories, Hopes & Conversations

Interviewee _____ Interviewer _____
Date _____

1. Remembering my entire experience at our church, when was I most alive, most motivated and excited about my involvement? What happened? What was my part? How did I feel?

2. What do I value most about our church? What activities or ingredients or ways of life are most important? What are the best features of our church?

3. Building on these experiences and strengths, what are three possibilities I prayerfully imagine that God might desire for the future of our church?

CHAPTER VII - COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

G-2.10 of the *Book of Order* provides for Commissioned Ruling Elders, authorized by the Presbytery for limited pastoral service.

Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE) can be valued for serving churches in the presbytery in a variety of different settings. Primarily they are used to provide pastoral leadership in churches which cannot at present call an ordained minister. They may also serve as an interim CRE in churches where there is an active search being conducted for a permanent pastor. Some CRE candidates may be commissioned to form a CRE leadership pool in preparation for new church development work or for ministry, as defined by the Presbytery.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) will review needs for pastoral care and leadership within the Presbytery and determine which, if any may be well served by a CRE. COM will work with the session of church(s) demonstrating such need, in determining whether a CRE ministry is appropriate for that local church.

Positions may be full-time or part-time, salaried or volunteer. These may include preaching and pastoral commissions to congregations, interim pastoral support, as part of a pastoral team serving with Teaching Elders, new church development, or other specific needs.

The ministry of Commissioned Ruling Elders may include a variety of settings with multiple assignments such as: providing leadership to small, rural, racial ethnic and remote congregations; being part of a pastoral team serving with Teaching Elders; providing interim pastoral support in churches where there is an active search being conducted for a permanent pastor; working in new church development; or serving other specific needs within the churches of the Presbytery.

The Book of Order (G-2.1002), this Handbook, and the CPM policy establish criteria for training commissioned ruling elders and their expected accountability within the presbytery. The criteria shall be the following:

1. A commissioned ruling elder shall be a ruling elder member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. A commissioned ruling elder shall be commissioned by the presbytery to lead worship, preach the gospel, watch over the people and provide for their nurture and service.
3. COM may authorize commissioned ruling elders to perform any or all of the functions listed below:
 - a. Administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
 - b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism.
 - c. Moderate the session of the congregation(s) to which commissioned.
 - d. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or COM.
 - e. Demonstrate and provide a quality of life and relationships that

commend the gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice.

- f. Study, teach and preach the Word.
 - g. Pray with and for the congregation.
 - h. Encourage the people in the worship and service of God -- to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world.
 - i. Assist the Session in its leadership responsibilities to implement the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision-making of the church, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the community as a whole.
 - j. Share in the ministries of sympathy, witness, and service with Deacons.
 - k. Share in the work of the whole church, particularly by attending Presbytery meetings, and, when elected or co-opted, to serve in its Committees or Commissions.
4. Commissioned Ruling Elders are granted voice and vote in meetings of the Presbytery.
 5. The Commissioned ruling elder shall work under the supervision of the presbytery, through the moderator of the session of the church being served, or through the COM. A teaching elder shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor to provide spiritual and technical guidance. In addition, COM shall provide opportunity and resources for spiritual and intellectual development for all CREs.
 6. The ability of commissioned ruling elders to preach, to teach, to lead worship, to moderate session meetings, to conduct Christian marriage services, to participate with voice/vote in presbytery meetings, and to administer the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism shall be seen and recognized as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, competency will weigh more heavily than academic credentials as the basis for commissioning. Qualifications shall include the following:
 - a. The CRE applicant must have two years of active membership in a Presbyterian Church.
 - b. The CRE applicant must have a written endorsement from his/her local session where membership is listed.
 - c. The CRE applicant must provide three completed references.
 - d. The CRE applicant must be able to give affirmative responses to the nine constitutional questions as listed in *The Book of Order*.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. COM works with a church session(s) seeking the services of a Commissioned Ruling Elder and with the Preparation for Ministry Commission in determining whether there are CRE applicants who have completed the required training and are ready for commissioning.
2. COM works with the session(s) in the development of a job description for the CRE.

3. COM works with the session(s) in determining the amount of compensation to be provided a CRE.
4. COM interviews the applicant, after the Preparation for Ministry Commission has certified that a Commissioned ruling elder applicant has completed the necessary training and is ready to be commissioned, to determine the fit for the position and which if any of the additional responsibilities outlined in G-2.1001 will be given to the Commissioned Ruling Elder once commissioned.
5. COM assigns Mentors to each CRE Candidate and Commissioned CREs in the Presbytery. The mentor is an active Teaching Elder and is to provide spiritual and technical guidance as well as critique their performance. The mentor shall also provide confidential counseling and support in matters of faith and personal problems.

NOTE: A different mentor may be assigned a CRE Candidate undergoing training and after commissioning depending on the location of the CRE service.

The mentor shall:

- a. Periodically review the Candidate or CREs preaching and worship services and provide constructive critique of his/her skills.
- b. Provide informal, confidential counseling and support in matters of faith and personal problems.

NOTE: This relationship shall be in addition to the formalized supervisory relationships with the CRE and the Moderator of the Session to which the person has been assigned and shall be protected by strict rules of confidentiality.

- c. Meet with CRE Candidates at least twice annually and should be available to meet at additional times to provide needed support and counseling.
- d. Make an annual report to COM as to the fact that the relationship is still in effect, noting the dates of personal contacts, honoring at all times the rules of confidentiality concerning content of their conversations.

REPORTS required from Mentors is an annual report to COM attesting that the relationship with the CRE is continuing, and that personal contacts are being maintained. The report shall indicate the dates of visits or communications, with no discussion or mention of the content.

TERMINATION OF RELATIONSHIP can be requested by either the CRE or the Mentor without explanation, that the relationship be terminated. In such case the COM shall assign the CRE Candidate or Commissioned Ruling Elder to another mentor as soon as possible.

6. COM approves the CRE applicant for commissioning and approves the additional responsibilities to be granted once all of the above steps have been completed.
7. COM completes the appropriate approval forms including a copy of the complete job description and terms of the contract.

8. COM evaluates the work of each commissioned ruling elder annually.

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER PROCEDURES

1. COM receives statement from CPM that a person is ready for commissioning.
2. Candidate is interviewed by Partner team from COM. The following should be included in the interview:
 - a. Polity issues (preparation for moderating, etc.)
 - b. Sacraments (preparation for administering)
 - c. Qualifications and training for performance of Christian marriage ceremony
 - d. Candidate's relationship to governing bodies
 - e. Appropriateness of job placement (need job description, which should include a request for the privileges that the church would like the CRE to have. Will the CRE attend Presbytery meetings as an Elder commissioner from the church?)
 - f. Examination of contract
 - g. Supply candidate with a copy of Sexual Conduct Policy and Ethical Guidelines for ministers.
3. Take report to next COM meeting for concurrence or lack thereof on recommendation from CRE that commissioning take place.
4. Stated clerk should send statement of concurrence to CPM in a timely way so that examination and commissioning can be done at a Presbytery meeting. COM shall schedule an appearance of the CRE Candidate before the Presbytery at its next stated or appropriately called meeting. The COM shall present the Candidate and make
Its report to the Presbytery commending him/her for commissioning. Such report shall identify the position to which commissioning is recommended and describe the duties and length of time for which the commission is recommended. COM shall also make recommendation as to which functions should appear in the commissioning document.

The actual commissioning service may be held at the church/site at which the CRE is being commissioned, and shall include:

- a. The moderator asking for the affirmative response of the Candidate to the
Constitutional Questions (*Book of Order* G-14.0565, W-4.4003).
- b. The moderator's Prayer; and
- c. The moderator's formal pronouncement of the Constitutional Declaration of formal commissioning of the Candidate as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

COMMISSIONED POSITION

When the CRE has completed the educational requirements or demonstrated

competency, in preparation for COM review, the local session will be asked to provide a written working contract. It shall be in the form of a position description and will clearly specify the supervisory relationships and the plan for remuneration for services and expenses which shall include:

- a. Title of Position
- b. Specific Duties/Responsibilities
- c. Accountability
- d. Compensation
 1. Salary
 2. Social Security
 3. State/Federal Tax
 4. Pension
 5. Travel Allowance

For occasional, short-term assignments and multiple church assignments, the agreement governing the assignment of the CRE shall be provided by the COM.

The commission shall be valid for a period up to three years as determined by the presbytery. It may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery. A review of the work of the commissioned ruling elder shall be conducted at least annually by COM.

PERIODIC EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS

Evaluations of Candidates and CREs shall assist in identifying strengths, weaknesses, training and continuing education needs not only for the individual but for the CRE program as a whole. COM shall report to the Presbytery annually during the month of April as to the status of the CRE program and those serving in the capacity of CRE.

CREs in active commissioned status shall submit a narrative report to COM via the Moderator of Session annually. Report will include the activities of the CRE during the preceding twelve months and address any problems or questions he/she may have. It should also include information about continuing education courses, seminars or assignments completed which serve to broaden or improve the CRE's ability to serve.

Moderator of Session shall review the narrative reports submitted by the CRE and shall include his or her own personal brief narrative comments as these are forwarded to the COM. The Moderator shall address strengths exhibited and concerns for the performance and development of the CRE. *Problems recognized by the Moderator should be brought to the immediate attention of the COM and are not limited to annual reporting periods or procedures.*

CREs with multiple assignments shall complete an annual report of services provided including date, location and type of service. An example is provided at the end of this section.

5. Sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of the current commission of the CRE, the Moderator of Session will be asked to make specific recommendations concerning renewal of the commission.

EVALUATION OF COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

The annual evaluation of Commissioned Ruling Elders may be conducted in multiple parts:

- I. A series of questions shall be answered by the CRE in conference with one of more of the COM partners. (The questions would be provided to the CRE in writing in advance and examples are provided for guidance.)
- II. A series of questions can also be answered by members of the Session of the church. Selected questions to be provided to Session member(s) to be answered and returned to the COM partners.
- III. A consultation with the ordained pastor who has been assigned as mentor to the CRE (as per Book of Order G-2.1004).

The combined results of this three-part evaluation shall be developed by the COM partners and reported to the CRE, to the Session, as well as to the Commission on Ministry. This evaluation shall be completed before a new contract can be issued by the Session for an ensuing year of service by the CRE.

I. Example Questions for the Commissioned Ruling Elder.

1. What increase/decrease in membership has occurred in the past year?
How many new members have been added to the rolls?
Has there been a decrease in membership?
How many members have been deleted from the rolls?
2. What has been the average attendance at Sunday worship over the past year?

At the beginning of the
year? At the end of the
year?
For the year as a whole?
3. For what ages do you hold regular Sunday School classes? (check those that apply and give attendance numbers)
Average Attendance
☐ Pre-school _____
☐ Ages 5-8 _____
☐ Ages 9-12 _____

□Ages 13 - 18 Adult_____

4. Does your church have a regularly scheduled activity for youth apart from Sunday School classes? ____
How often do they meet and what is the average attendance?
Scheduled_____
Attendance _____
5. What other activities do you regularly conduct, or assure that they are conducted, that provide spiritual growth and development for your members? Identify those that apply and comment briefly on each - schedule, numbers participating, nature of activity, etc.
 - a. Bible study apart from Adult Sunday School
 - b. New member classes
 - c. Women's groups
 - d. Camp meetings/ sings
 - e. Other
6. What activities do you promote that encourage fellowship among your members apart from the activities identified above?
7. Do you utilize work parties from outside churches for work projects and/or Daily Vacation Bible School during the spring and summer months? Please list the ones that have served your church this past year, giving the nature of the projects they carried out and the number of visiting persons involved for each. In connection with this question please indicate the ways in which the local church partnered with these groups in their activities - as co-workers, cooking meals, fellowship activities during the week they were there, etc.
8. What outreach activities have you carried out this past year to extend your ministry into the community? This might include radio ads, printed flyers, clothing rooms that are open to the community, etc.
9. Approximately how many hospital and home visitations have you made this past year to members of the congregation?
Hospital visitations_____Home visitations _____
10. Have you conducted baptisms, marriages, funerals this past year?
How many Baptisms_____Marriages_____
Funerals_____

11. In what continuing education for Commissioned Ruling Pastors have you participated this past year? Please identify each activity, its date, and the content of the activity.
12. How many times have you met this year with the Teaching Elder assigned as your mentor?
13. How did you use your study leave this past year?
14. Please provide a financial report for the year showing sources of income and amounts and categories of expenditures and amounts. If you had work parties that carried out particular capital improvement projects - paving, painting, major repairs, additional furniture and equipment, etc., you might list those separately and indicate the approximate value of each project.
15. Apart from your study leave and contractual vacation weeks, how many Sundays were you in the pulpit this past year?

II. Example Questions for Session members

1. Has the membership of the church increased or decreased this past year? How many new members has the Session received?
How many members has the Session dropped from the rolls? _____
2. What has been the average attendance at Sunday worship over this past year, excluding Christmas and Easter? Has that increased or decreased during the year?
3. How often has the Session met this past year? Do you meet on a regular scheduled basis, or do you meet on the call of the pastor when there is business to be conducted? Are financial reports provided to the Session at each session meeting? Are minutes of each meeting kept and published?
4. Does the pastor conduct training segments for the Session focusing on your duties/responsibilities as session members, on procedures from the Book of Order, or other items intended as education for session members? If these are done, are they as part of regular session meetings or are there special meetings just for that purpose?
5. What is the status of your Sunday School this past year?

How many children are involved each Sunday on average? _____

How many adults are involved in teaching Sunday School? _____

6. Are these the same people all the time? Has the pastor made efforts to recruit and train other adults to assist with teaching in the Sunday School?
7. Are there activities other than Sunday worship carried on to bring about spiritual growth and development of the congregation? What are they and who conducts these activities?
8. What do you consider to be the greatest strengths or skills that your pastor brings to your church and congregation?
9. What do you think are areas in which your pastor could develop greater strength and new skills that would improve the growth and mission of your church?
10. In what ways does your church, under the leadership of the pastor, reach out into the community to encourage new attendance, to show support for un-churched folks in your community, to provide service to people in your community?
11. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being greatest) how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the performance of your pastor?

III. Example Questions for minister/mentor

1. How often have you met with the pastor this past year to mentor him/her in duties and responsibilities of a Commissioned Ruling Elder?
2. In what particular areas of performance have you instructed and mentored the pastor? Is the pastor taking advantage of continuing education opportunities offered for CREs?
3. What is your perception of how well the pastor has responded to your guidance and suggestions? Have you seen growth and development in these areas in which you have offered guidance?
4. In what areas of performance do you see the pastor exhibiting greatest strength? Areas needing improvement?

5. What is your perception of how well the congregation is responding to the leadership of the pastor?
6. Overall do you see the pastor exhibiting the kind of growth and development in his/her performance as a CRE that would warrant continued service in this role?

COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY CPM:

1. _____ is, by vote of CPM ready for commissioning. CPM recommends _____
Mentor's Name
as mentor/supervisor for this candidate.
-

TO BE COMPLETED BY COM:

2. _____ has been interviewed by the Commission on Ministry and _____ has, _____ does not have concurrence that he/she may be commissioned.
3. Permission to perform the following has been granted:
- _____ a. Administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion
 - _____ b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism
 - _____ c. Moderate session meetings
 - _____ d. Officiate a Christian Service of Marriage when invited by the Session.
4. The commissioning will be valid in the following church(es). _____
—
5. _____ has been appointed mentor and supervisor.
6. This commission is valid for _____ year(s) and is to be reviewed by COM annually.

Signed _____, for the COM Partnership Team _____
[date]

Signed _____, COM Moderator _____
[date]

Signed _____, CRE _____
[date]

Signed _____, Presbytery Stated Clerk _____
[date]

The Stated Clerk should send a copy of the completed form to the CRE.

COVENANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN A SESSION AND A COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER

The session of the _____ Church being well satisfied with your qualifications to lead and assist us in the fulfillment of our corporate and individual ministries contracts with you _____ to become our Commissioned Ruling Elder beginning _____ for a period of one year, subject to renewal. Oversight of the contract and your performance is through the session and the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry. This contract will be reviewed annually.

_____ having satisfied the requirements of Pastor of the Presbytery, received a commission from the Presbytery to serve _____ Presbyterian Church in capacity of Commissioned Ruling Elder on _____

EXPECTATIONS: (Delete items not applicable)

During your time of service, we expect you to perform the following services:

- a. Administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism.
- c. Moderate the session of the congregation(s) to which commissioned.
- d. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or COM.
- e. Demonstrate and provide a quality of life and relationships that commend the gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice.
- f. Study, teach and preach the Word.
- g. Pray with and for the congregation.
- h. Encourage the people in the worship and service of God -- to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world.
- i. Assist the Session in its leadership responsibilities to implement the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision-making of the church, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the community as a whole.
- j. Share in the ministries of sympathy, witness, and service with Deacons.
- k. Share in the work of the whole church, particularly by attending Presbytery meetings, and, when elected or co-opted, to serve in its Committees.

The session estimates that fulfilling these duties will require _____ hours per week.

COMPENSATION: (Delete items not applicable)

Salary _____

Study Leave Expense _____

Housing _____

Moving Expense _____

Travel Expense _____

Telephone _____

Insurance _____

Other _____

The session promises and obligates itself to provide you with the following added compensation:

1. (For occasional services only, a \$ per service should be substituted.)
2. Documented travel reimbursement at the rate allowed by IRS.
3. Vacation of one month annually.
4. Study leave of two weeks annually.

TERMINATION:

This contract may be terminated by either the session or the Commissioned Ruling Elder with 30 days of notice.

SIGNED:

Clerk of Session _____ Date _____

Commissioned Ruling Elder _____ Date _____

Commission on Ministry Representative _____ Date _____

PART 1

Commissioned Ruling Elder

Annual Evaluation Form

CRE Name: _____ Date: _____

Year becoming a Commissioned Ruling Elder _____

Church currently being served _____

(If multiple, just write multiple in blank)

Mentor assigned _____

Commissioned Ruling Elder Questions: Answer any 3 question from section 1 and any 2 of the possible questions from section 2 (attached) that best define your services over the past year.

PART 1 Example Questions for the Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Section 1

1. What increase/decrease in membership has occurred in the past year?
How many new members have been added to the rolls?
Has there been a decrease in membership?
How many members have been deleted from the rolls?

2. What has been the average attendance at Sunday worship over the past year?

At the beginning of the
year? At the end of the
year?
For the year as a whole?

3. For what ages do you hold regular Sunday School classes? (check those that apply and give attendance numbers)

Average Attendance

- ☐ Pre-school _____
- ☐ Ages 5-8 _____
- ☐ Ages 9-12 _____
- ☐ Ages 13 - 18 Adult _____

4. Does your church have a regularly scheduled activity for youth apart from Sunday School classes? _

How often do they meet and what is the average attendance?

