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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

HEALTHY MINISTRIES: THE GOAL OF COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY WORK
Pastors and congregations come into relationship with expectations and assumptions, but little knowledge of one another. The effectiveness of their ministry together depends a great deal on how well they build a relationship of understanding, appreciation, and trust. The Committee on Ministry’s primary responsibility is to serve as Pastor and counselor to the Ministers of Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elders, including CREs and those in other validated ministries) of the Presbytery, to facilitate the relationship between congregations, Ministers, and the Presbytery, and to settle difficulties on behalf of Presbytery when possible and expedient. The responsibilities of the COM are best fulfilled by fostering healthy ministries in the congregations of the Presbytery.

THE PRESBYTERY AS PASTOR, COUNSELOR AND ADVISOR
One of the ways Presbytery’s role as Pastor, counselor and advisor is best fulfilled is by developing and maintaining mechanisms and processes that cultivate both healthy congregations and healthy leaders who, together, are able to devote their best energies to fulfilling God’s call to become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.

Health in congregational life is not so easily defined. The shape of congregational life varies from one place to another. Not every congregation can or should engage in precisely the same forms of worship, Christian education, congregational fellowship, or service to the world beyond the church building. However, there are some shared characteristics that are discernable in most healthy congregations.

Healthy congregations can be found in inner city settings, nestled into suburban developments, and in rural communities; they share many of these norms and behaviors:

- Vibrant faith in God is expressed in lively, faithful worship and in a commitment to engage in ministries of justice and compassion.
- Caring response to the needs of people outside the church is as important as fostering relationships of friendship and caring within the congregation.
- Following God’s intentions for the congregation is more important than maintaining buildings or merely balancing the budget.
- Respect for tradition and the past is balanced by flexibility and creativity.
- People of all ages are growing in wisdom and knowledge.
- Relationships of friendship and mutual accountability provide the context for inclusive hospitality and respectful evangelism.
- Respect, accountability and trust rather than control, individualism and secrecy characterize relationships within the congregation.
- Clear structures of authority and decision-making are coupled with open access to those structures by the entire congregation.
- Transparency and openness in regard to communication, information sharing and decision-making are balanced by appropriate and respectful treatment of confidential information.
- Respect for the authority of called and elected leaders is coupled with the awareness that leaders are only part of a very complex organism.
- Congregational self-confidence is balanced by appropriate humility.
Congregations, like the people who are part of them, are gifted and flawed, faulty and faithful, often messy and always thoroughly human. However, when congregations and their leaders are healthy, they are better able to faithfully answer God’s call and to respond to the claims of God on the people of God.

The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

The Committee on Ministry devotes its best energies to helping the ministries of the Presbytery to be healthy. As they do, they partner with God in bringing to reality the Great Ends of the Church (Book of Order, F-1.0304).
PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

CHRISTIAN VOCATION, COMMISSIONED SERVICE, AND ORDINATION

God has given each of us gifts and calls us to use them in a way that pleases and glorifies God. Our vocation is the way in which we respond to the many gifts God has given us: how we live our life. Vocation is not limited to those who serve the church, but each person has a calling to service. As we participate in the community of faith, Christian Vocation is about living into our baptismal identity, answering the call to demonstrate the gospel in all that we do and say.

Christian Vocation is God’s call to daily service in the world through our jobs, talents and interests—it is the cornerstone of our lives as Christians. A sense of Christian Vocation is what gives meaning to our daily routine. Without a true sense of God’s call in our daily lives, we will pass through life without direction to our work, and most of life will have no meaning.

The resulting joy of accepting our labors in God’s work allows us to take life one step at a time—as it has been delivered to us, and to find meaning and worth in every moment of the day and in every encounter along the way. God’s “Call” is more than a job—it is discovering the possibilities of oneself; it is insight into who one is, what one should do. Call is a powerful resource for confronting the uncertainty of life. It is a symbol of divine direction and divine acceptance, connecting one with the community in which one serves.

Recognition and commissioning provide the church with a way to honor the many gifts and ministries being shared with the church and world by its members as they live out their call to discipleship. Commissioning of church school teachers, mission service personnel, community ministry volunteers, mission trip participants, and commissioners to Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly are just a few opportunities for church to commission its members.