Scheduled_____

Attendance _____

5. Approximately how many hospital and home visitations have you made this past year to members of the congregation?

Hospital visitations_____Home visitations _____

6. Have you conducted baptisms, marriages, funerals this past year?

How many Baptisms_____Marriages_____

Funerals_____

7. How many times have you met this year with the Teaching Elder assigned as your mentor?

8. How did you use your study leave this past year?

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

PART 1 Example Questions for the Commissioned Ruling Elder.

Section 2

9. What other activities do you regularly conduct, or assure that they are conducted, that provide spiritual growth and development for your members? Identify those that apply and comment briefly on each - schedule, numbers participating, nature of activity, etc.
 - a. Bible study apart from Adult Sunday School
 - b. New member classes
 - c. Women's groups
 - d. Camp meetings/ sings
 - e. Other
10. What activities do you promote that encourage fellowship among your members apart from the activities identified above? Please describe the strengths of your church's fellowship? What are ongoing challenges?
11. Please list the work parties from outside churches for work projects and/or Daily Vacation Bible School? Please describe how they served your church this past year, giving the nature of the projects they carried out and the number of visiting persons involved for each. In connection with this question please indicate the ways in which the local church partnered with these groups in their activities - as co-workers, cooking meals, fellowship activities during the week they were there, etc.
12. What outreach activities have you carried out this past year to extend your ministry into the community? This might include group projects, specific mission events, radio ads, printed flyers, clothing rooms that are open to the community, etc.
13. In what continuing education for Commissioned Ruling Pastors have you participated this past year? Please identify each activity, its date, and the content of the activity. What are one to three key "takeaways" from your continuing education?
14. Apart from your study leave and contractual vacation weeks, how many Sundays were you in the pulpit this past year? Please describe your ordinary duties as a worship leader? Describe how you have grown more comfortable as a worship leader in the past year?
15. Please provide a financial report for the year showing sources of income and amounts and categories of expenditures and amounts.

Question 1:

Question 2:

PART 2

CRE Name: _____

Session Members Questions: 3 session members should be selected to answer 2 of 11 possible questions (attached) which best define a strength and a weakness of the CRE.

PART 2 Example Questions for Session members

1. Has the membership of the church increased or decreased this past year?
 How many new members has the Session received? _____
 How many members has the Session dropped from the rolls? _____
2. What has been the average attendance at Sunday worship over this past year, excluding Christmas and Easter? Has that increased or decreased during the year?
3. How often has the Session met this past year? Do you meet on a regularly scheduled basis, or do you meet on the call of the pastor when there is business to be conducted? What financial reports are provided to the Session at each session meeting? How are minutes of each meeting kept and published? What is the CRE's role in Session processes?
4. Does the pastor conduct training segments for the Session focusing on your duties/responsibilities as session members, on procedures from the Book of Order, or other items intended as education for session members? If these are done, are they as part of regular session meetings or are there special meetings just for that purpose?
5. What is the status of your Sunday School this past year?
 How many children are involved each Sunday on average? _____
 How many adults are involved in teaching Sunday School? _____
 How would you describe your Sunday School's strengths?
 What are its challenges?
6. Are these the same people all the time? Has the pastor made efforts to recruit and train other adults to assist with teaching in the Sunday School?
7. Are there activities other than Sunday worship carried on to bring about spiritual growth and development of the congregation? What are they and who conducts these activities?

8. What do you consider to be the greatest strengths or skills that your pastor brings to your church and congregation?
9. What do you think are areas in which your pastor could develop greater strength and new skills that would improve the growth and mission of your church?
10. In what ways does your church, under the leadership of the pastor, reach out into the community to encourage new attendance, to show support for un-churched folks in your community, to provide service to people in your community?
11. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being greatest) how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the performance of your pastor?

Session Member 1
Question 1

Question 2

Session Member 2
Question 1

Question 2

Session Member 3
Question 1

Question 2

PART 3

CRE Name: _____

Mentor Questions: Answer any 2 of the 5 possible questions in addition to Question 1 (attached) that best defines the CRE's services over the past year to the church.

PART 3. Example Questions for minister/mentor

1. **Required** - How often have you met with the pastor this past year to mentor him/her in duties and responsibilities of a Commissioned Ruling Elder? _____
2. In what particular areas of performance have you instructed and mentored the pastor? Is the pastor taking advantage of continuing education opportunities offered for CREs?
3. What is your perception of how well the pastor has responded to your guidance and suggestions? Have you seen growth and development in these areas in which you have offered guidance?
4. In what areas of performance do you see the pastor exhibiting greatest strength? Areas needing improvement?
5. What is your perception of how well the congregation is responding to the leadership of the pastor?
6. Overall do you see the pastor exhibiting the kind of growth and development in his/her performance as a CRE that would warrant continued service in this role?

Question 1

Question 2

CHAPTER VIII – INTERVIEW PROCEDURES FOR PRESBYTERY MEMBERSHIP

Introduction

1. Interview committees are to be guided by instructions in the *Book of Order* G-2.0502 and 2.0503 and this COM Handbook.
2. Interview purposes are to examine Christian faith and theological views of every Teaching Elder or candidate applicant for presbytery membership.
3. Interviews with applicants for any pastoral position are to determine suitability for the position; eligibility for further consideration by a PNC or APNC or session; and, eligible for presbytery membership. Interviews with those wishing to have a particular ministry validated are to determine if the ministry meets criteria for validation. Interviews with other categories of applicants are to determine if they qualify under presbytery policies for membership and should be granted membership.
4. Interviews will be conducted by a committee of three COM members. Other COM members, the Presbytery Pastor, and the Stated Clerk/Associate may substitute when needed.
5. Interviews will normally be one hour long. Candidates and other involved persons are to be notified, in advance, of this expected duration.
6. All interviews are to be documented by completion of the Summary of Interview form found in the Appendix/Forms section of this handbook, copies distributed as directed on the form.

For pastoral positions in a church

1. An applicant for a Call to a particular church will be interviewed by the liaison members for that church. Other COM members may be included if needed.
2. Prior to the interview, committee members must have received copies of the applicant's required Statement of Faith and brief biographical history and can include the church MIF as well.
3. The COM interview with a candidate for an installed position will take place prior to the candidate's meeting with the church PNC or APNC. In the same way, an interview with a candidate for a temporary pastoral position will take place before meeting with the church session's search committee.

For all other candidates for transfer to the Presbytery

When a teaching elder is seeking to transfer his or her membership from another presbytery to this Presbytery, the following procedure will be followed:

1. If the teaching elder/candidate is seeking to have a ministry validated as a Ministry Beyond the Jurisdiction, prior to being scheduled for an Interview, the minister shall be asked and required to submit the following:
 - a. Statement of Faith and brief biographical history
 - b. Job Description of the ministry position to be validated, and the terms of remuneration, which have been approved by the ministry Board of Directors along with a listing of the names of the members of the Board.

- c. Provide a detailed description of how the proposed ministry meets or complies with all of the criteria for the determination of a validated ministry in Service Beyond the Jurisdiction (G-2.0503) as outlined in the Presbytery of Grand Canyon's Validated Ministry Form.
2. If the teaching elder is Honorably Retired or a Member-at-large of another presbytery who qualifies for membership under Grand Canyon's Continuing Membership and Validation of Ministry Policy, he or she shall provide prior to an interview a Statement of Faith and brief biographical history.

Procedure for interview

1. Moderator directs Introduction of candidate to committee members, who identify themselves. Moderator explains the committee is fulfilling requirements of the Book of Order G-2.050 and G-2.0503, and that time at interview's end will be for applicant's questions.
2. First question should be asking for a short biographical sketch, followed by an easy question to help candidate relax.
3. The committee's examination on the Book of Order basic questions should follow the list prepared by the committee. It may be a smoother interview if the Moderator, in advance, has assigned each of the committee members some of the areas to be covered. Questions need not be verbatim, but must be covered.
4. Additional questions in the four basic areas (journey of faith, theology, sacraments, government), or other areas, should arrive from studying the PIF and/or MIF forms. The committee would ordinarily cover areas of family, and the candidate's willingness to accept the position if it's offered.
5. In addition to standard questions and conversation, committee members should formulate questions meant to learn the individuality of each candidate. The purpose of all questions is to test the accuracy of the committee's evaluation of the candidate. Some example questions are in the Appendix.
6. The committee should encourage the candidate to ask questions or share concerns about the calling church, presbytery, salary, house and area weather. The committee should be prepared to answer all questions, or promise to get answers if needed.
7. This final question must always be asked: "Are you able to answer all the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception and, if not, which ones and why not?"
8. If the answer is "yes," the interview is complete, the applicant is excused, the committee discusses its learnings, and makes a decision as to acceptability in the presbytery.
9. If applicant expresses an unwillingness or inability to answer "yes" the committee shall diligently inquire further into the reasons, and prayerfully seek to discern its recommendation to the full COM, and to the PNC, if applicable.
10. Should the Interviewing Committee determine to continue on with further consideration, the minister shall be reminded and advised of the Examination for Membership policy provisions numbered six (6), seven (7) and eight (8)

which shall become operative in order to continue further in the process. (See below for detail.)

11. The candidate is excused, with an escort to another area.
12. After the committee makes its decision and informs the candidate, further follow-up is:
 - a. Committee evaluations should follow with a vote on candidate's acceptance
 - b. PNC representative is called in and informed of decision, if applicable
 - c. Committee moderator reports interview result to the liaison, the COM moderator, and the Stated Clerk/Associate.
13. Individuals being examined for ordination and/or presbytery membership who are unable to answer all of the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception shall submit a statement of "scruple" (exception) expressing their disagreement to the presbytery in writing prior to their examination.²
 - a. Each person submitting a statement of "scruple" (exception) shall be examined by the presbytery in plenary assembly.³ Each exception requested shall be considered by the presbytery as to whether it constitutes a rejection of an essential tenet of Reformed faith or polity. The person being examined shall be granted opportunity to defend the objection before the assembly. The assembly may take into account the depth and quality of theological reasoning in determining whether the position taken constitutes a rejection of an essential tenet.⁴
 - b. Persons who are judged by this presbytery to reject an essential tenet of Reformed faith or polity shall not be ordained as a Teaching Elder, or be granted membership in this presbytery, regardless of prior ordination or retirement status.
 - c. "So far as may be possible without serious departure from [the standards of the church], without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without

² On the limits of personal conscience, see Form of Government G-2.0105; while G-2.0105 specifically identifies only the

Constitution, the COM has added "the Scriptures." The provision requiring a written statement is included to aid the presbytery in conducting its assessment of whether the departure constitutes an essential of Reformed faith and polity. Should a "scruple" be announced during the examination, the presbytery would be in order to suspend the examination to provide opportunity for the Candidate to provide the written statement. The presbytery could choose to resume the examination at such a place and time as would provide sufficient opportunity to consider the request carefully and conduct a reasonable and responsible examination. CPM and/or COM will be responsible for notifying persons to be examined of the presbytery policy sufficiently in advance so as to allow them time to prepare written statements prior to the meeting.

³ Under 2.0105, the determination of departure from essentials is the responsibility of the governing body. The presbytery believes this decision may not and should not be delegated to any committee, task force, council, or commission.

⁴ "It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his beliefs and stated his motives personally, and after the examining body, whether Presbytery or (General) Synod, had had full opportunity to judge the man himself, as well as abstract questions of doctrine." (Report of the Special Commission of 1925 ["Swearingen"], PCUSA, 1927, pp. 56-86).

obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained” (G-2.0105).

- d. The presbytery may not take any action which binds the judgment of future assemblies in the examination of Candidates, nor may it reject a Candidate’s statement of exception without providing the Candidate an opportunity to defend the position or the presbyters the opportunity to weigh the position or its defense.⁵
14. Persons whose statements of “scruple” (exception) are deemed by the presbytery not to constitute rejection of an essential tenet are nevertheless required to act in conformity with the faith and polity of the church.⁶ Persons willfully violating mandatory provisions of the Constitution shall be subject to disciplinary action.
15. All steps in the above process must be completed prior to an individual assuming a call or contract within the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. If a plenary examination is necessary, a special meeting of the presbytery may be called to ensure that the examination occurs in as timely a fashion as possible.

⁵ “One fact often overlooked is that by the Act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance.” (Report of the Special Commission of 1925 [“Swearingen”], PCUSA, 1927, pp. 56-86.)

⁶ “The Commission recognizes the right of individuals to hold views contrary to the Constitution of the PCUSA but, for the sake of order, actions contrary to the Constitution are not sanctioned” (PCUS, 1983, *Hambrick v. PJC, Synod of North Carolina*, No. 1-1983). See also *Londonderry et al. v. Presbytery of Northern New England* (RC 213-2, 2001). An examination concerns fitness for office. A decision to grant a “scruple” in examination for ordination does not abridge the authority of the Constitution to govern conduct of ministry or limit the grounds for remedial or disciplinary actions.

⁷ See Footnote #6.

Examples of Interview Questions For Presbytery Membership

Icebreaker:

1. Describe your journey of faith. How were you called to the ministry?
2. What have been some of your greatest joys in your present ministry?
3. What is there about this church/position that appeals to you?

Theology:

1. Who is Jesus Christ to you?
2. Please relate your understanding of the Trinity.
3. How do you interpret the Bible and use it in your ministry?
4. What contemporary theologian has most influenced your theology and practice of ministry?
5. What is an appropriate balance between the prophetic and pastoral functions of ministry?
6. What are one or two major issues facing the Presbyterian Church at this time in its history?

The sacraments:

1. What is your understanding of baptism? Of the Lord's Supper?
2. Would you admit children to the Lord's Table? If so, on what basis?
3. A grandparent in your congregation indicates that a grandchild is coming for a visit, and the family would like to arrange for the child's baptism while the family is in the area. What is your response to this request?

Government:

1. What has been your involvement in presbytery mission? How would you like to serve in our presbytery?
2. How have you instructed your elder and deacon candidates before taking office?
3. What, in your opinion, are the major strengths in the Presbyterian system of government?
4. How have you dealt with interpersonal conflict in your former ministry?
5. How have you dealt with institutional conflict in your former ministry?
6. Are you able to answer all ordination questions in the affirmative without exception and, if not, why not and why?

Optional questions:

1. What is the mission of the church?
2. How do you relate to the session, and how does the session fit into your administration of the church?
3. How would you relate to the staff of the church?
4. What compensation do you require?

Interview Summary Form

Name of Interviewee _____

Presbytery of Membership or Care

Date of Interview _____

Position Considered (Check Below as Appropriate)

Permanent _____ Associate _____ Interim _____

Temporary _____ HR _____

Validated Outside a Congregation _____

Validated Beyond Jurisdiction _____

Name of Church or Employing Organization

Interview Commission Decision (Check All Below as Appropriate)

Approved for further consideration by PNC, APNC, or Session (temporary position) Yes _____ No _____

Approved the request for Validated Ministry
Yes _____ No _____

Interviewee responded affirmatively to the question:
"Are you able to answer all the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception: and if not which ones and why not?"
Yes _____ No _____

Approved for Membership in the Presbytery
() Permanent () Temporary
Yes _____ No _____

COM Members of the Interview Commission:

Signature of the Convener of the Interview Team

Addendums:

Please attach:

- ☐ CIF Form
- ☐ PIF FORM
- ☐ Statement of Faith
- ☐ Bio

Home Address:

Spouse name:

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Date of Ordination: _____

Ordaining Presbytery: _____

Instructions: Attach a information requested above and indicate those items received by placing a check in the box. Return this form to the Presbytery Office for further processing and or filing by the Stated Clerk and staff.

Signature of the Interviewee

CHAPTER IX – PERIODIC VISITS

This Handbook provides that the Commission on Ministry shall coordinate visits with each session:

To ensure that these guiding principles are being followed, those responsible on behalf of presbytery for the oversight and review of the ministry of particular worshipping congregations should discuss with those sessions the quality of worship, the standards governing it, and the fruit it is bearing in the life of God's people as they proclaim the gospel and communicate its joy and justice. (W-1.4002)

One of the reasons that COM is organized along the liaison concept is the hope that closer relationships may be established between the COM and the Sessions in each of our churches. There are many times and many ways in which members of COM interact with the pastors, churches and sessions under their care throughout the year. Generally, these contacts tend to be event or circumstance driven so it is important that there be a specific time set aside to “discuss the mission and ministry of the particular church.” That time is the Periodic Visit. Although Periodic Visits are no longer required by the Book of Order, it is highly recommended that COM visit with each Session of the presbytery annually, discussing with them the mission and ministry of the particular Church and encouraging the full participation of each Session and Congregation in the life and work of the Presbytery and of the larger Church.

PURPOSE OF PERIODIC VISITS

1. To discuss with the Session the mission and ministry of the congregation – its successes and challenges.
2. To discuss the church's participation in the life of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.
3. To receive counsel and guidance from the Session of how the Presbytery could be of help to the Session.

VISITATION TEAMS

1. COM will select teams of two or three including Elders and Ministers. The Church's liaison from the COM shall be the head of the team and shall make contact/appointments with the assigned churches.
2. Team members may be selected from outside the COM.

PREPARATION OF TEAMS

1. Arrange with the Pastor or the Clerk of Session for date, time and place of visit. Arrange with the moderator of Session if the pulpit is vacant.
2. Request a copy of the Congregation's annual report, a recent church bulletin, and recent church newsletter. Review the church's website and familiarize yourself with its content.
3. Send a letter to the moderator of Session, (usually the church's pastor), two months in advance of the periodic visit. Convey to the pastor what she or he can expect:
 - That the periodic visit will take no longer than one hour,

- That elders will be asked to share three success and three challenges they have recently experienced or are experiencing,
- That elders will be asked about their connection to the presbytery, including any messages they would like to convey to COM, staff, or other presbytery committees,
- That included in the letter as an addendum is a list of sample topics for elders to consider as possible conversation topics – this list is only illustrative, not required, and is shared for the purpose of helping elders consider potential points for discussion.
- That the pastor(s) will be asked to excuse oneself/themselves for a brief periodic of time so elders can share how the pastor-congregation relationship is going.

PROCESS FOR THE TEAM'S VISIT

1. Pray as a team before meeting with the Session: to be able to LISTEN well, LISTEN faithfully and LISTEN non-defensively. Pray also as a team for the grace to SPEAK kindly, SPEAK respectfully and SPEAK the truth in love.
2. At the visit, following introductions and greetings, the team leader will explain the purpose of the visit and the process to be followed.
3. The team will engage in conversation with the elders on the following topics:
 - What are three success and three challenges they have recently experienced or are experiencing,
 - Tell about your connection to the presbytery, including any messages they would like to convey to COM, presbytery staff, or other presbytery committees,
 - Are there any of the sample topics from the addendum the elders would like to discuss or to which they would like to respond?
4. The Pastor(s) will be excused for a period of time during the meeting so that the Elders can speak freely concerning their evaluation of and concerns for their Pastor(s).
5. Inform the Session the team leader will, soon after the visit, prepare a report of the team's findings for the session and COM. Thank the Session for their time, consideration and service to Christ's Church.

ADDENDUM – LIST OF SAMPLE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are some of the exciting things going on now at the church?
2. What is the image of your church in the community?
3. In what ways do you do annual planning? Budget planning?
4. What are the top three priorities of the session at the present time?
5. What is your most successful educational program?
6. What has been the meaningful worship experience for this year?
7. How is the congregation responding to the stewardship program?
8. What are your missions beyond the church's walls -locally and globally?

9. Identify any particular concerns or issues facing your church?
10. What does your pastor(s) do best?
11. How does the session evaluate pastoral staff?
12. How does the session recommend pastoral compensation to the congregation?
13. How well is the Session doing its job?
14. What can the COM/Presbytery do for you?

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL VISITATION REPORT FORM

Church, Chapel or Fellowship Visited:

Date of Visit:

Church Person Contacted:

Position:

Setting of Visit (i.e. worship, session meeting, fellowship event, etc.):

Provide a Brief Summary of the Visit, Matters Discussed, Celebrations, etc.:

(Please attach additional pages if needed)

Particular Concerns, if any, For Presbytery Level Discernment:

Any Follow-up Planned?

Purpose:

Names of Those Making Visit:

Date of Report:

Signature (s) of Those Reporting:

This report will be filed in the Presbytery office's file on this Church, thereby providing information for the COM, Presbytery Pastor, and Stated Clerk. It is confidential in nature and will be handled with due care.

The purpose of the visit is to develop meaningful connections between the Presbytery and its congregations. The time, energy and compassion of all visiting persons and groups is greatly valued.

CHAPTER X - ETHICS

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING ELDERS POLICY

The vows from *The Book of Order* which clergy persons take at ordination address principles which are tested constantly, but these principles stand as guides for behavior. This document is a way to recognize those vows and illustrate their relevance and power in daily ministry.

All Presbyterian teaching elders have the responsibility assumed in their ordination vows, to trust Jesus Christ as Savior, to acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and to believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are further committed to obedience to Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by the *Book of Confessions*. In their personal lives all teaching elders, acting as God's servants, follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love their neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world. In both their personal and professional lives, they strive to further the peace, unity, and purity of the Church, and serve society with honesty, imagination, and love. Each teaching elder has also promised to be governed by this church's polity, to abide by its discipline, to be a friend among all colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit. (W-4.4003). Every time a teaching elder is installed in a new position these same commitments are reaffirmed. Every ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery (G-2.0502).

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

1. In all professional matters, teaching elders maintain practices that give glory to Christ, advance the goals of the Church, and nurture, challenge, and protect the welfare of church members, parishioners, clients, and the public.
2. Teaching elders act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, morality, and dignity of the profession.
3. Teaching elders limit their practice to those positions and responsibilities for which they are qualified.
4. Teaching elders conduct all professional matters in a manner that assures security and confidentiality and avoids conflicts of interest.
5. Teaching elders demonstrate respect, honesty, and fairness when interacting with clergy colleagues and persons in related professions.
6. Teaching elders maintain professional competency throughout their careers.
7. In personal as well as professional relationships teaching elders have honest and sincere motives, upholding the peace, unity, and purity of the church, and sharing faith, hope, and love with all people.

There are two aspects to teaching elder ethics--the professional code and the personal

code. Both aspects are concerns for the whole church and have a direct relationship to effectiveness in ministry. The maintenance of high standards of professional competence is an ethical concern and is a responsibility shared by all teaching elders.

While teaching elders are directly accountable to the presbytery to which they belong or where they labor with permission, they also bear accountability to their employing body or session and congregation. In the realm of ethics, there is a larger accountability to the religious community as a whole and to the general public. Teaching elders show sensible regard for the moral, social, religious, and legal standards of the Christian community and the community at large, realizing that any violation on their part may be damaging to their parishioners, to colleagues in ministry, to their profession, and to the body of Jesus Christ. Attitudes and standards regarding divorce and remarriage, for one example, vary widely from one region to another. Therefore, teaching elders may find it useful to seek guidance from the COM in such matters. The teaching elder's integrity in personal business and financial dealings is also an ethical concern, and ethical teaching elders will not involve themselves or their congregations in questionable business practices, nor will they incur debts they cannot pay in a reasonable time, nor will they leave any community with unpaid personal bills.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

In all professional matters, teaching elders maintain practices that give glory to Christ, advance the goals of the church, and nurture, challenge, and protect church members, parishioners, and counselees. They give a full day's work for a full day's pay and are careful not to be slack or indifferent about their devotion to duty. Their practice of the profession will also seek to advance the profession.

- A. Teaching elders accurately represent their professional qualifications, education, training, and experience in all contacts with the church or the public. Teaching elders are themselves responsible for correcting any misrepresentation.
- B. Teaching elders use their knowledge, skill and experience, and their professional connections, for the benefit of the people and the institutions they serve and do not seek to secure unfair personal advantage.
- C. Members of the profession limit their practice to those positions and responsibilities for which they are qualified and know when to make referrals if that is indicated in a particular case.
- D. Personal information forms, announcements of professional services offered, and other kinds of publicity are accurate, objective, and dignified and are used within the standards of generally accepted good taste.
- E. Any financial arrangements or expectations regarding preaching, speaking, counseling, weddings, funerals, and other professional services are discussed at the start of any such counseling or services and are handled in a business-like manner. Teaching elders who serve congregations offer their services to members of their own congregations without charge and without expecting any honoraria for such services. All teaching elders stand ready to render services to individuals and communities in crisis without regard to financial remuneration, when appropriate. While fees for the use of church facilities are set by the session, honoraria or fees for the pastor's services to non-members can be set by the pastor or by the session.

- F. Personal records of colleagues on staff, notes on counseling sessions, records pertaining to parishioners or clients, and other materials, which might need to be kept confidential, are stored in a place assuring security and confidentiality.
- G. Teaching elders avoid the disparagement of any person, and particularly of colleagues and other professionals.
- H. Teaching elders and pastoral counselors do not engage in sexual misconduct. (See the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Child Protection Policy)

PASTOR - PARISHIONER / COUNSELEE RELATIONSHIPS

Teaching elders respect the integrity and protect the welfare of persons or groups with whom they are working and have an obligation to safeguard information about them that has been obtained in the course of the counseling process.

- A. During the counseling process, it is the duty of a teaching elder and pastoral counselor to maintain the relationship with the counselee on a professional basis.
- B. Teaching elders and pastoral counselors do not make unrealistic promises regarding the counseling process or its outcome.
- C. The influence of teaching elders and pastoral counselors may be considerable, however they need to recognize that the religious convictions of a counselee have powerful emotional and volitional significance and need to be approached with care and sensitivity. An imposition of the teaching elder/pastoral counselor's own theological position on counselees is inappropriate, though exposure of this position may beneficially provide the counselee with new insight and work in his/her best interests.
- D. All personal communications from counselees or parishioners are treated with professional confidentiality. Records may be released with the written and signed permission of a counselee.

COLLEAGUE RELATIONSHIP

Teaching elders maintain a vital association with their professional colleagues and with colleagues in related professions--health care, social services, legal services, and the like. This includes persons in the Presbyterian Church, those in other faith groups, and possibly some without any faith-group connection. They communicate regularly with such peer persons and respect, support, and depend on them professionally and personally.

- A. Teaching elders are understanding toward one another, accept each other as persons, honor each other's position descriptions, respect the competencies of each other, offer constructive suggestions to one another, forgive misunderstandings, and are tolerant of differences of opinion and style of operation.

In staff relationships, the objective of the teaching elder is to create an atmosphere where the whole staff will work together with a spirit of cooperation in building up the whole church. Specific position descriptions are prepared to describe the responsibilities, accountabilities, and interrelationships of all church staff.

The principles of ethical, healthy staff relationships apply equally to professional, paraprofessional, and support staff (secretarial and custodial employees) and volunteers. All staff members are given equal respect without regard to sex, race, ethnic origin, disability, or marital status. Any person working on a staff who feels unable to manage relationships with other staff members in a creative and effective manner needs to be encouraged to give serious consideration to relocating for the sake of the work of the whole church.

If a staff person is not able to continue to fulfill job requirements and a termination of services becomes necessary, teaching elders and churches have a responsibility to be especially caring and considerate of that employee. The termination needs to occur with compassion, gentleness and kindness, keeping in mind how one would want to be treated in a like circumstance.

- B. In pastoral calling and other home or hospital visiting, seeing one's own parishioners is the teaching elder's first responsibility. Ordinarily the teaching elder avoids calling on someone who is a member of another church unless some initiative comes from that person or from that person's own teaching elder. Professional courtesy suggests that if a teaching elder does call on a parishioner from another church, the parishioner's own teaching elder is notified.
- C. When a teaching elder is called upon to officiate at a wedding, funeral, or baptism for families who are not members of the teaching elder's own congregation, the teaching elder determines whether they are members of another church. If so, they need to be urged to secure the services of their own teaching elder. If that effort fails, the teaching elder seeks to inform their teaching elder of the circumstances. In administering the sacraments, the teaching elder will know and honor the provisions of The Directory for Service of God and the Form of Government as found in *The Book of Order*.
- D. The purpose of an interim pastor is to prepare a particular congregation for the coming of a new pastor soon to be called. To this end, he/she will not seek to glorify him/herself or to mold loyalties to him/herself, but rather loyalties to the office of the pastor and, most of all, loyalties to Christ and to the Church. According to the Form of Government, the interim cannot ordinarily be a candidate for the pulpit that he/she serves as an interim supply pastor.

- E. An installed pastor or a temporary pastor has the responsibility to be courteous to any predecessor. The years may have built up loyalties that are strong, and though the preceding teaching elder may do everything possible to discourage a former parishioner from seeking his or her services, that parishioner may be quite persistent. If this happens, the former pastor should steadfastly resist the request and urge the parishioner to seek the current teaching elder's services. If, in unusual circumstances, the current teaching elder chooses to invite a former teaching elder to participate in some service, this is completely on the initiative of the current teaching elder. Some careful flexibility in such matters may do more to move a congregation to accept a new teaching elder as their own than would "standing up for one's rights" as the installed teaching elder.
- F. All teaching elders who fall into the category of General Assembly's listing "other teaching elders" need to be active in the life of a particular congregation but respect the position of parish pastors regarding all teaching elder functions within the community. Weddings, funerals, and baptisms are not performed by teaching elders without a parish, unless an invitation has been given by the pastor of the church involved. Teaching elders without parishes may administer the sacraments (1) at the request of a local pastor and his/her session, or (2) by permission of the presbytery. Teaching elders without parishes ordinarily do not counsel with nor advise parishioners concerning personal problems or problems in their churches, but encourage them to seek the counsel of their own pastors.
- G. When clergy are no longer serving in a presbytery-validated ministry and are not honorably retired, they either seek inactive status in presbytery or ask to be released from exercise of the ordained office and transfer their presbytery membership to a particular congregation. In situations not covered by *The Book of Order*, the teaching elder consults the COM for guidance.

CHAPTER XI – DISSOLUTION OF CHURCH PASTORAL CALLS

SEPARATION PRACTICES GUIDELINES

We believe that God calls our Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and other church professionals to a particular place through the voice of a congregation, and when the presbytery agrees with that call, it is a Call from God to a particular ministry. However, despite the commitment and best work of the people bound together in a covenantal relationship the need to dissolve that relationship arises. Following are some principles that apply to the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

The pastoral relationship in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a three-way covenant between a pastor, a congregation and a presbytery. Generally, all parties must concur before the pastoral relationship may be established or dissolved.

G-2.09 Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships:

G-20901 "An installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. Whether the teaching elder, the congregation, or the presbytery initiates proceedings for dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, or decline to consent, to dissolution." See also G-2.0902, G-2.0903, G-2.0904 and G-2.0905.

I. **Dissolution at the Request of The Teaching Elder:**

Dissolution of a pastoral relationship at the request of the teaching elder may occur after one month's written notice to session and to COM on approval of COM. The teaching elder will be paid the cash equivalent of his/her unused earned vacation (but not study leave) at the date of dissolution. **Severance allowance will not be provided unless authorized by COM at Session's request.** The period of written notice may be waived at the discretion of the session, in consultation with the COM of the presbytery.

II. **Negotiated Settlement:**

Either the pastor or the Session may request that the Committee on Ministry assist in negotiating a peaceful and appropriate end to a relationship which either the-pastor or Session believe is no longer workable. Some of the following circumstances may lead to this necessity:

- The result of funding limitations
- Changing ministry environment
- Poor performance
- Any other situation that brings the viability of the pastoral relationship into question

III. **Dissolution for Cause:**

The pastoral relationship may be dissolved as a result of judicial action or presbytery determination that “the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.” Dissolution for cause of pastoral relationships is to be clearly stated and is ordinarily only to come after other potential resolutions of difficulties have been attempted. Dissolution for cause shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Abuse or misconduct
2. Insubordination to the presbytery
3. Neglect in the care and use of church property or funds
4. Conduct inconsistent with presbytery standards, policies, or ordination vows
5. Violation of the *Book of Order*
6. “As a result of” disciplinary action of a judicial commission of the Church

IV. **Medical Disability or Incapacitation**

Physical or mental impairment of a permanent or progressive nature may become a cause for dissolution if or when unsatisfactory performance results. The congregation, Session and Commission on Ministry need to be sensitive to the many issues involved and work collaboratively regarding the physical needs, housing, placement of the minister and family. The presbytery and Session should be mindful of state and federal laws pertaining to disability.

V. **Death in Service:**

In the event of the death in service of a teaching elder of the Word, the use of manse of the person will be continued to the spouse by the church for three months beyond the month in which the teaching elder’s death occurs.

VI. **Severance**

For Negotiated Termination, and Medical Disability or Incapacitation; the following minimum guidelines for severance shall apply:

- 1 year of service ---- equivalent of 2 month’s effective salary
- 2 years of service ---- equivalent of 4 month’s effective salary
- 3 years of service or more ---- equivalent of 6 month’s effective salary

Effective salary is defined as: base salary, housing allowance and any FICA or 403b payments already a part of the Pastor’s terms of call. In addition to the effective salary, the church is responsible to pay to the Board of Pensions the ordinary percentage on BOP dues required for this salary amount.

This compensation schedule is subject to review by the session in consultation with the Commission on Ministry and may be voided or modified upon any employment of the Teaching Elder. **Accrued vacation time, unused study leave, unused sick leave, unused allowances and benefits (such being vouchered expenses) are not reimbursable if they have not been used.**

VII. **The Process**

The Session, Administrative Commission or Pastor shall contact the Commission on Ministry in writing stating the desire to sever the relationship and a brief overview of the reasons.

The Commission on Ministry will respond with the appropriate resource persons and a liaison to meet with all parties to bring about resolution and inform all of the parties of the presbytery's policy on dissolution.

The Session or Administrative Commission, Pastor and Commission on Ministry negotiate, approve and sign and approve a written dissolution agreement. A Guideline for Negotiated Agreements is attached as **Attachment A**.

Copies of the written dissolution agreement are made available upon request to members of the congregation no later than the date of the first call for the congregational meeting at which the dissolution of the call is to be determined.

The congregation votes on the dissolution of the call at a congregational meeting that shall be moderated by a member of presbytery appointed by the Commission on Ministry. **No party at the congregational meeting can amend the severance terms.** An outline of the Congregational meeting process is attached as **Attachment B**.

The Commission on Ministry approves the dissolution and the written dissolution agreement. The agreement is not effective until the presbytery has voted to approve the agreement.

VIII. **The Dissolution Agreement:**

The Dissolution Agreement - Involuntary Dissolution (Negotiated Termination, Dissolution for Cause, and Medical Disability or Incapacitation) should contain the following items:

- Identification of the parties (Pastor, Church, and Presbytery)
- Dates for
 - End of ministry responsibilities
 - Removal of personal property
 - Termination of call
 - Final compensation, benefit payments

- All financial agreements, including but not limited to
 - Salary continuation
 - Benefits continuation
 - Loan repayment or shared equity agreement (where applicable)
 - Manse use (where applicable)
- In ministry settings where the pastor is full-time: The agreement shall specify that if the pastor finds full-time employment prior to the end of the terms of the agreement, the church's financial obligations end as of the date said full-time employment begins. Part-time employment will result in appropriate prorated adjustments in financial payments.
- In ministry settings where the pastor is part-time: The agreement shall specify that if the pastor finds full or part-time employment prior to the end of the terms of the agreement, the church's financial obligations end as of the date of said employment begin.
- A clause that releases each party from legal action unless the agreement is not fulfilled.
- A statement regarding the limited liability of the presbytery. For example: Presbytery will participate in the agreement (spelling out the extent of presbytery participation) or Presbytery will not participate and the Session is totally liable for the agreement.
- Date and signature of all parties.
- The statement is to be put in the pastor's file and the church's file.

A sample for a Dissolution Agreement is included as **Attachment C**.

GUIDELINES FOR SEPARATION ETHICS

A. Saying Goodbye

The need to say goodbye to a congregation occurs for one of several reasons. A pastor may receive a call to another field of service. A pastor may decide to retire. A pastor may decide to leave the pastoral ministry and enter another area of service. The presbytery may, for cause, take the initiative to dissolve the relationship. This break can be a difficult time for both the pastor and the congregation.

Whatever the cause, it becomes the occasion when pastor and congregation find they must say goodbye.

1. Saying Goodbye to Accept a Call a Distance Away

When a pastor accepts a call to a ministry a distance from the congregation which she or he is leaving, the opportunity for contact with members of the former congregation is quite limited, often non-existent. However, recent technologies provide for frequent contacts in spite of geographical distances. Hence, there frequently arise certain circumstances which pose questions for the departing pastor as to what is appropriate, and what can be most helpful to the congregation and the interim and following pastors. It is always incumbent upon the departing pastor to make sure that parishioners know that her or his relationship with the congregation will change considerably. It is important that parishioners understand that this change of relationship is necessary in order that the congregation be free, in all respects, to make the adjustments necessary for changes of leadership, interim and permanent, without the departing pastor's influence. (See Section B, "Responsibilities in Saying Goodbye," below.)

2. Saying Goodbye, But Remaining a Neighbor

When a pastor says goodbye and remains nearby, there are particularly sensitive aspects of separation which require careful attention on the part of the departing pastor. The experience of pastors and congregations over the years has led many to believe that when a pastor ends a ministry with a congregation, it is best for the pastor to move out of the community. However, this is not always possible or advisable, nor is it necessarily realistic in the retirement destination area characterizing this Presbytery. Thus, it is particularly important when a departing pastor remains in the community and in proximity to the former congregation, that he or she, with care and forethought, pay particular attention to what is said below with reference to a departing pastor's responsibilities to the congregation, individual members of the congregation, and to the interim and subsequent installed pastors (Section B, "Responsibilities in Saying Goodbye")

The departing pastor should not be a part of the worshiping or fellowship life of the congregation except upon the initiative and invitation of the interim or other incumbent pastor, and it normally is not desirable that an interim would issue such as invitation nor should the departed pastor initiate an attempt to have such an invitation issued by either an interim or a subsequent incumbent pastor. If such an invitation is extended, normally, it should not occur until the interim or any subsequent incumbent pastor has had an opportunity to establish relationships with the congregation.