Settling Difficulties

- In fulfilling the task of settling “… difficulties on behalf of the Presbytery where possible and expedient” the Presbytery has wide latitude in creating entities and delegating its authority as it determines.
- Presbyteries may create committees or commissions to help facilitate the settling of difficulties in which the Presbytery, in its role as Pastor, counselor and advisor, has become aware.
- Presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties at its own initiative. Sessions and church leaders may also request Presbytery assistance with difficulties.
- Presbyteries “…shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes…to settle difficulties on behalf of the Presbytery where possible and expedient.” Having such mechanisms and process in place before difficulties arise can hasten response and resolution.
Ordination
What is Ordination? - by Joseph D. Small

The church’s ministry and mission are the calling of the whole people of God. In the Reformed tradition, ministry is not the domain of a particular group of people called “clergy,” who lead a larger group called “laity.” This un-Reformed clergy/lay distinction obscures the reality that all specific ministries of the church are particular expressions of the ministry of the whole body of Christ. All Christians are gifted for ministry, and there is a real sense in which all are ordained to ministry in their baptisms.

Within the ministry of the whole people of God, persons may be called to perform specific functions that are important to the life of particular communities of faith. However, some functions are considered to be necessary to the spiritual health and faithful life of every Christian community. The church gives order to these necessary functions by regularizing their shape, their duties, their qualifications, and their approval. These “ordered ministries,” and the persons who are called to them, are established in ordination – the whole church’s act of setting apart for particular service.

The Presbyterian Church (USA), following the development of Reformed ecclesiology, ordains persons to three ordered ministries: Ministers, Elders, and Deacons. These three ministries represent two ecclesial functions: ministries of the Word performed by presbyters (Pastors and Elders) and ministries of service performed by Deacons.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament, also called “Teaching Elders” and Elders, traditionally called “Ruling Elders” are both “presbyters.” Identifying Ministers by their teaching role emphasizes the primacy of the Word and the centrality of the “teaching church.” The designation Ruling Elder is easily misunderstood, however. The historic understanding of the “ruling” exercised by Elders has less to do with managerial governance than with ruling out or measuring the work of ministry, the fidelity of communal and personal lives, and the progress of the gospel in the church. The service of Deacons is to lead the church in its ministries of compassion (distributing aid, caring directly for the poor, the sick, refugees, and prisoners), and justice (working for equity in society).

Ordination to one of the church’s ordered ministries is not the simple recognition that a person possesses “gifts for ministry,” or that an office suits a person’s abilities. It does not follow naturally from a person’s “sense of call.” Ordination is certainly not about access to position, influence, and power in the church.

Ordination is the church’s act of recognizing the movement of the Holy Spirit in the interactions among the whole church’s ordering of ministries, its standards for these ministries, and its current needs, together with prayerful discernment by persons, congregations, and Presbyteries.

Ordination is a gift, not a right. The “spiritual welfare of the church” depends, in large measure, upon its recovery of an understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God, the ordered ministries of the church, and the gift of ordination.
INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS
Pastoral Relationships are established by three partners - the Presbytery, the congregation or Session (for temporary relationships), and the individual serving in the Pastoral role. This is true for both installed or temporary Pastoral relationships. The COM will address the needs of each congregation and review all Pastoral terms of call, then make appropriate recommendation to the Presbytery.

Installed Pastoral relationships are ones in which the individual is called to become “Pastor”, “co-Pastor”, or “associate Pastor”. The call may be for a designated period of time, or until one party or the other dissolves the call, as determined by the Presbytery in consultation with the congregation and as specified in the call. There is not a requirement to have the call be full-time.

OTHER MINISTRIES
At Large Minister
A member-at-large is a Minister 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 the Book of Order. A Minister may be designated a member-at-large because she or he is limited in her or his 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 the Book of Order as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a PC(USA) 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 a member-at-large shall be reviewed annually.

Validated Ministry
The calls of Ministers to ministries supportive of the mission of the church and requiring ordination to that office are in validated ministry. Pastors in validated ministry are accountable to the Presbytery and supervised by COM. Such validated ministry Pastors may be assigned a mentor by COM as well.

Validated ministries may include teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by COM on behalf of Presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacraments at times and places authorized by COM on behalf of Presbytery. When Ministers 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 PC(USA) 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 COM shall review annually the work of all Ministers engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.

In its discernment about a particular call, the Presbytery through COM must assess the ministry and the candidate or Minister. A validated 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
- serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others
- give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God’s Word
- be accountable for its character and conduct to the Presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served
- 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)
Endorsement for Specialized Ministry

Ministers may be called to many forms of Pastoral care in settings outside of a congregation, such as hospitals, prisons, businesses, hospice programs, educational institutions military settings and more. In order to provide a high standard of care, there are a number of professional organizations committed to education and certification for those ministries. The Presbytery also has an important role in ecclesiastical endorsement and validation of ministries.

The Presbytery, through COM, has responsibility to serve as Pastor and counselor to all Ministers, including those who are serving as chaplains or in other specialized ministries. Chaplains in hospitals and care centers, in the military, and Pastoral counselors, as well as Ministers serving in other validated ministries need and deserve Pastoral care and expressions of interest in and appreciation for the important service they provide. All are accountable to the Presbytery for their ministry, but it may be difficult for them to participate in the same ways as Pastors of congregations, especially for military chaplains who may be deployed overseas. Most chaplains and Pastoral counselors go through an extensive process of training and professional preparation in order to become certified.