This does not mean that a former pastor may not on infrequent occasion, such as an annual visit to the area of his or her former church, worship with the congregation after first seeking permission from the incumbent pastor, which permission should normally be granted.

A retiring pastor who remains in the proximity of the congregation from which he or she has retired, will need to give careful consideration to the responsibilities that follow below in Section B, "Responsibilities in Saying Goodbye".

3. When One is Elected Pastor Emeritus when a pastor retires, the congregation may bestow upon him or her the title of Pastor Emeritus. The provision for this is found in older versions of the *Book of Order* as follows; as it is a Presbytery policy only:

"When any pastor or associate pastor retires, and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue an association in an honorary relationship, it may, at a regularly called congregational meeting, elect him or her as Pastor Emeritus. This action shall be taken *only after consultation with the Commission on Ministry of the presbytery concerning the wisdom of this relationship for the peace of the church*. This action shall be subject to the approval of presbytery (COM), and may take effect upon the formal dissolution of the pastoral or associate pastoral relationship or anytime thereafter." (*Book of Order* G-14.0620. Emphasis added.)

To elect one as pastor or associate pastor emeritus:

- Is evidence of a long and loving, mutually caring pastoral relationship;
- Is a congregation's way of saying to the church-at-large and to the world that they love this person and are thankful for his or her time with them; and
- Is a gift to the retired pastor which says something special to him or her.

However, it must be recognized that the pastoral relationship has been dissolved. The relationship of pastor to people has ended and there is no expectation of the person to be present with the congregation because of the election. All expectations related to the former pastor of a congregation apply to a pastor emeritus (see Section B below).

4. Associate Pastors, Parish Associates and Commissioned Ruling Elders who have not been serving as Pastor. While the relationship is different from that of pastors serving effectively as "head of staff" or solo pastor, the need to make a complete separation in terms of pastoral role is relevant, and the provision of sub-section 3.b. below, suitably adapted to such position, may provide adequate separation from pastoral relations with the congregation.

B. Responsibilities in Saying Goodbye

These guidelines are an effort to deal in "Separation Ethics." The use of the term "ethics" implies certain values which are important to consider during this often highly charged experience of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Such values include:

- Effective leadership;
- Congregational health and stability;
- The growth of pastor and members in dealing with opportunities that arise with the pain, the problems, and the possibilities of separation; and
- The ability of the session and congregation to move positively and effectively toward the next phase of their life together.

These values instruct the conduct and responsibilities of both the pastor and the congregation regarding their separation.

The material which follows is addressed to pastor, session, and congregation, the Commission on Ministry of the presbytery and also, the pastor's family, where appropriate. However, the pastor is the one in the professional leadership role and, therefore, the one who has the responsibility for making sure that the separation that occurs is anticipated and carried through with foresight and effectiveness.

1. Responsibilities of the Departing Pastor

Because of the sensitivity of the pastoral relationship, it is important that the departing pastor, in any dissolution, assume certain responsibilities to the former congregation, to the remaining staff and personnel of the church, to individual members of that congregation, and to the interim and next installed pastors.

a. To the Congregation

When the date has been set for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the departing pastor must take the lead in beginning to prepare the congregation for their separation. Certain things will need to be communicated clearly to the congregation in order to avoid confusion on the part of members in the days ahead. This communication can be accomplished in several ways. A letter could be addressed to the members of the congregation spelling out clearly the matters below which are part of the separation and the time that follows. A sermon might contain references to the approaching separation and speak to these matters. In casual conversation one-on-one or in groups, in public presence, in newsletters, in all contacts with people of the congregation, it is important that these matters be communicated and every effort made to have them understood. These matters are:

- 1) That all pastoral and professional relationships and responsibilities of the pastor with the congregation will end as of the effective date of the dissolution;
- 2) that the pastor will not be involved in any way in the selection process of either the interim pastor or the next installed pastor. Neither will he or she be involved in any way with the selection of any search

team or pastor nominating committee;

3) that the pastor, after leaving, will not become engaged in conversations with church members or staff which, in any way, offer opinions or criticism about the life of the congregation or the performance of the interim or any subsequent installed pastors;

4) that any desire on the part of members of the congregation for the departing pastor to participate in congregational life or services should be discussed not with the departing pastor, but with the interim pastor or subsequent installed pastor;

5) that the departing pastor may participate in a wedding, a funeral, or a baptism of the congregation, after the date of dissolution, only by invitation of the interim pastor or installed pastor, who shall be the officiant.

b. To Individual Members of the Congregation

It is important that, with particular friends, it be made clear that the pastoral relationship will come to an end. This does not mean that friendships must come to an end. Friendships are priceless and are to be preserved, but there is a special responsibility on the part of the departing pastor to prevent friendships from becoming confused with the pastoral relationship. The pastoral functions of counseling, calling, conducting weddings, funerals, or baptisms are not appropriate. Neither is the rendering of opinions or judgments about the ministry of the former church or its pastor. It is the departing pastor's responsibility to see that this really happens.

If the former pastor receives a request to return to the congregation for a particular occasion, it is important for her or him to remind those making the request that the present pastor is the one to whom the request should be made.

In any social context, where the former pastor is with friends or other members of the former congregation, it is the responsibility of the former pastor to be sure that he or she voices no criticism or evaluative comments about the new leadership of the congregation. It is not appropriate for the former pastor to comment, engage through silence, entertain, or otherwise invite conversation on the "state of the congregation" or to be involved in any way in the selection of a successor, once she or he has departed.

c. To the Remaining Pastoral and Other Staff and Personnel of the Church

The former pastor has responsibility to the pastoral and other remaining staff and personnel of the church at least in the following ways: 1) to prepare them for the separation that will occur; 2) to encourage them to receive and welcome the interim pastor and next installed pastor and be prepared to alter working patterns and relationships as may be needed; and, 3) to make clear that he or she will not be available for counsel or advice regarding the life and work of the church.

d. To the Interim and Subsequent Installed Pastors

The former pastor has a responsibility to the interim pastor and to subsequent installed pastors to make sure that any requests that come to him or her for services in the former congregation be redirected by the requesters to the interim pastor or installed pastor.

It is important that, when any request comes to the former pastor, she or he be in touch with the current pastor to let it be known what contacts have been made with him or her. This is a courtesy, which is important to be extended to the current pastor. There should be no pastoral functions of any kind performed by the former pastor without the prior invitation or request of the current pastor.

Should any community non-church function call the former pastor back into the community for public appearance of whatever nature, as a courtesy, the former pastor should inform the current pastor of the fact and the nature of the occasion.

e. In all Cases

The spirit of these guidelines is what is most important. It is not possible to list all the various ways through which that spirit might be violated. In an age of social networking, blogging, emailing and whatever comes next, the potential for writing and thus publishing comments that would violate the spirit of these guidelines will arise. All who fall under these guidelines should consciously seek not to make comments in an on-line or any other medium or forum or with any former parishioners or pastoral or other staff of his or her former church that would violate the spirit of these guidelines and thus impede the effectiveness of succeeding pastoral relations.

2. Responsibilities of the Session

a. To the Departing

Pastor

Following the pastor's decision to request dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the session can give support and encouragement to the pastor in the implementation of the decision. This can be done by assisting the pastor in interpreting the meaning of the end of the pastoral relationship to the congregation and, if need be, to the wider community.

As a caring expression of closure, it is appropriate for the session to arrange for an occasion when the congregation and pastor may formally say goodbye.

b. To the Congregation

The session will want to be sensitive to the feeling of loss experienced by members of the congregation while demonstrating through their actions the meaning of the end of the pastoral relationship.

Additional session leadership may be needed in the transition period so that worship, congregational life, and fellowship may continue.

The session can help the members of the congregation by encouraging them to see this time as an opportunity for growth and change. It can be a time for listening to individuals and groups in the congregation. It can be a time for examining present life, ministry, and service, and to be open to new possibilities. It is important that the congregation be prepared for change and for new pastoral leadership.

With the help of the Commission on Ministry, the session should interpret the role of the Commission on Ministry of the presbytery during the transition period. This will involve the naming of the session moderator, the process of obtaining an interim pastor, and the process of calling an installed pastor.

3. Responsibilities of the Commission on Ministry

a. To the Departing Pastor

Upon learning of the pastor's intention to retire or resign, a liaison of the Commission on Ministry shall meet with the pastor to discuss these guidelines.

b. To the Session and Congregation

Commission on Ministry liaison(s) are available to be present at the meeting of the session when the pastor announces his or her resignation; the pastor shall invite such attendance. The meeting shall include informing the session fully of these guidelines and orienting the session to the process of seeking pastoral leadership following the departure of the present pastor.

A representative of the Commission on Ministry shall be present at either the meeting of the congregation when the pastor requests concurrence in her or his plans to leave, in the case of an installed pastor, or at the final or near final worship service led by the pastor in the case of other-than-interim other incumbent pastors, to inform the congregation of the process for obtaining subsequent pastoral leadership, and to read to the congregation the substance of Section B.I.a., above, of these guidelines.

When a congregation plans to elect a retiring pastor as Pastor Emeritus, the material in item 3 on page 3, concerning the meaning of "Pastor Emeritus," will be sent to the congregation and the liaison of the Commission on Ministry will interpret the statement if that is desired.

c. To the Interim and Next Installed Pastors

It will be important for the Commission on Ministry to review these guidelines with the interim pastor and the next installed pastor and to be available for counsel should any difficulties arise regarding relationships with the former pastor.

4. The Pastor's Family

In the considerations of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, a particular concern arises for the needs of other family members, especially the minister's spouse. Quite often family members have joined the church their spouse was serving, have become very involved in congregational programs, invested great interest and energy in the church's life and established deep personal relationships with other church members. The Presbytery has no direct jurisdiction over the non-clergy members of ministers' families, but the Presbytery urges the spouse, in the context of those relationships, not to do anything which would undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation and a new pastor or interim pastor. As, a general rule, where practical to do so, this is best accomplished by the spouse's removing himself or herself from the life of the congregation and seeking another church home. Of all the matters above, it is recognized that this subject is perhaps the most difficult to navigate in a healthy and effective manner and may place a real burden upon family members. It may be helpful to remember one of the great touchstones of our heritage, that is, "truth is in order to goodness," (Book of Order, G-1.0304) and to follow one's conscience and the best intentions of the heart is the best advice of all.

These guidelines have been prepared in the hope that they will provide support, clarity, and encouragement to pastors and their families, sessions, and congregations in those situations in which a pastor and congregation discover that they must say goodbye. It is the practice of this presbytery to require submitting a Covenant of Closure (**Attachment D**) form to verify acknowledgement of these pastoral ethics when leaving a church.

Attachment A

Guideline for Negotiating a Dissolution Agreement

Guiding Principle: In order to maintain the peace, unity and purity of the church and for the good of the congregation, all ordained members of Session (which includes the Pastor) are to seek a mutual agreement for dissolution.

Overview of the Negotiation Process and Agreement of all Parties: When notified by a Pastor or Session of the request for a dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the Committee on Ministry will appoint two persons; one to work with the Session and the other to work with the pastor to negotiate the terms of dissolution. The Session may appoint a Severance Team to work on their behalf with the Pastor and COM. The Pastor may also name one person to assist in the negotiation of the terms of dissolution. These constitute a Severance Negotiation Task Force.

The Negotiation Process shall take place at the time of a Called Meeting of the Session that shall be moderated by the Presbytery Pastor or the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery or another member of the presbytery appointed by the Commission on Ministry.

While it is hoped that terms of dissolution acceptable to all parties would be negotiated, a majority of the Task Force membership may carry a proposal to the Session, Pastor and Commission on Ministry.

Separate Caucuses: The representatives of the pastor will meet with him/her to discuss terms of dissolution. Likewise, the representative of the Session/Administrative Commission will meet with them to discuss terms of dissolution. These meetings will take place simultaneously and for a period of no longer than 1 hour. By mutual agreement of the Task Force, the time period for a caucus may be extended up to 30 minutes.

Presentation of Proposed Terms: The representatives of the pastor and Session shall meet together with the Moderator of the Called meeting of the Session. Each side shall present written copies of proposed terms of dissolution.

Agreements are Identified: The Moderator shall work with the representatives to identify areas of agreement. If there are areas where agreement is close, the Moderator and representatives shall strive to reach mutual agreement on such terms.

Resolution of disparate proposals: Proposed terms of dissolution that appear too far apart will be returned with the counter proposal to the Pastor and Session. The parties are to discern how to resolve the difference and to propose new terms,

which shall be reported to the Negotiating Task Force. If agreement of the disparate terms cannot be reached by the parties, the majority vote of the Negotiating Task Force shall prevail.

Final Agreement is Approved: When a final agreement is reached and approved by the parties, a copy shall be produced by the Clerk of Session and signed by both parties. The Moderator of the Called Session meeting shall present the final agreement to the Commission on Ministry. Items to keep in mind: Every Dissolution Agreement will be unique. Every Agreement should address the issues of salary, housing and benefits toward the objectives of supporting a minister for a reasonable period of time or until the minister has entered into a comparable call or secular employment; and providing a reasonable termination of salary and benefits in order that a congregation might obtain pastoral leadership for the future.

COM cannot establish a minimum or maximum number of months for which to pay severance. A recommendation or suggestion can be made but the decision has to be that of the Session/Severance Team and ultimately the congregation and pastor.

Whatever the church chooses to offer as the period of compensation for severance, careful analysis of the financial impact on the church should be done. When negotiating the terms of severance, all parties should have copies of the current terms of call in hand and the exact dollar amounts of each item should be clearly stated in the Covenant of Separation.

Attachment B

Outline of the Congregational Meeting to Dissolve a Pastoral Relationship

Opening Prayer

The Moderator requests the Clerk read the Call for the meeting and the Moderator also requests the Clerk to certify that the proper notice was given for the meeting and that a quorum is present.

The Clerk should make the following motion:

**Move that the Congregation of _____ concur with the Rev.
_____ in requesting that the Presbytery dissolve the
pastoral relationship between him/her and this church, effective
_____**

The Moderator calls for a second and then opens the floor for questions. A vote on the motion may be taken by voice or by show of hands.

The Clerk should affirm that all financial obligations of both the church and pastor would have been met by the termination date.

The meeting is adjourned with prayer. The Moderator files a report of the meeting with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

Attachment C

Sample Covenant of Dissolution

We, the members of the Session of _____ agree to request *the* dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the Rev. _____ effective _____ and with the following terms:

A. List the financial terms:

1. Salary
2. Housing Allowance (or Utility/Equity amounts if applicable)
3. Pension, Medical amounts **(to be paid to BOP only)**
4. 403b Contributions (if applicable)
5. SECA Allowance
6. Repayment of loans, with amount and schedule of repayment included (if applicable)

Describe how the financial arrangements will be paid.

B. Professional, expenses, automobile expenses and study leave/continuing education expenses will terminate on the date of dissolution.

C. Describe any non-financial terms: Use of manse, etc.

D. Date of Separation

- Ministry duties will cease effective _____
- Date pastor will return all church property and vacate the church office
- Date pastor and family will vacate the church manse

Other terms:

The pastor, acknowledging receipt of financial payments under this agreement, covenants and agrees; that he/she waives all rights to demand and/or secure a civil court and/or a jury trial with respect, to adjudication of the matters contained in this Dissolution Agreement, in matters that pertain to his/her ministry in the church and/or the negotiations what have led up to this agreement.

All unpaid financial payments to the minister shall cease at the date, before the end of financial payments under this agreement, if the minister accepts another position

for full-time employment or shall be adjusted if the minister accepts a part-time position.

All parties agree that the pastor is to abstain from any pastoral duties and congregational or church-sponsored activities. The pastor shall refrain from inappropriate contacts with his or her former church. The pastor shall not conduct worship services in the congregation he/she is departing unless prior approval of the Committee on Ministry is granted. A pastor who, following a single warning, violates any of the provisions of this paragraph shall immediately forfeit all of his/her remaining financial payments under this Dissolution Agreement.

It is understood that this Dissolution Agreement is a final disposition of all matters between a pastor and the congregation. This Dissolution Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties hereto and any other representations are null and void.

Attachment D

COVENANT OF CLOSURE: PASTORAL ETHICS WHEN LEAVING A CHURCH

The Rev. _____; the _____ Church of _____, Arizona, and the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon having discussed the importance of making a clean break for a pastor who is leaving a church, enter into the following covenant:

2. The Rev. _____ agrees
- i. not to involve him/herself in any leadership or advisory role (public or private) in the _____ Church of _____, Arizona.
 - j. not to intervene, support or give advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement or dispute;
 - k. not to officiate in any special events in the lives of former parishioners or of the congregation, including weddings, funerals, baptisms, worship leadership, church anniversary activities, etc. unless expressly invited by the Moderator of the Session;
 - l. to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the _____ congregation;
 - m. to recognize that some conflicts make it unwise for a prior pastor to return to visit a previous congregation, and as a matter of professional courtesy, to establish an understanding with the new Moderator of Session regarding subsequent visits to the church, attending worship or attending a special event;
 - n. to refrain from giving opinions or direction regarding church business that could undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation and a new pastor;
 - o. in the event that the departing pastor continues to live in the area and does not begin service to another church, he/she will not normally attend congregational events for at least one year, or at least one year after a new pastor is installed. After this period, in consultation with and invitation by the session and the current pastoral leadership, the departing pastor may resume worshiping and fellowship within the congregation, provided that the requirements above continue to be observed; however
 - p. if the departing pastor has family, (spouse, children, grandchildren) who remain active in the former congregation, in consultation and with the approval of the current pastoral leadership, he/she may be attend isolated “special events” in the life of the relative, e.g., baptism, ordination, marriage, Christmas programs, always being careful to observe the criteria contained in this agreement.

It is understood that this policy does not affect or require the termination of friendships with individuals in the former congregation.

4. The Session and members of the _____ congregation agree
 - e. not to initiate pastoral or professional contact with previous pastors;
 - f. to respect the terms of the Covenant of Closure agreed upon by The Rev. _____ outlined above;
 - g. to interpret the terms of the Covenant of Closure to the congregation; and
 - h. to incorporate this agreement in the Session minutes.

5. The Presbytery of Grand Canyon's Commission on Ministry shall
 - e. interpret this Covenant of Closure to the Session of _____ Church;
 - f. be the Presbytery's agent in reminding the parties to this Covenant of Closure of the principles of the Covenant in the event any transgressions are reported to it;
 - g. note this agreement in the minutes of the Commission on Ministry; and
 - h. consider setting aside portions of this policy if requested by a departing pastor and the session of the former congregation.

I understand these policies and agree to abide by them.

Pastor

Date

Clerk of Session

Date

Name of church

City

Commission on Ministry Representative

Date

APPENDIX 1 GUIDES

RECONCILIATION AND INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

Our society seems to have two widely divergent opinions on forgiveness and reconciliation. According to L. Gregory Jones, it is seen as something that is either therapeutic, relieving guilt or bitterness, or it is seen as impossible. The church, however, will not fall for such simplistic "bumper sticker" theology. While it is true that forgiveness can have a therapeutic effect, there is much more involved than mere therapy. And while forgiveness can be quite difficult, it is not impossible, for "what is impossible for mortals is possible for God."

From the Lord's Prayer we learn that just as we need to be forgiven, we must also forgive and be reconciled. This forgiveness and reconciliation that we have in Christ is real but it is not ours to hoard, rather it is ours to participate in.

- But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace: in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us." (Ephesians 2:13 &14)
- So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. (II Corinthians 5:17 &18)
- This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:12)
- The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:23 & 24)
- We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming, but speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. (Ephesians 4: 14-16)

As disciples of Christ we are to work for unity in the church. As members of the Presbyterian Church we are to work for "the peace, purity, and unity of the Church." We work from the knowledge that we are reconciled to God, and we need to be reconciled among ourselves through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We work from the knowledge that as Jesus prayed that we would be one, we must pray that God will make us one in Christ through his Spirit; we are unable to do this on our own. This work is not easy, as can be seen in our Lord's suffering and death. There are times when we need to employ church discipline with serious consequences, but as *The Book of Order* (see also Matthew 18:23-35) reminds us, the purpose of such discipline is to heal and restore.

GUIDELINES FOR SESSIONS AND CONGREGATIONS WHEN THEY EXPERIENCE CONFLICT

As Presbyterians, we are called to work for the "peace, unity and purity of the Church" as we seek to be faithful to God's work in the world. However, disagreements and conflicts are inevitable in the life of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as we try to be faithful. They exist within committees, congregations, presbyteries, synods, at General Assemblies and in the national life of the denomination.

Conflicts are inevitable in all of life and certainly in the church. The history of the church is filled with conflicts and disagreements. Several of Paul's letters address the conflicts which were common in the early church. There have been and are going to be disagreements as Christians attempt to discern God's work in the world and as we interpret scripture.

Conflicts can be harmful and even destructive. They can cause individuals a great deal of pain and the community of faith immeasurable damage. Congregations have been divided; denominations have experienced schisms.

At the same time, conflicts can be an opportunity for new insights, learning, and individual and corporate growth. Disagreements can illuminate a topic in helpful ways and can present solutions to problems which previously had not been seen. The successful resolution of conflict can also bind people together in a powerful way.

The Bible contains many stories of conflict and disagreement and much advice about how they can be addressed. As those stories indicate, God is already present wherever there is brokenness, granting wholeness and peace. God promises to be with us in times of disagreement and calls us to reconciliation, trust, love and forgiveness.

We realize that our perspectives are limited, so to help us affirm each other, enhance our community, stay open to the viewpoints of others and be sensitive to cultural diversity, we must commit ourselves to the following Guidelines in a spirit of prayer, trust, and love, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

SEEKING TO BE FAITHFUL TOGETHER GUIDELINES FOR PRESBYTERIANS DURING TIMES OF DISAGREEMENT

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will:

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ;
 - We will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange.
 - we will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.
2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.
4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teaching.
5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity; **we will not engage in name-calling or labeling of others prior to, during, or**

following the discussion.

6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.
7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
8. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension; **we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.**
9. Follow these additional guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:
 - urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;
 - seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
 - be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;
 - abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these Guidelines.
10. Include our disagreements in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.

Adopted by the 204th General Assembly (1992) of PCUSA

IDENTIFYING THE CONFLICT

Bringing Harmony to God's Family

Tom Mullen wrote a cute book of devotions on family life called, Where Two or Three are Gathered Together, Someone Spills His Milk. How true it is! Where two or three Christians are gathered together in a church, there will be a debate about scripture, disagreement about the color of the new choir robes, whether the pastor is spending enough time in the office, and on and on. We are people! And when we gather together to do God's good work, we don't always get along. It's a fact of life, just like the milk.

But even to say that we have problems means we have lifted the veil of secrecy which has surrounded conflict/disagreement in churches. For many Christians the idea that we might really disagree about something and even be angry with each other or express our feeling is totally foreign to our thinking. We don't want our place of comfort, our refuge from the world, to have the same antagonists, the same harsh realities that we face in our daily lives. No, give us a nice quiet pew, a good anthem on Sunday morning, and a message that doesn't make us think too much, and that's just fine, thank you!

The truth is, however, there is conflict, disagreement and trouble in churches. Such problems can come from a small dissenting group, or one loud voice who won't let go of his/her pet peeve, or a major blow-up over the style of worship. But the fact is that due to our desire to hide from conflict, we have not managed it well nor have we helped people grow in faith and commitment to God in the process. We have often fought hard, divided congregations and hurt many pastors and laypersons alike. The time has come to get serious about bringing a new style to our life together. We must face our situation, acknowledge the hurt and pain that is in the church, face conflict straight on, and take action to bring a new day for each and every church which is suffering through its own version of "spilling the milk." This manual is prepared as a tool to help churches walk through the valley of disagreement to a new day and a new life. The suggestions contained here are only the beginning of the ideas and resources available to churches for handling their disagreements. Let the manual be a tool to lead you to new ways of thinking and doing church.

Symptoms

How does a pastor or layperson know if there is a problem worth dealing with? At what stage in the game do you call in the experts or get advice from the Presbytery? Someone will say, "We don't want to blow this whole thing out of proportion and get more people involved than we need to. Besides, most people don't know what's going on anyway. Let's keep it that way - It will go away." When members or staff ignore the symptoms, it is hard for leaders to get support for action to deal with the problems. However, there are a few clues that you can watch for that will help you work at the problems your church might have before they get too big to handle. The early warning signs listed below are from Speed Leas' book Moving Your Church Through Conflict. Paying attention to these early warning signs can enable the issues to surface sooner and be handled more comfortably rather than waiting for them to become a serious conflict. Note which of these issues might be important for your congregation, now or in the future.

1. Environmental factors--These are usually external factors that affect the life of the church over which you have no real control. These could include: declining population base from which to draw new members or loss of jobs in the area or economic downturn thus affecting many in the church. The stress of these environmental factors make for stressed people, more prone to conflict.
2. Special congregational factors--Some events in the history of the congregation can leave it more prone to conflict; long-term pastorates (more than 12 years) can deeply affect a church and the following pastor. Unresolved grief over a loss in the church, particularly of a key leader, can affect people; or the presence of individuals with excessive needs for power or recognition can cause problems which will go beyond our ability to heal. Special care is needed to deal with these factors.
3. Rumors--One of the most frequent early warning signs of coming conflict is the presence of member complaints. They can and will be about anything: program, national church, sermons, the car the pastor drives, how much her/his spouse helps in the church, who is serving on the church boards, how much money goes to missions, etc. The voices of complaint may be loud and clear or soft and faint, but they are there. It can take a good deal of work to determine what is going on and what is actually bothering people.

Early detection of these issues and some effort to deal with them can be very important. The experienced veterans of the congregation need to talk about the church's history (does this happen often?) and determine a plan to work it through, not just snuff it out!

4. Reduced participation--Withdrawal of personal contact between members and/or between the pastor and certain members is a sign of problems. When there is conflict, it is natural to withdraw. Recognizing withdrawal and acting on it can help.
5. Decline in attendance and giving--The organization is healthy when there is growth and strong support. Attendance is probably the stronger factor of the two. People will withdraw from coming to church as soon as they feel a problem, while they may still give until the pledge period is over. Watching attendance patterns and giving patterns will help church leaders see trends and approach people who might have issues to deal with.

6. Changes in lay leadership--Not just the changes from one group of leaders to another, but changes when a very different (or younger) group begins to take control and press their programs. Sometimes the type of leaders change--from blue collar to white collar, rural to urban, etc.
7. Emergence of "Hardliners"--This indicator usually means the conflict has already been joined. Leaders are beginning to take adamant stands on some issue and are losing their ability to "hear" the needs of the congregation. When leaders no longer listen to others, but do what they please no matter what, conflict is on the horizon.
8. Changes in the Pastor's Behavior--Conflicted churches often become a place where the pastor does things to try to ease tension. He/She may become more reclusive, less available, very intense about a jogging program or some special study--all of these to get away from the conflict. Some will overuse alcohol, fight with the spouse, sleep more than normal, have improper relations with other men/women.

We Have a Problem--Now what?

First, hopefully, you have decided ahead of time to teach yourself or to enlist your pastor and fellow leaders in getting training about conflict (before it happens). You have learned the five levels of conflict (see attached Conflict Intensity Chart), you have gained some insight into how conflicts develop, and you have some background to help you. You have learned some communication skills, you have a theological and Biblical background to help you in the dilemma. You have taken the necessary steps to get ready for anything. Now! About the problem!

1. Don't Panic! That's right--keep your cool. When we are threatened, when we are in doubt about ourselves, when everything seems to be crashing in around us and the whole church, we want to run away and hide. "Let's just get out of here." But wait. Stop, take a good, deep breath and let it out. Then pause and think through what has happened, what the real issues are that seem to be causing this conflict-- begin to reflect on what is happening, not your reaction to what is happening. Use the tools you have learned to help you plan the next step and to determine how serious the problem is.
2. Next--if the problem is between you and another, see if you can approach that person to be sure you understood him/her correctly; see if the presenting problem is the real issue or if there is something else going on. If you feel too powerless to confront someone who opposes you, then talk to another person whom you trust, or make an appointment to see the Personnel Committee. If the issue involves the pastor or staff, then Personnel should help. But if the conflict is between members, the pastor may be the person who can help you get the issue cleared up before it gets worse. All churches need to have a procedure for filing grievances or dealing with tender subjects. If they do, then that is a good avenue of approach.
3. Most of all, use the church system which is in place to deal with issues. The session is the administrative body of the church which should address conflict issues. They may ask the Personnel Committee to address certain issues first and bring a report. But most important, try to manage the situation at the local church level. Don't call the Presbytery staff or COM Chair before you have exhausted options within your church. If the Personnel Committee (or its equivalent) is not available, write the session or go to a meeting and explain what has

happened. That may mean two or three people going together, but at least you have taken a step forward. If the session has received some training, they can receive your complaint or concern and figure out how to approach the problem (level I). If the problem is more complex or if they do not feel comfortable to move forward, you can...

4. Seek the advice and counsel of the Presbytery through the COM or the Presbytery staff. Most of all, remember that the COM and the Presbytery are friends and companions in ministry. They are concerned for the life and well-being of the entire church, so they will do all they can to assist in dealing with the problems. Early inquiries will be informal and primarily consist of options which you might consider next, or information about certain procedures. Pastors and session members need to remember that such suggestions are advice, not Presbytery telling you what to think or do. At this point, everything is very unofficial, with no action taken by a committee or the presbytery itself. Be assured that when the problems are addressed early and carefully, with trust and honoring of each other, many problems can be managed without great distress in the life of the church. Usually, we find that there has been a miscommunication, some difference of opinion about expectations, some honest area of theological or practical difference about which the parties need to negotiate a solution. This can be done, if you will be conscientious in your handling of conflicted areas.

But the Problem is Getting Larger, Growing Faster Than We Thought! Now what?

If a problem grows significantly and the session or pastor is unable to manage the situation, then more formal action could be initiated through the COM or the Presbytery. A common procedure is for members of the session or pastor to contact COM and present the case, outline the problem as they understand it, and see what avenues of correction can be taken. Often, COM will have an intervention team assist in further study of the problem, with the possible use of an outside conflict management consultant. Once the whole picture is in view, recommendations will be made, and sometimes, if necessary, further actions taken to the floor of Presbytery. Presbytery does have the option to appoint an Administrative Review Committee or an Administrative Commission to take the case further toward resolution. Usually, these steps would not happen unless the congregation was at a level III or level IV conflict, both of which are very serious.

INTERVENTION

When the presbytery is called to “[promote] the peace and harmony of congregations and [inquire] into the sources of congregational discord” (G.3.031c; c.f. also G.3.0303d), COM shall seek to nurture the peace, unity, and purity of the church in accordance with the Book of Order and this policy. Ordinarily, the COM becomes aware of a potential problem through calls, letters, and/or personal visits to the Presbytery Pastor, Stated Clerk, and/or a member of COM. Whether the communication comes from pastor(s), elders, or church members, COM should encourage discussion with a congregation’s leadership upon learning of a potential problem at a given church. Ordinarily, the initial conversation will be with the pastor/moderator. When necessary, COM may initiate and/or compel action but always in accordance with the Book of Order and the guidelines set forth below.

Expressed concerns are categorized by this policy into three, distinct types: (1) Ordinary Conflict, (2) Serious Complaint, and (3) Gross Misconduct. Each distinct type has its own definition that requires a unique response by the presbytery.

Ordinary Conflict

Ordinary conflict includes all of kinds of issues common to organizations, especially churches (e.g. communication, decision-making, power dynamics, etc.). Caution is beneficial when receiving reports of ordinary conflict. In a time of strong cultural, political, and ecclesial conflict, nearly every congregation will experience some form of conflict. Further, in a time when the long-term health of congregations may require significant *adaptive* and *technical* change, there will be predictable conflict that attends such significant change.

Family systems thinkers report the target of an organization's anxiety is usually focused on the most powerful and/or most vulnerable person in the system. The pastor is often both the most powerful (e.g. power of the pulpit, role as moderator) and the most vulnerable (e.g. paid staff, personal and family provider) person in the church system. The pastor, therefore, becomes both the object of praise and anxiety, often exceeding what she or he is actually responsible for. Congregational conflict is often directed to the person in the pastoral role regardless of their actions. Though saying this does not relieve the pastor from responsibility in church conflict, cognizance of these ordinary, family system dynamics will go far to help the presbytery support healthy responses by all concerned within a congregation.

Responding to the Ordinary: If the concern has not yet risen to the level of being a serious complaint, Presbytery staff and COM should encourage direct conversation whenever possible and inquire if the person expressing the concern has spoken to the person about whom the concern is being made (e.g. to the pastor, Session, music director, etc.). If the parties have not yet spoken directly to each other, they should be encouraged to do so and counseled about potential strategies for good communication toward a positive outcome for all.

If the concern has been discussed directly with another and no mutually agreed upon outcome achieved, presbytery staff or COM member shall inquire of the person expressing the concern if they prefer (a) that no further action be taken, or (b) that the pastor and clerk of Session be made aware of the concern with the person's name attached to the concern? Under no circumstance shall an ordinary concern be conveyed forward to the pastor or clerk anonymously. If the person expressing the concern chooses to have her or his thoughts conveyed to church leadership, both pastor and clerk of Session shall be made aware of the concern and encouraged to engage their member(s) in further conversation. No further action is required by staff or COM member.

Serious Complaint

What distinguishes a serious complaint from an ordinary conflict is a matter of judgment. If professional or appointed COM leadership suspects that a concern or set of concerns brought forward about a congregation, its members, or its leadership might rise to the level that requires a more structured COM inquiry, a consultation will be scheduled with an appropriate executive team to discuss. This team may include the Presbytery Pastor, Stated Clerk, Chair of COM, professional consultants such as a psychologist or other counsel if appropriate, and the Pastor and/or Clerk of Session of the congregation if invited by the COM Chair. This group will consider whether complaints being considered are verifiable and if verified might lead to destructive conflict in the congregation (recognizing differences among contexts in congregations). The group may also consider whether individuals bringing

complaints are themselves participants in or sources of unhealthy discord and might benefit from counsel from the Presbytery, or if congregational leadership might benefit from counsel as they respond. Complaints will not be discussed that are brought anonymously or about which anonymity is requested.

Responding to serious complaints: If this team determines the complaint(s) rises above what is ordinary conflict, and the complaints do not involve allegations of gross misconduct, the following steps shall be taken:

1. The Presbytery Pastor and COM liaison shall initiate a meeting with the pastor and the clerk of Session to communicate the concerns / complaints that have been brought to COM attention and to hear their initial reactions, listen to their perspectives, and seek to build an awareness of the background to the issue. It is important to carefully separate questions of verifiable fact, narratives without context, perspectival bias, and subjective opinions when interpreting concerns.
2. Following the meeting in step "1," and with consideration for the pastor/moderator's and clerks' perspectives on the situation, both the COM and Session shall be made aware of the complaint(s) and requested to provide preliminary feedback to one another, with an attempt made to sort through the above questions of verifiable fact, narratives without context, perspectival bias, and subjective opinions listed in number 1 above.
3. Following the receipt of feedback from Session and COM, if one or both parties believe there is sufficient merit to the complaint(s) to require a formal response, a meeting shall be scheduled to create a plan for responding. This meeting shall include at least two elders from Session, two members of COM, the pastor/moderator, and may include the Presbytery Pastor and/or Stated Clerk. The action plan to be created may include any or all of the following:
 - a. Will there be work done with Session, committees of the church, the congregation? Who will do it?
 - b. Is there need for counseling or outside help? For whom, how long will it last? How and to whom will reports be issued?
 - c. What are specific things recommended pertaining to the pastor?
 - d. How can the appropriate role and effective leadership of the pastor/moderator and/or Session be supported?
 - e. What time parameters need to be put in place for "the plan"?
 - f. What are the special needs of the situation?
 - g. Is an Administrative Review or Commission appropriate?
4. After the time agreed upon for "the plan" to work (see item 3.e above), if the problem(s) still exists and does not seem to be improving as assessed by the congregation, the church session, pastor and COM representatives, the COM will debate a motion to ask the presbytery to appoint an Administrative Review Committee as outlined in The Book of Order. If affirmed, this motion would be brought to the floor of the presbytery for a vote.
5. If an Administrative Review Committee is approved and appointed, work should commence within one month after it is constituted. The process used for their work will be formulated by the

AR committee in conjunction with the Stated Clerk, and the group is responsible to the presbytery through its reporting process.

6. If an Administrative Review Committee is not approved and appointed the COM shall, through its Reconciliation Team,ⁱ continue working with the church and the situation in whatever creative and constructive ways it is possible for them to agree upon, if it is deemed necessary by majority vote of a quorum of the COM.

Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct includes those accusations that rise to the level of disciplinary action (e.g. allegations of sexual boundary violations, fiduciary irresponsibility, or physical or emotional violence). Reports of gross misconduct require immediate response. If a member of presbytery staff or the COM, becomes aware of an alleged incident of gross misconduct, said staff shall listen attentively and document the specifics of the accusation. Reports of gross misconduct shall be written and forwarded to the Stated Clerk. An investigative process shall be initiated as outlined in the Book of Order's Rules of Discipline.