Military chaplains have a separate process for ecclesiastical endorsement and training. Ordinarily they are expected to have experience as Pastors before serving as chaplains in a military setting. Ecclesiastical endorsement is an official declaration by the Presbytery of membership/care that a person seeking certification as a chaplain or Pastoral counselor has the gifts of ministry for this special calling. It is not a statement of competency. Endorsement is the responsibility of the religious body, while certification is the work of the professional organization.

Military Chaplains

Those who offer themselves to serve as military chaplains need to work closely with the Presbytery under the guidance of The Presbyterian Council for Chaplains and Military Personnel. Information about this ministry, the qualifications for military chaplaincy and the process for ecclesiastical endorsement are outlined on their website. The PCCMP has been authorized as the endorsing agent on behalf of the PC(USA), in collaboration with the COM. The PCCMP Director should be contacted in any matter related to the service of Ministers serving as military chaplains (active duty or reserve) or being considered for such service. Endorsement is given and may be withdrawn by the PCCMP in consultation with the Presbytery.

Through the Board of Pensions, the PC(USA) has agreed to the terms of USERRA (the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act). They include, when the individual returns to service in a PC(USA) entity (not necessarily the one he/she departed):

- the continued accrual of seniority and the pay thereof for PC(USA) Ministers (or laity) serving in the military for up to five years
- the accrual of pension benefits for the same service
- the guarantee of reemployment upon release from military service

Pastoral Counselors and Other Types of Chaplains.

Ordained Ministers and others serving in specialized Pastoral ministries are required to provide, to their respective professional organizations, evidence of endorsement and validation of their ministries by PC(USA). Endorsement and validation of the ministry is a requirement for certification and for continuing membership in the professional organization. The Leadership Team of the Presbyterian Association of Specialized Pastoral Ministries (PASPM), a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA), in conjunction with the Office of Vocation, has prepared this information to assist

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both those persons who are seeking endorsement, certification, and/or validation of a ministry of Pastoral care and the COM. This information will clarify terminology, summarize standards of the professional certifying bodies, incorporate recent statements of agreements between the professional organizations and the religious endorsing bodies, and encourage support for persons in specialized Pastoral ministries.

Terminology

Endorsement is an official declaration by the Presbytery that a person has met its criteria to serve in a ministry of chaplaincy, Pastoral counseling, or clinical education. Certification is the process whereby professional certifying agencies such as APC (Association of Professional Chaplains AAPC (American Association of Pastoral Counselors), ACPE (Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.), CPSP (College of Endorsement for Specialized Ministry Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy), declare a person to be in compliance with professional standards as delineated by that professional organization. Validation of ministry is an official declaration by the Presbytery that a particular ministry complies with all of the criteria enumerated in G-2.0503.

Endorsement is the work of the faith group; therefore, the professional certifying organizations encourage Presbyteries to establish a process for endorsement of persons seeking to enter, and/or persons serving in ministries of chaplaincy, Pastoral counseling, or clinical education seeking certification. The professional organizations also encourage these persons to initiate a relationship with their Presbytery early in their training so that the presbytery, through its committees, can provide guidance, discernment, and support. The declaration of endorsement addresses the following criteria through a process that might include written papers, interviews, and mutual discernment:

- Personal history
- Statement of faith
- Theological and clinical training
- Letters of reference
- Requirements for ministry
- Good standing and accountability within the faith community
- Ability to work collegially in diverse and pluralistic environments
- Willingness to adhere to a code of ethics prescribed by the institutions served, and by the certifying bodies

A letter of endorsement from the Presbytery to the certifying body is continuous unless:

- The applicant has failed to successfully complete the membership or certification process
- There is a change in membership status or level in the professional organization
- There is a change in faith group affiliation, jurisdiction or standing
- The certifying body requests a new letter

RETIRED MINISTERS

“Honorably Retired” is one of the categories of Presbytery membership for Ministers. An honorably retired member remains a full member of the Presbytery with voice and vote and the privilege of serving, if elected, to a position. There are no other honorifics or titles provided by the constitution, such as emeritus/emeriti. Congregations or councils are free to honor former leaders in whatever way they choose. While the Presbytery may designate a member of Presbytery as honorably retired, criteria for retirement and disability benefits are within the purview of the Board of Pensions as reviewed by actions of the General Assembly. Without the invitation of the moderator of a Session, retired Ministers may not provide Pastoral services to members of former congregations.
THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM) DEFINITION OF ROLES
Each Presbytery is charged by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as follows: “... develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as Pastor and counselor to its Pastors, both Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders commissioned to Pastoral service (also called Commissioned Ruling Elders), as well as the certified Christian Educators of the Presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the Presbytery and its congregations, Pastors, and certified Christian Educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the Presbytery where possible and expedient.

Presbytery may delegate to committees the authority to facilitate the Presbytery’s oversight of inquirers and candidates, reception and oversight of Pastors, approval of calls for Pastoral services and invitations for temporary Pastoral services, oversight of congregations without Pastors, dismissal of members, and its close relationship with both member congregations and Ministers.”

The Committee on Ministry is responsible for the health of ministry in the Presbytery of Cincinnati, attending to the well-being of congregations and their faithfulness in responding to God’s call to them as well as the nurture, support and professional development of church professionals, including Pastors, Certified Christian Educators, and Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COM
The Committee on Ministry shall seek to nurture our mutual interconnection between the Presbytery and the Sessions of the congregations within its bounds. The aim of the strategies outlined in this section is to provide regular contact and encouragement; to share available resources and best practices in our common mission; and to offer counsel and resources to settle difficulties when necessary. These strategies are part of other efforts described elsewhere in this manual or in other documents of this Presbytery. What is outlined here is a way to establish regular contact between the Presbytery and the Sessions and to provide for more in-depth visits on occasion to further consult about our ministry together.

With Congregations and Sessions
- Visit regularly and consult with each Minister in the Presbytery; report to Presbytery the type of work in which each Minister of the Presbytery is engaged; require an annual report of each Minister performing work which is not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery or a higher governing body of the church.
- Visit with each Session of the Presbytery by the COM ministry Liaison at least annually.
- Counsel with churches regarding their Pastor Nominating Committees (or Associate Pastor Nominating Committees) regarding calls for permanently installed Pastoral relations.
- Counsel with congregations regarding the advisability of calling a designated Pastor.
- Counsel with churches regarding temporary Pastoral relationships, including support for discerning future needs, writing an MIF, providing lists of available Pastors, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and qualified lay persons who have been trained and commissioned by Presbytery to supply vacant pulpits.
- Promote the peace and harmony of the churches.
• Counsel with Session regarding difficulties in the congregation, act as mediator in conflict situations, and/or act to correct difficulties in a conflict situation when asked to do so by the parties involved or when authorized by Presbytery to do so.
• Appoint Liaisons to the congregations and urges congregations to keep a mission design current in order to facilitate the search process for a new Pastor when a Pastor leaves.
• Conduct and file Exit Interviews when a Pastoral relationship is dissolved, or other such documentation as required (including Covenant of Closure).
• Oversee the assessment of Session records for each church annually.

With the Presbytery
• Make recommendations to Presbytery regarding calls for the services of its Ministers.
• Provide for the implementation of equal employment opportunity for Ministers and candidates, and report to Presbytery the steps taken by each calling group to implement equal employment opportunity.
• Find in order calls issued by churches, approve and present calls, approve examination of Ministers transferring from other Presbyteries, CREs and pulpit supply providers, dissolve Pastoral relationships in certain situations, grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of Presbytery, and dismiss Ministers to other Presbyteries.

Additional responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry include work with a Minister joining another denomination or transferring to the Presbyterian Church (USA) from other denominations, work with Ministers seeking release from the exercise of ordained office, dissolution of Pastoral relationships and work with Commissioned Ruling Elders. The COM of the Presbytery of Cincinnati will also oversee all Session record reviews.

STRUCTURE OF THE COM
The Committee will consist of 18 members called COM Liaisons (including the Moderator and Vice Moderator) equally divided into 2 classes, elected for a two-year term, including both Ministers and Ruling Elders. Each member will be eligible to serve a total of 6 consecutive years (three terms).

Members will be appointed a minimum of (generally) between 2 and 4 congregations to which they will serve as COM Liaisons. The congregations should not change over the tenure of the Liaison’s term with the COM to facilitate growth of strong trusting relationships; however, from time to time as COM members or congregational needs change, it may be necessary to change the Liaison appointment.

The Moderator will be elected by the Presbytery, and will serve for one year (unless asked to extend the role).

CONFIDENTIALITY FOR THE COM
Confidentiality about the work of the COM is crucial to the integrity of the Committee and the level of trust the members of a Presbytery will place in it. Matters before the COM are sensitive and should be held in strictest confidence unless the welfare of a congregation or the safety of an individual is in question. Even then, the COM must be extremely cautious about sharing information except with those who have a clearly identified need to know. Information learned through the COM should never, under any circumstances, be the subject of casual conversation, especially not with persons who are unaffiliated with the COM. The COM has a policy that requires members of the COM to excuse themselves from any discussion of the congregation of which they are members. A similar policy for excusing oneself when a
discussion concerns a church professional who is a close friend will help avoid any appearance of favoritism. Members of the COM hold an important position of trust and responsibility in the Presbytery, a position that carries with it a significant degree of power. Members of the COM must be mindful of both their actual power and their perceived power and strive to be above reproach in their dealing with confidential matters.