ONE FINAL COMMENT

The people who have prepared this document are convinced that if churches in conflict would spend time in the elements that are distinctive to the church, there would be less serious conflict. We would encourage churches to engage in activities that build up the Body of Christ, such as: worship, cultivating the spiritual disciplines, prayer, Bible study, personal devotions, giving care to others, theological reflection with brothers and sisters in faith, listening and seeking understanding, healing and reconciliation. Time and energy in these practices would greatly heal the church while negative activity tears it apart. Whatever happens in your church, try to help members think about the whole church, how much the church needs healing and how much we can all do to build it up. Let us remember how much God has entrusted to us and how much better it will be when we re-channel our energy and efforts toward the good things that bind us together in communities of faith, seeking the peace and unity of the church.

RESOURCES

Enclosed is a copy of the "Conflict Intensity Chart" which outlines the five levels of conflict in churches. It is a good beginning of training for sessions and pastors. Think back through some recent issues in your church and see if you can identify what level you experienced. Most will be level I, Problem to Solve, and a few will be level II, Disagreement. Think about what happened to help you through those times and what needs to be built upon for a healthy future.

Coping with Conflict. Videos and study materials from the Synod of the Lakes and Prairies. Outlines the five levels of conflict, has dramatized vignettes that help you see yourself in a church fight. Good material. Available from Interchurch Resource Center.

Dealing with Conflict in the Congregation. A small booklet, suitable for congregational study. Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has done this along with a number of good Bible studies on peace and conflict issues in the Bible. 75 cents.

How Should Congregations Talk About Tough Issues? A resource by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. A good resource for an adult class on the issue of conflict. These cost only about 75 cents

so they could be used by most churches with little cost.

If Not Here, Where? Video produced by the Lutheran Church. Available from Interchurch Resource Center.

Searching for Community : Video by Scott Peck. Available in Interchurch Resource Center

Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement. A training manual, by Richard Killmer and Sara Lisherness. Published by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. LDMS #259-93-944 \$3.95. This is an excellent resource for learning about conflict, how to handle it, and how we can learn new tools for communication and understanding. The manual has eight sessions which walk one through the different levels of the Guidelines. A valuable adult study, sections could be used for officer training or retreats.

Talking About Tough Issues. Video. Available from Interchurch Resource Center.

Bohler, Carolyn Stahl. When You Need to Take a Stand. Drawing upon her counseling experience, Bohler presents guidelines for deciding when and how to take stands and finding the strength to do so.

Ratelliff, Bill J. When you are Facing Changes. This author shows that we can emerge from times of change even more whole than we were before the transition.

Rogers, Jack. Claiming the Center. This volume could well become the text book for reconciliation and trust building within mainline denominations.

Saussy, Carroll. The Gift of Anger. This book provides a biblical basis and a practical methodology for using and expressing anger in a healthy and redemptive way.

Rediger, Lloyd G. Clergy Killers. Offers strategies to prevent abuse and offer support to clergy in troubling congregations. It also has a chapter on killer clergy.

Cosgrove, Charles and Dennis Hatfield. Church Conflict. Presents the hidden Systems behind the fights.

Managing Church Conflict. Can be used as a model for addressing conflict in church systems and other nonprofit and voluntary organizations. Westminster/John Knox

Leas, Speed. Discover Your Conflict Management Style. An excellent tool for raising self-awareness and a practical introduction to conflict management. Alban Institute

Moving Your Church Through Conflict. Speed Leas presents his highly acclaimed theory of levels of conflict and spells out appropriate responses to each, including when to seek outside help. Alban Institute

APPENDIX 2

REFERENCE MATERIAL

User Guides for Presbyteries

Church Leadership Connection



***Version 1.1
February 2017***

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Your Per Capita Dollars at Work!

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User Guides for Presbyteries Release 1.1
February 2017

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Introduction

The Church Leadership Connection (CLC) is the PC(USA)'s web-based computer matching and referral system. CLC is a web-based system that provides global access and visibility for both calling organizations and call seekers. CLC policies are in compliance with the Book of Order, they do not supersede the authority of mid councils but work in partnership to support presbytery mission. CLC adheres to values of fairness and openness and affirms the denomination's polity of these issues. The mission of CLC is "To help search committees and call seekers with a high likelihood of "fit" to make an initial connection, relying on them to go deeper in exchange of information, conversation, and discernment."

The need for user guides

Welcome to this new guide on the roles and functions of the presbytery on the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) System. This guide provides an overview of each task and is developed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the responsibilities of the presbytery in the search and call process. This guide will assist in training the Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk, Pastor Nominating Committee, and the Clerk of Session. The Church Leadership Connection computer matching and referral system is most effective when each partner in the call process uses the CLC system maximizing its features.



Figure 1. CLC website found at <http://www.pcusa.org/clc>

Church Leadership Connection (CLC) User's Tasks

| Presbytery (EP) | COM | PNC | Clerk of Session | CPM | Stated Clerk | Synod Exec | Individual |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Assign login IDs | Assign login IDs | | | | | | |
| Reinitialize passwords | Reinitialize passwords | | | | | | |
| | | Enter MIF | | | | | Enter up to 3 PIFs |
| | | Update MIF | | | | | Update PIFs |
| | MIF Sem. Debt Assist | | | | | | |
| | Approve MIF | | Approve MIF | Attest to Candidate | Attest Teaching Elder | | |
| Matching | Matching Within Presbytery | | | | | Matching | Self Refer PIF |
| Request Rematch | | Request Rematch | | | | Reverse Matching | |
| Reverse Matching | | | | | | Request MIF Rematch | |
| | | | | Unauthorize PIF | Unauthorize PIF | | |
| Notify of New Call | Notify of New Call | Notify of New Call | | Notify of New Call | Notify of New Call | | Notify of New Call |
| Notify Info Update | | | | | | Notify Info Update | |
| Update phy. contact | | | | | Update phy. reference check for Teaching Elder's contact information | Edit contact Info | |
| Advanced Search | | | | | | | |

CLC User Viewing

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Presbytery (EP) | COM | PNC | Clerk of Session | CPM | Stated Clerk | Synod Exec | Individual |
| Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search | Opportunity Search |
| Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report | Applicants & Positions Report |
| MIF Status | MIF Status | MIF | | PIF Attestation Record | MIF Status | MIF Status | PIF |
| Referred PIFs | Referred PIFs | Referred PIFs | View Part 1 of MIF | | | View Referred PIFs | View Referred MIFs |
| MIF Web Hit Count | MIF Web Hit Count | MIF Web Hit Count | | | PIF Attestation Record | MIF Web Hit Count | |
| MIF Diversity Count | MIF Diversity Count | | | | | MIF Diversity Count | |
| View Presbytery Info | View Presbytery Info | | | View Presbytery Info | View Presbytery Info | View Presbytery Info | |
| Referred Advanced Search PIFs | | | | | | | |

1. Executive/General Presbyters

Responsibilities

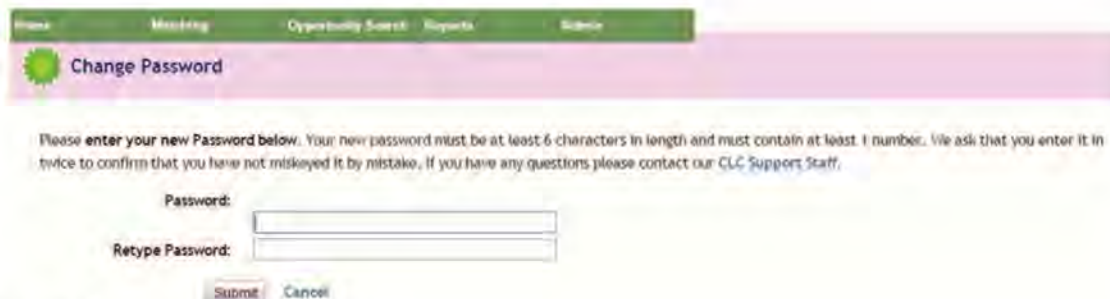
As Executive/General Presbyter (EP/GP) you are responsible for several tasks within Church Leadership Connection (CLC). They are: **Matching, Reverse Matching, requesting a MIF Rematch, requesting Advanced Search, Notify CLC of a New Call, Assign Login IDs, and Notify CLC of Presbytery Information Updates.** See instructions below.

Login and password

Your login will begin with EP followed by the 6-digit synod/presbytery ID number. If you do not know your login and/or password or have forgotten it, please contact CLC at (888) 728-7228, ext. 8550. The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned.

Change password

- Go to **Admin** menu dropdown
- Click **Change Password** (must be at least 6 characters, one being a number).



Home Matching Opportunity Search Reports Admin

Change Password

Please enter your new Password below. Your new password must be at least 6 characters in length and must contain at least 1 number. We ask that you enter it in twice to confirm that you have not miskeyed it by mistake. If you have any questions please contact our [CLC Support Staff](#).

Password:

Retype Password:

Figure 2. Change Password screen

Matching

| Perform New Matching | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Review PIF Referrals | <input type="text" value="(enter MIF ID)"/> | <input type="button" value="View"/> |
| PIF Narrative Search | <input type="text" value="(enter Search String)"/> | <input type="button" value="Search"/> |

Figure 3. Matching

The matching and referral system matches the criteria indicated on the Ministry Information Form (MIF) with criteria on Personal Information Forms (PIF) to generate names for consideration by Pastor Nominating Committees (PNC) and Search Committees. As EP/GP you can do the matching for the positions within your presbytery or CLC staff can do the matching at your request.

Matching

- Go to Matching dropdown, click **Matching**.
- Click on **Perform a New Match**.
- Dropdown list, choose the MIF ID#, **Submit**.
- View MIF criteria, **Submit**.
- View the PIFs by choosing the **PIFID#**, click **Go Back** at the upper left hand side highlighted in red after viewing each PIF.
- Go to **Selection** column, click in the box of the PIF to send for the match.
- Click **Generate Final Referral Report**.

Reverse matching

| Perform New Reverse Matching | | |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Review PIF Referrals | <input type="text" value="(enter MIF ID)"/> | <input type="button" value="View"/> |
| PIF Narrative Search | <input type="text" value="(enter Search String)"/> | <input type="button" value="Search"/> |

Figure 4. Reverse matching

Reverse Matching uses the criteria of a specific church professional's PIF to match with MIFs in the CLC system. This is especially helpful when you are aware of a minister member of your presbytery who needs to quickly relocate to a different ministry setting or you just want to assist a minister in his/her search process.

Reverse matching

- Go to Matching dropdown, click **Reverse Matching**.
- Click on **Perform a New Reverse Match**.
- Dropdown list, choose the **PIF ID#**, click **Submit**.
- View PIF, click **Submit**.
- View the MIFs by clicking the **MIFID#**, click **Go Back** at the upper left hand side highlighted in red after viewing each MIF.
- Go to **Selection** column, click in the box of the MIFs to send for the match.
- Click **Generate Final Referral Report**.

Assign login IDs and passwords and re-initializing a password

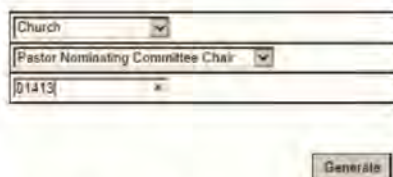


Figure 6. Assigning login IDs



Figure 7. Re-initializing a password

The EP can also assign login IDs and passwords for the PNC and/or Clerk of Session.

To assign a login ID and password:

- On the **Admin** drop down menu, click on **Assign Login IDs**.
- Under **Organization Type** click on the type of organization (Church, Presbytery, Synod, Theological institution, General Assembly, and other).
- Under **Role** click on the role identity of the person to whom you are assigning the login ID (i.e. Pastor Nominating Committee Chair, Clerk of Session, Pastor Nominating Committee Member, Search Committee Chair).
- Enter the church PIN number.
- Click **Generate**. The login and password will be displayed on the screen.

The Login/ ID generated will begin with letter(s) (P for PNC Chair, COS for Clerk of Session, M for PNC Member) followed by the five number church PIN. The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned.

If a Password is forgotten you can re-initialize the password by moving cursor to the **Admin** drop down menu, choose **Re-initialize Password**.

- You will need the Login ID of the person whose password you are re-initializing and the email address where you would like the new password to be sent or you can have the password sent to your email address.
- Enter the Login ID and email address.
- Click **Submit**

Notify CLC of presbytery information updates

When your Presbytery has a new EP/GP, COM moderator, CPM moderator, or SC or when there are changes to information such as address, etc. please notify CLC.

In order to change information:

- Go to dropdown menu under *Admin* click *Notify for Information Update*.
- Make the appropriate changes, *Submit*.

The section **Distribution Code** tells CLC where in the course of a normal matching process the email notification about referred PIFs is distributed. If your presbytery has a specific situation where the distribution needs to be handled differently, please call CLC.

The section **Allow matching PIF inside the Presbytery** tells CLC whether or not your presbytery allows PIFs from minister members of your Presbytery to be matched with MIFs in your Presbytery.

Other areas accessible to EPs/GPs

Opportunity search


Allows you to see all the positions that are posted on CLC and sort according to a number of parameters.

Reports

- **Applicants and Positions** is the current number of applicants and positions within the CLC system.
- **MIF Status** list the most recent MIFs from your presbytery. You can also view the MIF.
- **View Referred PIFs** allows you to see the PIFs referred to each of the MIFs in your presbytery.
- **MIF Web Hit Count** allows you to see how many times the MIF has been accessed through CLC and the last time it was accessed.
- **MIF Diversity Count** allows you to see how many PIFs were referred to each position, the number of those PIFs that are Racial/Ethnic, Gender, etc.
- To view **Advanced Search matches** see the Match Menu.

Admin menu

View Presbytery Information lists the basic information for each presbytery. Changes to this section can only be made by the EP/GP.

 **Edit Presbytery**

[Go back](#)

If any of the following information has changed, please notify CLC Staff by modifying it here. Once you've completed your changes, click on the Submit Changes button below. Thank you!

| | |
|---|---|
| ID: | 150-004 |
| Name: | ABINGDON PRESBYTERY |
| City: | PO BOX 317, WYTHEVILLE VA 24382 |
| Synod ID and Name: | 150-000 - SYNOD OF MID-ATLANTIC |
| Distribution Code: | P - PNC & EP |
| Allow matching PIF inside the presbytery: | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

Figure 8. Notifying CLC of updated information

 **MIF Diversity Count Report**

[Go back](#)

ABINGDON PRESBYTERY

10/29/2015 10:14:37 AM

| MIF ID | Church Name | City, State | PIF Count | Female | Racial Ethnic PIF Referral Counts | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|----------|--------|-----------------|-----------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------|-------|--------|----------------|
| | | | | | African American | Chinese | Hispanic Puerto Rican | Japanese | Korean | Native American | Taiwanese | Other | Hispanic Mexican Central American | Other Asian | Amer Indian Alaskan | Asian | Black | Latino | Middle Eastern |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 9. MIF diversity count example

Responsibilities

As Stated Clerk you are responsible for several tasks with Church Leadership Connection (CLC). They are: **Attestation for a Personal Information Form (PIF)**, **Unauthorize a PIF**, **Notify CLC of a New Call**, **updating the Reference Check for Teaching Elder's contact information**.

Login and password

Your login will begin with SC (stated clerk) followed by the six-digit synod/presbytery ID number. If you do not know your login and/or password, please call CLC staff at (888) 728-7228, ext. 8550. The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned. CLC suggests that you change the password to something easier to remember.

Change password

- Move the cursor to **Admin** dropdown, click **Change Password**. Your password must be at least six characters, one being a number.

Please enter your new Password below. Your new password must be at least 6 characters in length and must contain at least 1 number. We ask that you enter it a 2nd time to confirm that you have not miskeyed it by mistake. If you have any questions please contact our CLC Support Staff.

Password:
 Retype Password:

[Home](#) [Logout](#)

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Figure 10. Stated Clerk Change Password screen

Attestation of Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

| PIF ID | Name | Attestation |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 123456789 | Don Jones | Awaiting |

Figure 11. PIF awaiting attestation

judicial process pending, the ministry or under supervised rehabilitation. The receiving body should always ratify their ministry and activities within the presbytery of membership.

Comments:
Comment 1 (0/100)

Figure 12. Failed PIF example

You are responsible for attesting to the presbytery standing of PC(USA) teaching elders submitting a Personal Information Form (PIF) to CLC for circulation. Your attestation is a verification of standing only, and does not include or imply approval of the PIF or verification of any information contained on the PIF. When a PIF is submitted, the system will generate an email message to you. The email will identify the person and their PIF ID number. You do not need to wait for the email before attesting to a PIF.

- Move cursor to PIF dropdown, click **PIF Attestation**. All PIFs needing your attestation will be listed.
- If you wish to view the PIF, click **View** to the right. Then click **Go back** located to the left, which will return you to the PIF name and information.
- Click the PIF ID number to the left of the person's name to open the screen for PIF attestation.
If failed choose **No** and under the comment box choose reason; this will generate an email to CLC.
- Click the appropriate box:

Note: You will also see the Sexual Misconduct Self-Certification Statement, to which the individual has attested.

- Click **Submit**.

Note: When a PIF has been active for one year, CLC will generate an email requesting that you re-attest to the person's standing in presbytery. We require attestation annually to monitor changes in standing that may affect the individual's ability to accept a new call.

Unauthorize a PIF

Cancel (0/100)

Please enter or select the Professional Identification Form Number below:

PIF ID: 123456789 Don Jones

Submit Cancel

Figure 13. Unauthorize a PIF

- Move cursor to PIF dropdown, choose **Unauthorize a PIF**.
- Choose the name of the PIF that needs to be unauthorized. Make sure the name is highlighted in the box **PIF ID**, click **Submit**.

Notify CLC of a new call

When a new call has been extended and the applicant has accepted, the stated clerk or executive/general presbyter of the presbytery is asked to notify Church Leadership Connection.

- Move cursor to PIF dropdown, on the menu under **Admin** click *Notify of New Call*.
- On the dropdown screen **MIF ID**, click the appropriate Ministry Information Form (MIF) ID number.
- Enter the individual's Personal Information Form ID number ("PIF ID") or, if you do not know the number, provide the information asked for, including the effective date, then Click *Submit*.

Other areas accessible to Stated Clerks

Opportunity search

Allows you to see all the positions that are posted on CLC and sort according to a number of parameters.

Reports

- **Applicants and Positions** is the current number of applicants and positions within the CLC system.
- **MIF Status** list the most recent MIFs from your presbytery. You can also view the MIF.
- **PIF Attestation Record** lists the active PIFs in the CLC system for which the stated clerk has attested.