**COM AND THE PRESBYTERY**
The Committee on Ministry’s responsibility to provide for healthy ministry means that members focus on building relationships of mutual trust and care within the committee, with congregations and with ministry professionals. Those relationships become the foundation on which all the other work of the committee is built. The Committee members rely on each other as colleagues and partners in ministry. Their relationships with one another are characterized by the same mutual trust and care that is the goal of their work with congregations and church professionals. The Committee on Ministry will work closely with a number of other people and committees in the Presbytery and in the larger church. Those relationships include:

- The Executive/General Presbytery staff to coordinate the work of the COM and respond to emerging needs
- The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery who can advise and assist the committee
- The Moderator of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, especially in matters related to the ordination of candidates for ministry
- The Committee on Representation (Nominating) of the Presbytery in finding new members for COM
- All committees of the Presbytery as they relate to congregations
- Committees on Ministry and Committees on Preparation for Ministry in other Presbyteries, especially in accepting or dismissing clergy and candidates
- Synod and General Assembly staff who relate to Committees on Ministry and provide resources and support for COM

**COM MEMBER EXPECTATIONS**

**Meetings:** Attendance at each COM meeting (one per month) is expected to be a priority, and no more than ¼ of the meetings should be missed. Please notify the Moderator in advance if you will not be able to attend.

An agenda and materials to be considered by the committee will be sent to members in advance of each meeting. In addition to COM business matters, meetings will include shared worship and prayer, and time for sharing of personal/church concerns; educational and review items may also be part of the agenda. COM business is always strictly confidential. Meetings will be adjourned by docketed time unless the COM votes to extend the meeting. Minutes will be mailed out as soon as possible following each meeting.

**Liaison Role:** The Liaison should plan on meeting individually with the Pastor, Clerk of Session and Session for each assigned church at least once per year, with frequent communication at other times during the year. If a church is in transition and documents are due to be sent to the COM, interactions will be considerably more frequent. Liaisons should also try to attend worship with each congregation at least once annually.

**Documents:** Documents and material to be considered by the committee should be completed and approved by the Session prior to submission to COM. Such finalized documents and material should be
sent by the COM Liaison to the COM Moderator prior to the meeting at which it will be considered. Examples include:

- Review of Stated Supply
- Terms of Call or Contracts
- Committee Report/Recommendations
- Report of Exit Interview and signature on the Covenant of Closure
- Revised Yoked Agreements
- Installation Arrangements Request
- Review of Validated Ministries
- MIFs/PIFs

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS

The COM Liaison is responsible for completing an annual review of the Session minutes and congregational records of the calendar year prior. This will be conducted at any time the Clerk of Session for that congregation indicates the records are ready for review. The review includes a full assessment of minutes and records for compliance against the checklist (found in the COM Cabinet on the Presbytery of Cincinnati website), evidence of insurance, sexual misconduct policies, and child protection policies. The COM Liaison then signs the Session minute records, the checklist and informs the Moderator or Vice Moderator of COM of completion, date, and status. The Vice Moderator of COM will maintain a list of completion for all congregations in the Presbytery. The annual reviews must be completed prior to October 15 of the year following the year of the records review. The list is then sent to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

COM RESOURCES

- The Bible
- The Book of Order - (The Annotated Edition may be especially helpful for the COM Moderator)
- COM documents on the Presbytery of Cincinnati website
- On Calling a Pastor: a Manual for Churches Seeking Pastors PDS#72214-05-004
- On Seeking a Call: A Manual for Church Professionals Considering New Ministries (Download Only.) www.PC(USA).org/clc/resources
- Resources from the PC(USA) website, especially those for the use of the COM – www.PC(USA).org/ministers
- Church Leadership Connection website – www.PC(USA).org/clc
- Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees www.PC(USA).org/clc “Resources”

THE CALL PROCESS AND ORIENTATION OF THE PNC

In the PC(USA) call process, the congregation gives authority to search for a Pastor to a Pastor nominating committee (PNC). The PNC, representative of the whole congregation and elected by the congregation, has the responsibility for nominating a Pastor to the congregation for election.

Documents to aid the COM Liaison in this process can be found in the COM Cabinet on the Presbytery of Cincinnati website. The General Presbyter, Moderator and other COM leadership will act as resources during the process.

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The COM has a responsibility to work with the PNC and to advise them on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call. The Presbytery is authorized by the Book of Order to be one of the decision-making partners in all Pastoral calls. The COM has a responsibility to work with a Session to determine when and in what manner the election of a PNC will take place and to give a congregation permission to elect a PNC. Considerations include:

- the congregation's ability to meet pastoral terms of call responsibilities,
- creation of a job description
- whether a congregational mission study is necessary before calling a Pastor,
- the type of Pastoral relationship a congregation will be seeking,
- the length of time the call process may take, and
- whether there will be an intentional interim time with an interim Pastor in place.

Any mission study and the job description must be approved by Session, then by COM, before a PNC can be elected. Once the PNC is elected, Orientation of the PNC must occur before the PNC initiates work. The COM Liaison and other members of Presbytery provide Orientation by meeting with the PNC to ensure a thorough understanding of the process and requirements for the determination of a candidate call.

### Election of a PNC

After receiving authorization from COM, the Session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a Pastor nominating committee (PNC) that shall be representative of the whole congregation. The committee's duty shall be to create the Ministry Information Form, screen and interview candidates, and eventually nominate a Pastor for election by the congregation.

### Call Process Between PNC, Candidate and Presbytery

The process outlined in the Book of Order for calling an installed Pastor, co-Pastor, or associate Pastor is rather brief and straightforward:

- The Presbytery, providing guidance to the congregation in the call process, grants permission for a congregation to fill a Pastoral vacancy.
- With COM approval, the congregation elects a PNC whose responsibility is to nominate a Pastor for election by the congregation.
- The COM and Presbytery orient the work of the PNC.
- The PNC will create the Ministry Information Form (MIF), which is approved by Session and then by COM before it is released. At that point the PNC may begin review of candidates.
- The PNC shall receive and consider the COM’s counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call.
- When the PNC is ready to present the nominee to the COM, the COM Liaison will arrange for a fitness interview with COM members.

### Entrance Interview

The Committee on Ministry seeks to discern the merits, availability, and suitability of any candidate or Minister whose name is contemplated for nomination to the congregation and whether the candidate or Minister will be collegial in "serving in the councils of the church". The COM Liaison and General Presbyter, as well as selected other COM members, will work with the PNC and congregation to arrange for the entrance/fitness interview, and reports to the COM and stated clerk. No fewer than two COM members conduct the interview, which shall take place before the PNC or APNC notifies the session that it is ready to report to the congregation. If the candidate preaches in a "neutral pulpit," that visit provides an excellent opportunity for the entrance interview. It is recommended that those conducting the
entrance interview contact the COM Liaison to the PNC or APNC regarding the candidate's merits, availability, and suitability.

Per the Book of Order, COM is required to "examine each Minister or candidate who seeks membership in [the Presbytery] on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church". Some COMs address this constitutional obligation by discussing the constitutional questions with the candidate. Suggested elements are below:

1. Whether they have any departures from the Constitution to declare
2. If you receive a PIF that does not contain the sexual misconduct sign-off section or Stated Clerk's attestation, ask the candidate for a complete PIF or do not consider them further.
3. A COM interview of a prospective Pastor should include:
   - Share with us how your journey in faith has led you to explore this call.
   - What specific challenges and opportunities do you see for this congregation and what gifts do you have to deal with those challenges and opportunities?
   - Describe your previous participation in the ministries of Presbytery. How would you prefer to fulfill your promise to be active in government and discipline, serving in the "councils of the church" in the Presbytery of Cincinnati?
   - Discuss the expectations of both the congregation and the Pastor regarding the Pastor's spouse and/or significant other and/or family.

It is important that COM has a copy of the MIF and PIF to ask specific questions that relate to what the church is looking for and the skills of the Pastor. It is also important to have information from the exit interview of the previous Pastor and questions as to how the new Pastor might handle a problem (if such exist). The more you know about a congregation, particularly in the areas of worship, mission and the community, the easier it is to ask questions that will benefit the new Pastor and the church. For example, the COM entrance interview might cover such things as an example of a conflict the prospective Pastor has experienced in the recent past and how she or he helped to resolve it.

Final Call Process

- With the approval of COM, the PNC may then present the final candidate to the congregation. The PNC will notify the Session, which shall call a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing the Pastor.
- The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any Presbytery minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the benefits plan of the PC(USA), including both pension and medical coverage.
- The Presbytery completes the call process by organizing and conducting a service of installation. Installation is an act of the Presbytery establishing the Pastoral relationship. A service of installation occurs in the context of worship. The order for that service of worship in the Directory for Worship shall be followed.

Equal Opportunity Calls

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The PC(USA) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in the Constitution.

21 March 2019
• The PC(USA) is committed to equal opportunity for service. This commitment is not based on secular law but on the higher standards of our constitution.