Admin menu

View Presbytery Information lists the basic information for each presbytery as well as the names of the EP/GP, stated clerk, committee on ministry moderator, and the committee on preparation moderator.

To update presbytery information log into the system, select Admin and choose **View Presbytery Information**, select your presbytery, select **Edit Presbytery Information**, and edit the fields for Reference Check for Teaching Elders' Contact Information, *Submit*.

Notify for Information Update. To update presbytery information, log into the system, select **Admin** and choose **Notify for Information Update**. Only EP and SC can make these updates.



Figure 14. Notify CLC of a new call

3.

COM moderator

Responsibilities

As a committee on ministry (COM) moderator, you are responsible for several tasks in Church Leadership Connection (CLC). They are: **Assign Logins to Pastor Nominating Committees (PNC) and Clerk of Session (COS)**, **Approve MIF**, and, **notify CLC of a new call**, and **notify CLC of the eligibility of a church with a MIF to participate for the Board of Pensions Seminary Debt Assistance Program**, and **Matching Within Presbytery**. Instructions on how to fulfill these responsibilities are below.

Login and password

Your login will begin with CO (for COM) followed by the six-digit synod/presbytery ID number. If you do not know your login and/or password, please call CLC staff at (888) 728-7228, ext. 8550. CLC suggests that you change this password to something easier to remember.

Change password

- Move the cursor to **Admin** dropdown, click **Change Password**. Your password must be at least six characters, one being a number.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Change Password" with a green lock icon. Below the title, a message states: "Please enter your new Password below. Your new password must be at least 6 characters in length and must contain at least 1 number. The ask that you enter it in twice to confirm that you have not mistyped it by mistake. If you have any questions please contact our CLC Support Staff." The form contains two input fields: "Password:" and "Retype Password:". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Submit" and "Cancel".

Figure 15. COM Moderator Change Password screen

Assign login IDs and passwords and re-initializing a password

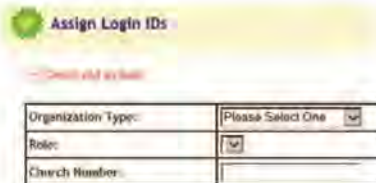


Figure 16. Assigning login IDs



Figure 17. Re-initializing a password

You are responsible for assigning logins and passwords for pastor nominating committees/search committees (PNC) and clerks of session. For PNCs this will include entering and correcting the Ministry Information Form (MIF), requesting re-matching for the MIF, and accessing the Personal Information Forms (PIF) that are referred to the PNC. The clerks of session approve the MIF.

To assign logins and passwords

- On the **Admin** dropdown menu, choose **Assign Login IDs**.
- Under **Organization Type** choose from the dropdown menu the type of organization (Church).
- Under **Role** choose the role identity of the person to whom you are assigning the login (i.e. Pastor Nominating Committee Chair, Clerk of Session, Pastor Nominating Committee Member, Search Committee Chair).
- Enter the church PIN number (available from your presbytery office).
- Click on **Generate**.

The login will begin with letter(s) (P for PNC chair, COS for clerk of session, M for PNC member) followed by the five number church PIN.

- The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned. CLC suggest that you change this password to something easier to remember.

Re-Initializing a Password

- If a password is forgotten, you can re-initialize the password by going back to **Admin** and choose **Re-initialize password**.

Note: You will need the login of the person whose password you are reinitializing and the email address where you would like the new password to be sent or type in X for the email address.

Ministry Information Form (MIF) approval

Before an MIF can be circulated it must be approved by the clerk of session (COS) of the congregation who confirms session approval of the MIF, and the moderator of COM who confirms approval of the MIF.

To approve an MIF

- Move cursor to MIF Part II, then click on **Approve an MIF**. All MIFs needing your approval will be listed.
- If you wish to view the MIF, click on **View** to the right. After viewing click on **Go back** located to the left. This will return you to the screen shown above.
- Click on the MIF ID number to the bottom left to open the screen for MIF approval.

Click on **Yes** or **No** then **Submit**.

Eligibility for seminary debt assistance program

One of the ways that smaller churches may be able to attract pastors willing to consider serving with them is through the opportunity to participate in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program administered by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA). This program is designed to assist newly ordained ministers serving small congregations to repay education debt incurred while seeking a Master of Divinity degree.

- If you want to notify CLC on whether or not the church MIF you just approved meets the criteria for the Seminary Debt Assistance Program, on the menu under **MIF** go to **Eligibility for Seminary Debt Assistance**.
- Right side of **MIF ID**, click on the MIF ID# from the dropdown list.
- If the church has fewer than 150 members and a budget of less than \$250,000, click **Yes**. If the church does not meet both criteria, click **No**.
- Click **Notify CLC**.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Notify CLC on Eligibility for Seminary Debt Assistance Program". Below the title is a green circular icon with a gear. The form contains a text box with the instruction: "The following list consists all those churches in your Presbytery that have MIFs in the system. Please fill out the following simple form so the CLC Staff will be notified immediately for each church's eligibility for Seminary Debt Assistance Program. Thank you!". Below this is a dropdown menu labeled "Church ID:" with the text "Please Select One" and a downward arrow. Underneath is the question "Eligible for Seminary Debt Assistance Program?" followed by two radio buttons: "Yes" and "No". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Notify CLC" (in orange) and "Cancel" (in blue).

Figure 18. Eligibility for seminary debt assistance program

Matching within presbytery

Matching Within Presbytery

⬅ Cancel and go back

The following list consists of MIFs from your Presbytery that are in the system. Select an MIF to update whether matc

MIF ID:

Please Select

Allow matching within presbytery?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Update

Cancel

Figure 19. Matching within presbytery

Notify CLC of a new call



Figure 20. Notify of new call

To notify CLC that a teaching elder has accepted a new call, login into CLC, select the Admin Menu and then choose Notify of New Call from the dropdown list, complete requested information and then submit.

Other areas accessible to COM moderators

| These functions can be found in the various pull down menus.

Opportunity search

| Allows you to see all positions that are posted on CLC.

Reports

- **Applicants and Positions.** This is the current number of applicants and positions within the CLC system.
- **MIF Status** lists the most recent change to active and inactive MIFs from your presbytery within CLC.
- **View Referred PIFs** allows you to see the PIFs referred to each of the MIFs in your presbytery.
- **MIF Web Hit Count** allows you to see how many times the MIF was accessed through CLC.
- **MIF Diversity Count** allows you view PIFs that were referred to each position, a breakdown by racial ethnic and gender.

Admin menu

- **View Presbytery Information** lists the basic information for each presbytery as well as the names of the EP/GP, stated clerk, COM moderator, and the committee on preparation moderator. This is where you can find the names of your counterparts in other presbyteries. Changes to this section can only be made by the EP/GP.
- **Change Password.** This allows users to change their password to one that may be more easily remembered.

Responsibilities

As committee on preparation for ministry (CPM) moderator, you are responsible for several tasks in Church Leadership Connection (CLC). They are: **Personal Information Form (PIF) Attestation for Candidates**, **notify CLC of a new call**, and **Unauthorize a Candidate's PIF**.

Login and password

Your login will begin with CP (for CPM) followed by the six-digit synod/presbytery ID number. If you do not know your login and/or password or have forgotten it, please contact CLC staff at (888) 728-7228, ext. 8550. The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned. CLC suggests that you change this password to something easier to remember.

Change password

- Move the cursor to **Admin** dropdown, click **Change Password**. Your password must be at least six characters, one being a number.



Change Password

Please enter your new Password below. Your new password must be at least 6 characters in length and must contain at least 1 number. We ask that you enter it in twice to confirm that you have not miskeyed it by mistake. If you have any questions please contact our CLC Support Staff.

Password:

Retype Password:

Figure 21. Change Password screen

Personal Information Form (PIF) attestation

You are responsible for attesting the Personal Information Form (PIF) of candidates. Please use the guidelines below to determine when a candidate is ready to negotiate for service.

- The candidate has fulfilled all requirements of “final assessment” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0607a–d) and is certified ready for examination for ordination, pending a call.
- Following an authoritative interpretation of the 219th General Assembly (2010), the presbytery attests the candidate has met the following requirements in order to enter into negotiation for his or her ministerial service.
 - Has completed two full years of theological education (or the equivalent thereof),
 - Has had consultation within the last year,
 - Has satisfactorily completed all the standard ordination exams or received an exception to this requirement under G-2.0610,
 - Has received approval of the presbytery of care.

**(For more information, see Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service section of the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry).*



Figure 22. PIF attestation screen

Attest a PIF

- Move cursor to PIF dropdown menu and click **PIF Attestation**. All PIFs waiting for attestation will be listed.
- To view the PIF, click **View** to the right. After viewing, click Go Back at top left corner.
- Choose the **PIF ID number** to the left to open the screen for PIF attestation. You will see the Sexual Misconduct Self-Certification Statement at the bottom of the screen.
- Choose the appropriate box and click **Submit**.
- If a PIF is failed, choose **No** and go to the comment box to select the reason. An email will be generated to notify CLC staff.

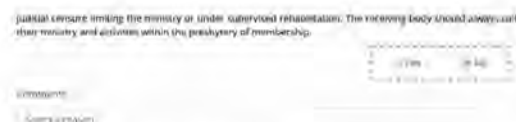


Figure 23. Failed PIF example

Unauthorize a candidate's PIF

- Move cursor to PIF dropdown menu and choose *Unauthorize a PIF*.
- From the dropdown menu, choose the PIF that needs to be unauthorized. Make sure the name highlighted in the box *PIF ID* is correct then *Submit*.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Professional Identification" with a green gear icon. Below the title is a red link "< Cancel and go back". A text prompt says "(Please enter or select the Professional Identification Form Number below.)". There is a dropdown menu labeled "PIF ID:" with the selected value "123456789 - Doe, Jane". At the bottom are "Submit" and "Cancel" buttons.

Figure 24. Unauthorize a PIF

Notify CLC of a new call

See page 17, Figures 23 and 24.

To notify CLC that a candidate has accepted a new call, login into CLC, select the **Admin Menu** and then choose **Notify of New Call** from the dropdown list, complete requested information and then submit.

Other areas accessible to CPM moderators

Opportunity search

Allows you to see all positions that are posted on CLC.

Reports

- **Applicants and Positions.** This is the current number of applicants and positions within the CLC system.
- **PIF Attestation Record** lists the active PIFs in the CLC system for which the CPM moderator has completed attestation.

Admin menu

- **View Presbytery Information** lists the basic information for each presbytery. Changes to this section can only be made by the EP/GP.

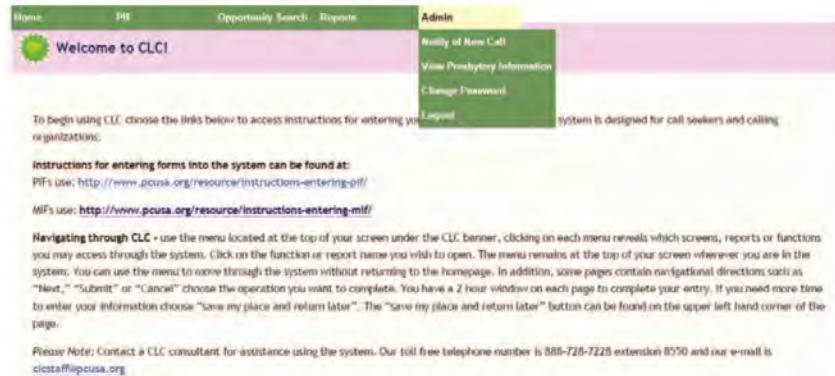


Figure 25. Dropdown to access Notify of CLC of a new call

If a new call has been extended and the applicant has accepted it, please fill out the following simple form so Church Leadership Connection will be notified immediately. Thank you!

MIF ID:

PIF ID:

If no PIF is available please provide the following information:

First Name:

Middle Name:

Last Name:

Effective Date:

Figure 26. Notify CLC of a new call

5.

Clerk of Session

Responsibilities

As clerk of session you are responsible for approving the **Ministry Information Form** for your congregation.

Login and password

You will be given a login and password from the committee on ministry (COM) of your presbytery. Your login will begin with COS (for clerk of session) followed by the five-digit church PIN number. If you do not know your login and/or password, please call your COM for assistance. The password is case sensitive and must be entered exactly as it is assigned. CLC suggests that you change the password to something easier to remember.

Change password

- Move cursor to **Admin** and click *Change Password*. Your password must be at least six characters, one being a number.

Ministry Information Form (MIF) approval

Before an MIF can be circulated with CLC, it must be approved by the clerk of session (COS) of the congregation who confirms session approval of the MIF and the moderator of COM who confirms COM approval of the MIF.

Please select a Ministry Identification Form Number from the list below.

| MIF | Church | Position |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 01710_ABY | First United | Pastor, joined parish |

Figure 27. Approving a MIF

Instructions for Approving an MIF:

- Move cursor to **MIF>Part II**, click *Approve an MIF*. All MIFs needing your approval will be listed.
- If you wish to view the MIF, click on **View** to the right. You may also wish to print a copy of the MIF for your records. After viewing close the screen.
- Click on the **MIF ID number** at the bottom left of the screen to open the screen for MIF approval.

Click **Yes** or **No** then **Submit**.

Other areas accessible to Clerks of Session

Opportunity search

| Allows you to see all positions that are posted on CLC.

Reports

- | ➤ **Applicants and Positions.** This is the current number of applicants and positions within the CLC system.

Admin menu

- | ➤ Change password and logout.

6. CLC staff contact information



The Church Leadership Connection staff is here to serve you. If you need any assistance or have questions, contact us by **phone** at 1-888-728-7228, ext. 8550, or by **email** at clcstaff@pcusa.org.

MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS COM REFERENCES

Part 14. EXAMINATION FOR MEMBERSHIP POLICY

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon reaffirms its commitment to be guided by and to uphold the entire *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* in the examination of both Candidates for Teaching Elder and previously ordained Teaching Elders seeking membership in the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. Based upon a thorough analysis of the relevant provisions in the *Book of Order*, the history of constitutional interpretation through decisions of the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission and the authoritative interpretations adopted by the General Assembly itself, we hereby adopt the following policy:

1. This policy is designed to assist the presbytery in its obligation to gain a broader vision of each potential Minister member's faith and manner of life and the presbytery's responsibility to conduct such examinations reasonably, responsibly, prayerfully and deliberately.
2. Persons being examined for ordination to the office of Teaching Elder shall be examined by the presbytery in plenary assembly during a regularly scheduled Stated Meeting or a Special Meeting of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.
3. Previously ordained Teaching Elders who are seeking membership in the Presbytery of Grand Canyon shall be examined by the Commission on Ministry (or a COM task force consisting of a least three persons from COM) for membership on behalf of the presbytery. During this examination process those seeking membership shall be specifically asked: "Are you able to answer all the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception? And if not, which ones and why not?" Those received by COM for membership in the presbytery without "scruple" (exception) shall be introduced to the presbytery at its next convenient presbytery meeting.
4. Persons being examined shall submit a brief statement of faith and a brief biographical history (ordinarily not to exceed two pages) which shall be reviewed as part of the examination. These documents shall be provided to the presbytery as part of the plenary examination or introduction to the presbytery.
5. Governing bodies do not possess a "right of conscience" that would permit them to violate provisions of the Constitution.⁷
6. Individuals being examined for ordination and/or presbytery membership who are unable to answer all of the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception shall submit a

⁷ Reaffirmed most recently in *Londonderry v. Presbytery of Northern New England* (Remedial Case 213-2, 2001).

statement of “scruple” (exception) expressing their disagreement to the presbytery in writing prior to their examination.⁸

a. Each person submitting a statement of “scruple” (exception) shall be examined by the presbytery in plenary assembly.⁹ Each exception requested shall be considered by the presbytery as to whether it constitutes a rejection of an essential tenet of Reformed faith or polity. The person being examined shall be granted opportunity to defend the objection before the assembly. The assembly may take into account the depth and quality of theological reasoning in determining whether the position taken constitutes a rejection of an essential tenet.¹⁰

b. Persons who are judged by this presbytery to reject an essential tenet of Reformed faith or polity shall not be ordained as a Teaching Elder, or be granted membership in this presbytery, regardless of prior ordination or retirement status.

c. “So far as may be possible without serious departure from [the standards of the church], without infringing on the rights and views of others, and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained” (G-2.0105).

d. The presbytery may not take any action which binds the judgment of future assemblies in the examination of Candidates, nor may it reject a Candidate’s statement of exception without providing the Candidate an opportunity to defend the position or the presbyters the opportunity to weigh the position or its defense.¹¹

7. Persons whose statements of “scruple” (exception) are deemed by the presbytery not to constitute rejection of an essential tenet are nevertheless required to act in conformity with

⁸ On the limits of personal conscience, see Form of Government G-2.0105; while G-2.0105 specifically identifies only the *Constitution*, the COM has added “the Scriptures.” The provision requiring a written statement is included to aid the presbytery in conducting its assessment of whether the departure constitutes an essential of Reformed faith and polity. Should a “scruple” be announced during the examination, the presbytery would be in order to suspend the examination to provide opportunity for the Candidate to provide the written statement. The presbytery could choose to resume the examination at such a place and time as would provide sufficient opportunity to consider the request carefully and conduct a reasonable and responsible examination. CPM and/or COM will be responsible for notifying persons to be examined of the presbytery policy sufficiently in advance so as to allow them time to prepare written statements prior to the meeting.

⁹ Under 2.0105, the determination of departure from essentials is the responsibility of the governing body. The presbytery believes this decision may not and should not be delegated to any committee, task force, council, or commission.

¹⁰ “It was clearly the intention that this decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be made after the candidate had been presented and had declared his beliefs and stated his motives personally, and after the examining body, whether Presbytery or (General) Synod, had had full opportunity to judge the man himself, as well as abstract questions of doctrine.” (Report of the Special Commission of 1925 [“Swearingen”], PCUSA, 1927, pp. 56-86).

¹¹ “One fact often overlooked is that by the Act of 1729, the decision as to essential and necessary articles was to be in specific cases. It was no general authority that might be stated in exact language and applied rigidly to every case without distinction. It was an authority somewhat undefined, to be invoked in each particular instance.” (Report of the Special Commission of 1925 [“Swearingen”], PCUSA, 1927, pp. 56-86.)

the faith and polity of the church.¹² Persons willfully violating mandatory provisions of the Constitution shall be subject to disciplinary action.