• In completing a Ministry Information Form (MIF) to search for a Pastor, the Pastor nominating committee (PNC) of a congregation will be asked to affirm their commitment to undertake the search for a Pastor in manner consistent with the standards of our constitution.

• The Presbytery, which shall determine the process for calling a Pastor within the Presbytery, may wish to consider how this commitment to equal opportunity for service will be carried out in the Pastoral search process. The COM will also act in an advisory capacity.

References and Background Checks

One of the ways that a Presbytery, PNC, or search committee gains information to assist in discerning whether an individual should be recommended for Presbytery membership or called to a particular position is through reference and background checks. Reference checks involve contacting those with first-hand knowledge and experience of an individual in order to learn more about that individual. Questions asked of references are intended to elicit reliable information, not rumors or impressions.

Primary references are persons, often listed on an individual’s personal information form (PIF) or resume, who can speak to an individual’s abilities and character. Primary references can also be provided by the individual under consideration when requested by the presbytery, PNC, or search committee. When provided by the person under consideration, no permission from the individual is necessary before contacting these references.

Secondary references are persons who are not listed by the individual but may be suggested by others for contact because of additional knowledge they may have about the individual. Secondary references should only be contacted when the individual has given permission to do so. Members of a Pastor’s present congregation should never be contacted without her or his written permission.

Stated clerks, executive/general/regional presbyters, and certain Presbytery committee or commission moderators routinely do reference checks with their counterparts in the Presbytery where an individual is or has been a member or candidate. No authorization is needed from an individual for these Presbytery to Presbytery reference checks to take place.

Most Presbyterians are familiar with secular employment practices where it is illegal to ask certain questions of a prospective employee. Because the ministries of the Church belong to the Church the rules are different for Presbyteries, PNCs, and search committees considering individuals for church employment. Neither civil nor church law mandate prohibited questions. However, as Paul wrote, while all things are possible, not all things are wise. Questions posed to references should focus on ministry effectiveness and not be unnecessarily intrusive.

PNCs may wish to compile a list of suggested questions that would be appropriate to ask each reference to be contacted. These questions could be supplemented with questions related to the particular position to be filled and/or with questions that arise from the reading of an individual’s PIF or resume or feedback from other references.

Background checks are additional assessments of a candidate’s character and fitness for employment. If this position will involve work with children, a state may require a background check on the person (check appropriate state law requirements). The Presbytery of Cincinnati requires background checks of candidates, incoming Ministers, and Ruling Elders commissioned to particular Pastoral service.
General Presbyter will authorize, working with the PNC, performance of background checks. Congregations often do background checks of all persons working with children.

**Terms of Call**
The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the Presbytery in effect when the call is made. The Session shall review annually the Minister’s terms of call and shall propose for congregational action such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery’s minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the benefits plan of the PC(USA), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.

As the search for a new Pastor begins and at the time of the annual review of a Pastor’s terms of call, Sessions often seek guidance from COM and Presbytery in helping to determine the terms of call. The phrase “terms of call” usually refers to more than salary, housing and participation in the Board of Pensions. Terms of call also includes additional items that a Presbytery has identified as part of the minimum terms, potentially including deferred compensation, dental insurance, SECA supplement, professional expenses including study leave, vacation and study time away, and sabbatical leave.

When a congregation begins the process of seeking a new Pastor, an understanding of the possible terms of call needs to be reached by the Session. The salary range of the effective salary that will be used to seek a new Pastor will be entered on the congregation’s Ministry Information Form (MIF). While a salary range will be necessary to search for a Pastor, once a call is extended the specific terms of call will be negotiated between the Pastor and the PNC, usually within the parameters of the salary range listed on the MIF, including any Presbytery required terms of call. The Pastor, PNC and Presbytery will all need to agree upon the terms of call.

When a congregation votes to extend a call to a new Pastor, the congregation will be asked to vote on the agreed upon terms of call for the new Pastor. Presbytery must also approve the call and the terms of call. Once a Pastor is in place, Session has a responsibility to annually review the Minister’s terms of call and to propose any changes to the congregation for their approval. The expectation is that any changes to the terms of call will continue to meet the Presbytery’s minimum requirements. Any changes to the terms of call must be reported to the COM and Presbytery for approval since “no Pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the Presbytery.”