8. All steps in the above process must be completed prior to an individual assuming a call or contract within the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. If a plenary examination is necessary, a special meeting of the presbytery may be called to ensure that the examination occurs in as timely a fashion as possible.
9. It is the responsibility of Sessions and the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) to counsel with individuals under care of the presbytery as Inquirers/Candidates for Teaching Elder regarding the provisions of this policy. Sessions and CPM need to specifically ask whether the individuals under care are able to answer all the ordination questions in the affirmative without exception, and if not, which ones and why not, so as to have sufficient time to address concerns and/or the inability to comply. It is not fair to the Session, CPM and Inquirer/Candidate to proceed through the Care process, only to discover that noncompliance is grounds for a vote not to sustain the final ordination Exam.
10. It is the responsibility of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison to make sure applicants for Calls and membership in the presbytery are aware of this policy as early in the process as possible. When interviewing applicants, PNC's should raise the issue of whether or not the applicant is in compliance with the provisions of this policy and determine whether the answer permits all parties to proceed with integrity. It is not fair to all involved to proceed through the Call process, only to discover that inability to comply is grounds for a vote not to recommend membership.
11. It is the responsibility of every Teaching Elder of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon to stay current on *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)*. They are reminded that "the decision as to whether or not a person has departed from the essentials of the reformed faith and polity is [to be] made initially by the individual." Teaching Elders should notify the COM immediately upon determining they are unable or unwilling to comply with one of more of the standards of the constitution.¹³

¹² "The Commission recognizes the right of individuals to hold views contrary to the Constitution of the PCUSA but, for the sake of order, actions contrary to the Constitution are not sanctioned" (PCUS, 1983, *Hambrick v. PJC, Synod of North Carolina*, No. 1-1983). See also *Londonderry et al. v. Presbytery of Northern New England* (RC 213-2, 2001).

An examination concerns fitness for office. A decision to grant a "scruple" in examination for ordination does not abridge the authority of the Constitution to govern conduct of ministry or limit the grounds for remedial or disciplinary actions.

⁷ See Footnote #6.

APPENDIX 3 POLICIES

POLICY 1

PRESBYTERY OF GRAND CANYON

HONORARIUM POLICY

For Temporary Pastors and Presbytery Appointed Moderators

Temporary Pastor

As a Presbytery, we recognize that as we gather together, worship becomes a central part of the expression of who we are as God's people. Further, we acknowledge that those who lead worship are both highly trained and skilled professionals. Therefore, it is incumbent upon churches to compensate fairly those who lead worship. In the absence of a pastor, a church may invite others to fill the pulpit. The Presbytery therefore has the following policy regarding compensation for visiting preachers:

In the absence of a pastor, churches may invite anyone they wish to fill the pulpit. However, those invited to preside over the sacraments (baptism and communion) must be an ordained Teaching Elder or other Elder approved by the Presbytery for administering the Sacraments at the church in question.

Guest preachers should be informed of what aspects of the worship service they will lead.

Honoraria for preaching shall be offered. Presbytery of Grand Canyon recommends a minimum of: \$75 for one service in a church of fewer than 40 members; \$100 for one service in a church of 40 or more members; and \$150 for two services. These are recommended minima and the Presbytery encourages churches to consider a fairer level of compensation when able to do so.

The church should incur any additional expenses such as travel, meals or lodging. The Presbytery recommends that mileage be reimbursed at the current IRS rate for mileage or a base rate not less than the current rate reimbursed by Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

Presbytery of Grand Canyon maintains a list of PC(USA) pastors available for pulpit supply. This list and the current IRS rate for mileage reimbursement are available from the Presbytery office.

Presbytery Appointed Moderators

The calling to be a Teaching Elder ("Minister") in the PC(USA) is a high calling. Ministers are professionals who **provide a professional service of leadership to churches. Often Ministers take on additional duties that are not part of their call but are, nonetheless, a service to the church as a whole. Usually these additional duties are not compensated. While the ministers may not expect compensation, compensation should be offered.**

Therefore, recognizing their service to the larger church, Presbytery of Grand Canyon offers the following recommendation for compensation for those assigned the task of moderating the session of a church other than the one they serve:

Honoraria may be offered to non-ministers (i.e., Ruling Elders) moderating session meetings. Honoring the time involved to moderate session meetings and the expert leadership moderators bring to the session, the Presbytery recommends that an honorarium between \$25 and \$50 be given to guest moderators.

Churches should reimburse for the expenses incurred by guest moderators, including Teaching Elders appointed for the task, for lodging, meals and mileage. The Presbytery recommends that mileage be reimbursed at the current IRS rate for mileage or a base rate not less than the current rate reimbursed by Presbytery of Grand Canyon.

POLICY 2

REFERENCE CHECK POLICY

Types of References and Their Definition:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Primary | A primary reference is a person named by the applicant on a PIF as a person who knows them and their work and can respond to inquiries from PNCs. Often those named include someone in an official capacity such as a Presbytery Pastor, COM chairperson, colleague, clerk of session, elder or church member |
| Governing Body | A governing body reference check is one conducted in later stages of the search process. It is a reference check completed by the Presbytery Pastor the presbytery with the vacancy contacting the Executive Presbyter or chair of COM of the presbytery where the applicant holds membership. |

References and their purpose

The purpose of completing reference checks is to seek information that is necessary and relevant to the qualifications for the position as set forth in the job description.

In contacting a primary reference those involved in the search process want to know more about the applicant and that person's qualifications to do the job. These are the references from sources the applicant believes to be in the best position to know them and their work. These references should be honored and contact made with a cross section if not all of those listed as primary references.

Governing Body references provide the opportunity to gain a more complete picture of the applicant and their qualifications to do the job. They provide an opportunity for a clearance from the presbytery of applicant membership and the purpose is to seek additional information relevant to the qualifications for the position.

It is the policy of this Presbytery to utilize reference checking in the process of selecting persons to work within the bounds of the Presbytery. It is also the policy of this Presbytery to cooperate fully with other governing bodies of the church and in so doing will provide only honest and accurate information concerning members of the presbytery or others who currently work within the geographic area of the presbytery and are seeking work elsewhere.

Teaching elder Members Within the Presbytery Seeking A New Call Shall :

1. Provide a copy of their current PIF to the Presbytery Pastor and the chair of COM who may request an interview with the teaching elder before answering requests for reference checks.
2. Sign a Statement: "I agree that the Presbytery Pastor and the chair of the COM may obtain both oral and written reference checks about me, that these reference checks will be honest and accurate."

Reference checks will not be given unless the above conditions are met. The Presbytery Pastor and the chair of COM shall keep logs stating the date, the inquirer, the person being checked and a summary of the conversation or a copy of the reference.

Pastor Nominating Committees Shall :

1. Complete all reference primary checks before requesting that the Presbytery Pastor with the chair of COM as backup complete a Governing Body Reference check.
2. Request that a Governing Body Reference Check be completed and receive clearance from either the Presbytery Pastor and/or Chair of COM and the COM Liaison before inviting any candidate for the first face to face interview.

Reference Checks by Presbytery Pastor on Possible Candidates for Positions in this Presbytery Shall :

1. Be completed on potential temporary pastors before the names are given to a search committee. Pertinent summaries of the content of the reference checks may be shared with the Search Committee.
2. Be completed on a person for an Installed Position by the Presbytery Pastor before they are invited for the first face-to-face interview.
3. Be available to COM liaisons and COM Committee persons that interview prospective members of the presbytery. COM persons shall have the PIF and the notes of the reference check at their disposal prior to the interview. The COM liaison and the Presbytery Pastor shall confer about what information to share with a PNC.

Note: A Governing Body Check will be completed on proposed members of the presbytery who are requesting transfer to this Presbytery in a membership status that does not involve a search process, outlined above, as part of the interview process of the COM for membership in the presbytery.

Copies of Primary and Governing Body Reference Check materials of those who become members of the presbytery and/or are placed in pastoral assignments in the presbytery without becoming a member shall:

Be placed in the person's Official Presbytery File maintained in the Office of the Stated Clerk.

POLICY 3

CONVERTING A NON-ORDAINED STAFF POSITION TO AN ORDAINED POSITION POLICY

When a church wants to convert a staff position filled by a non-ordained person, now qualified to be ordained, into a position to be filled by an ordained person:

1. The session shall consult with COM to secure approval of Presbytery to establish the position.
2. The congregation shall elect a PNC.
3. If an open search process was used when the non-ordained person was hired, and that person has fulfilled the requirements for ordination, the PNC shall consider the incumbent for the position before consideration of any other candidates. This procedure is modeled on the process for consideration of an organizing pastor for the position of pastor of a newly organized congregation.
4. If the incumbent is not recommended for the position, the usual procedure shall be followed for securing a pastoral staff person.
5. If there was not an open hiring process, the incumbent may be considered with other candidates, in the usual process.

POLICY 4

CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS POLICY

- I. The COM shall have responsibility for the care and oversight of the Certified Christian Educators employed by the particular churches in its presbytery.
 - A. The call to a Certified Christian Educator shall be in the form shown in Form of Government (specifically G-2.1103).^{*} The Certified Christian Educator's name shall be enrolled on Presbytery's roll of Christian Educators and shall be transmitted to the Office of the Stated Clerk so that it may be recorded in the General Assembly Minutes.

^{*}with correction in wording as needed
 - B. Certified Christian Educators and Associates in Christian Education shall have privilege of the floor in session; and in Presbytery, shall be eligible for other presbytery offices, since certification does not preclude ordination to any office.
 - C. Certified Christian Educators and Associates in Christian Education, who have been ordained as elders, may be granted a vote in meetings of the Presbytery.
 - D. When a Certified Christian Educator or the session of any church or other employee desires the dissolution of the relationship between the session or employer and the Christian Educator, either party shall have access to the presbytery COM.
- II. When a Certified Christian Educator accepts a call from a board or agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) the relationship shall be subject to the personnel policies of the employing board or agency.
 - A. A Certified Christian Educator may be, by vote of the presbytery, duly transferred as such by a letter of transfer to another presbytery within the bounds of which he or she has received and wills to accept a call to serve, such transfer to be effected only when the person's active membership has been transferred to a particular church within the bounds of said presbytery and the letter of transfer has been requested and received by that presbytery.
 - B. The Certified Christian Educator shall continue in the office as long as the presbytery is satisfied, from observation of the work being done and by reports from the Certified Christian Educator, that this person is actively engaged in the form of service to which this person was called. If the Certified Christian Educator has indicated intention to cease work, or if a lapse of two years has occurred since the Christian Educator has been actively engaged in such work, or if there are other reasons, the presbytery, after consultation with the Certified Christian Educator, may remove the name from the active roll; but in such case the presbytery shall record the reasons in the minutes and shall report its action and reasons therefore to the person and to the office of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery which the Christian Educator is employed or is a member. The name may also be removed upon request of the Certified Christian Educator.
 - C. Presbytery may reinstate the name of a Christian Educator after having been satisfied with the reasons given in the application for reinstatement.

GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS

Church Responsibilities

Specific information regarding requirements and training of prospective Certified Christian Educators is not included in these guidelines. Since programs may vary, churches are requested to outline guidelines relative to their needs and concerns. The job description should contain specific duties, and should accompany the call. However, the general guidelines below should be adhered to.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <u>CLASSIFICATION</u> | Certified Christian Educator |
| <u>CONTACT</u> | Five-(5) day week. (This does not necessarily mean free weekends.) |
| <u>VACATION</u> | Three weeks |
| <u>STUDY LEAVE</u> | Two weeks and time off for service pertaining to work of Presbytery and to attend meetings of professional organizations in their field. |
| <u>CAR ALLOWANCE</u> | As Presbytery recommends. |
| <u>CONTINUING EDUCATION ALLOWANCE</u> | As Presbytery recommends. |
| <u>SALARY</u> | Presbytery minimum with consideration to experience. |
| <u>MEDICAL AND PENSION BENEFITS</u> | Each church should consider the benefits of the pension and medical plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). However, many educators are covered by spousal health insurance with employer providing a pension plan of some kind. |

POLICY 5

MOVING FROM INTERIM TO INSTALLED PASTOR POLICY

It is understood that the ordinary process for a church seeking an installed pastor is to call a temporary pastor – known as an interim or transitional pastor – for a period of time until the installed pastor can be found through the work of a PNC. However, under unusual, extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances, it sometimes is beneficial and prudent to permit a church to allow an interim to become the installed pastor. In such a circumstance, care should be taken by the congregation, Session, Commission on Ministry and Presbytery to ensure the benefits of such action and its prudence. The following process **shall be observed**:

1. The interim shall serve for a minimum of **two years** before seeking to transfer to installed status.
2. A request to transfer a pastor's status shall be initiated by the Session of the local church and sent to the Commission on Ministry for consideration. This request shall include the following:
 - a. A description of the accomplishments of the interim pastor during the interim period,
 - b. A description of why the Session thinks the interim pastor fits the needs of the congregation moving forward in its ministry and mission.
3. Following the receipt of such a request, a conversation between COM representatives and the Session, to discuss the above document content, will occur prior to further action by the Session.
4. Following a report from the COM representatives on the meeting with Session, COM will act to approve or disapprove the request to transfer the interim pastor's status to installed pastor. A **two-thirds** majority for approval by COM is required to allow the Session to call a congregational meeting and present the candidate and terms of call to the congregation; according to the ordinary rubrics for an installed pastor.
5. Pending an affirmative vote of the congregation, the Presbytery will vote on whether there is concurrence with the COM and congregational actions. A **two-thirds** majority vote of Presbytery is required for concurrence.

POLICY 6

SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY FOR PARISH MINISTERS AND EDUCATORS

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The Presbytery of Grand Canyon strongly encourages that all new pastor/educator calls provide for a sabbatical leave as part of the terms of call, as herein described. Existing calls would be encouraged to adopt a plan to have a sabbatical included in renegotiation of the terms of call. The sabbatical is granted as compensated sabbatical time away of at least three months after six years of service to an individual church.

II GUIDELINES FOR SABBATICALS

A. General Considerations:

1. The study undertaken during a sabbatical leave shall ordinarily be of a practical nature, designed to increase the skills of the church professional in his/her current call, or allow for theological study/reflection and/or spiritual renewal.
2. Before the church professional goes on leave, provision shall be made to cover the duties of the person on leave.
3. Sabbatical leaves shall be granted no sooner than the completion of six years of service, nor sooner than six years after a previous sabbatical.
4. Sabbatical leaves shall normally be three months.
5. Ordinarily, the normal study leave time that is due in the sabbatical year shall be a part of the sabbatical leave time, not in addition to it.
6. The church professional shall normally pledge to stay in his/her position for no less than one calendar year after a sabbatical leave.
7. Plans should be made by the session to fully inform the congregation about the sabbatical plans at least 6 months ahead of time, explaining the rationale and the expected benefits.
8. Ideally, written notice and a written plan shall be given to the church's personnel committee and to the church's Session 6 months prior to the Sabbatical Leave. The Presbytery's Commission on Ministry should be notified of all approved Sabbatical leaves.
9. The church Session is responsible for covering the duties of the person on leave, with the intent that the pastor would have no contact with the church, except for an emergency.
10. It is considered desirable for the person on leave to spend part of the time away out of town, away from one's home environment and community.
11. Upon returning from sabbatical leave, the church professional shall present to the personnel committee and to the session, a written summary statement of the sabbatical leave experience, including what was learned.

12. In a church where study leave (time) may be accrued up to six weeks, this time may be used in conjunction with the Sabbatical Leave.

B. Financial Considerations:

1. During a sabbatical leave, all salary and benefits shall continue to be paid by the church.
2. The church professional shall normally pledge to stay in his/her position for no less than one calendar year after a sabbatical leave. If the church professional chooses to leave the congregation within one year after the completion of a sabbatical leave, that person shall refund to the church the salary paid to him/her during the sabbatical leave.
3. While the church professional is on sabbatical leave, the employing church shall provide for payment of the expenses of whoever covers the duties of the person on leave. There may be retired pastors or pastors in non-parish positions who would assist with preaching, pastoral care, etc. on a voluntary basis. This could be considered.
4. All costs to the church professional for the sabbatical leave shall be borne by the church professional, but he/she may apply his/her study allowances to these costs. It is suggested that churches wishing to assist in the expense of a Sabbatical Leave create a designated savings account for this purpose. Costs to the church professional do not include the costs to cover the duties of the person on leave.
5. Plans should be made to investigate well ahead of time, possible funding for the sabbatical from the Lilly Foundation and other agencies.
6. Since this policy suggested as part of new calls, the Presbytery also strongly encourages churches to establish as part of all new calls a designated savings account that would accumulate over the six years prior to a Sabbatical Leave to help defray the additional costs of hiring someone to cover the Pastor while s/he is on Sabbatical Leave.
7. The church may, at their discretion, give a gift to the pastor to assist with the sabbatical leave.

C. Teaching Elder or Educator Responsibilities

1. Bring the sabbatical proposal before the session – at least in outline form - a minimum of six months before the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
2. Secure the approval of the session for the sabbatical proposal and work out the necessary coverage of pastoral and pulpit responsibilities.
3. Assure the session of continued service to the church for at least one full year from the conclusion of the sabbatical.
4. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the session before departing on a sabbatical.
5. Submit to the Commission on Ministry in writing the sabbatical timetable and outline of the plans, including the personnel to fill in while the pastor/educator is away.

6. Upon return, present an overview of the sabbatical experience to the session and the congregation, (if possible), as well as the Commission on Ministry. The report should include information about what was learned and how that learning will be applied.

D. Session Responsibilities

1. Receive “for approval” the teaching elder’s proposal for a sabbatical, at least six months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
2. Continue terms of call commitments to the teaching elder during sabbatical leave.
3. Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
4. Work with the pastor/educator to arrange for the necessary staff substitutes as needed.
5. In addition, if agreed upon by the session and the teaching elder, the sabbatical might be combined with study leave for extended graduate study.
6. Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the teaching elder upon return.

E. Commission on Ministry Responsibilities

1. Beginning in the 5th year of a new call, begin counseling with the session and pastor concerning the development of the sabbatical plan. This could begin in the triennial review process.
2. Review the sabbatical timetable and usage plan as submitted by the minister.
3. Serve as mediator in any concerns of session, educator or minister relative to the sabbatical.
4. Assist with temporary supply pastors or support staff as needed during the sabbatical and determine who will moderate the session in the minister's absence.

F. Additional Information

If agreed upon by session and the teaching elder, the sabbatical might be combined with study leave for extended graduate study.

POLICY 7

MINIMUM SALARY FOR TEACHING ELDERS POLICY

The Minimum Effective Salary for Teaching Elders in full-time pastor positions in the Presbytery of Grand Canyon is \$52,000. The Commission on Ministry is authorized to define “full-time” and to make adjustments for less than full-time positions.

POLICY 8

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS OF THE PASTOR(S) AS WELL AS OTHER SUPPORT STAFF POLICY

The Session of all congregations shall have a process for clear, fair and objective Annual performance reviews of the pastor(s) as well as other support staff, with the understanding that some Sessions may delegate staff reviews to the Senior Pastor as Head of Staff. The Presbytery will make resources available to facilitate the review process and, if requested, the Presbytery will consider offering assistance if the Session determines it does not have the skills to manage functional human resource processes. There will be a question on the Examination of Session Minutes form asking whether the minutes indicate the annual review(s) took place.