**THE TRANSITION PROCESS**
During a time of Pastoral change in the life of the congregation, the Presbytery has the responsibility to oversee this transition by serving as Pastor, counselor, and advisor to Ministers and congregations. The COM Liaison plays a key role in ensuring the congregation needs are met by liaising between Session, COM and Presbytery. There are a number of issues the Liaison may wish to address and plan for to assist in a smooth transition for congregations and Ministers, including a discussion on ethics for departing Pastors, managing exit interviews with both the departing Pastor and the Session, arranging with COM for temporary Pastoral leadership, including pulpit supply and Session moderator, preparation of the MIF with Session and evaluation of incoming PIFs from candidates, working with Session to establish critical interview questions and participating as requested in the interview process, and working with COM to arrange the final call of the next installed Pastor.
FIRST CALL PASTORS
When a congregation is considering a first call candidate, special attention is needed to see that important information is shared between Presbyteries about the individual’s preparation for ministry, gifts for ministry, and needs for development. The Presbytery of call shall record the ordination and installation, along with written affirmation of the new Minister to the obligations undertaken in the ordination questions, and enroll the Minister as a member of the Presbytery. The stated clerk of the Presbytery shall report these actions to the General Assembly, the Presbytery of care, and to the congregation of which the candidate was formerly a member.

First call Pastors (or first ordination to a validated ministry) will have a Pastor mentor assigned to walk alongside the new Pastor for at least the first year. The mentor will be assigned through COM. Periodic reports back to COM as part of the Liaison’s role will be expected. The role of the COM Liaison to such Pastors and Sessions is the same as for a fully-called Pastor.

TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP (INTERIM OR BRIDGE)
Like all Pastors, Interim/Transitional Pastors offer to the congregations they serve:

- Worship leadership and preaching
- Pastoral care
- Work with the session to provide for the life and ministry of the congregation
- Administrative work including supervision of other staff persons
- Staff support for programs and committees of the congregation

In addition, an Interim/Transitional Pastor leads a congregation during the transition time after an installed Pastor has departed, helping the congregation prepare to welcome the leadership of a new installed Pastor. Interim/Transitional Pastors understand the dynamics of a congregation in transition, including feelings of grief, loss, and, sometimes, relief or anger.

Interim/Transitional Pastors will help the session provide for continuity of essential programs, and may assist the session in assessing needs for changes in programs and ministries of the congregation.

Some Interim/Transitional Pastors have special skills and experience that can help a congregation recover from a time of conflict or after the disclosure of clergy sexual misconduct or other trauma.

Ordinarily, an Interim/Transitional Pastor is not eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor, or co-Pastor, or associate Pastor of the congregation. The Interim/Transitional Pastor may, if the session and the Committee on Ministry approve, work with the session in a mission study or assist the Pastor Nominating Committee in gathering data for the writing of the Ministry Information Form. With those possible exceptions, the Interim/Transitional Pastor may not be involved in the work and discernment of the PNC.

A good Interim/Transitional Pastor will “hit the ground running,” beginning his/her time with the congregation with intensity and energy, and will leave with intentionality, engaging in a “good goodbye” with the congregation and its staff. A good Interim/Transitional Pastor is fully present with the congregation from the beginning, and really leaves when she/he leaves.

SMALL CHURCHES AND LEADERSHIP
Smaller churches often have part-time stated supply Pastors or CREs to fill their unique needs. In other cases, two smaller churches may be served by a single Pastor in a formal yoked arrangement; in this
case each individual congregation maintains its own documents, policies, Sessions and Deacons, and other elements. All such arrangements are created through the COM, even in arrangements that do not require a call but are served through a contract.

**PASTOR INSTALLED FOR A DESIGNATED TERM**

Congregations go through life-cycles and critical events, thus, there may be times when a Pastor installed for a designated term is best able to provide the kind of leadership needed for that period. This generally occurs when a congregation is engaged in transformation and is redirecting its ministry or wishes to test a new direction or new model of leadership; when a congregation has been wounded by conflict or by a “revolving door” in the Pastor’s office through which a number of Pastors have come and gone in a relatively few years; when congregations are considering engaging in shared ministry; when a congregation needs a different Pastoral leadership style.

Presbytery, with the COM, and congregations may work together to call and install a Pastor for a designated term. The specific process by which that occurs and the length of the term is determined on a case-by-case basis. Pastors called to a designated term are Ministers. The role of the COM Liaison to such Pastors and Sessions is the same as for a fully-called Pastor.

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS**

The particular role of Commissioned Ruling Elder is an extension of the office of Ruling Elder, which is an ordained office of the church. The role was created in response to the mission needs of Presbyteries which did not have enough Ministers to adequately serve their churches. Originally designated as “Commissioned Lay Preacher”, the role was expanded to give Presbyteries the option for authorizing a CRE to administer sacraments and provide other pastoral functions when commissioned to particular pastoral service by the COM and Presbytery.

The potential CRE must comply with all elements of the Presbytery CRE Policy, including complete 8 courses of seminary education at an approved institution and be examined on personal faith, motives, and areas of instruction. Once approved, the CRE is commissioned in a service of worship during which they respond to constitutional questions. The role of CRE is limited in time and place of service, such that sacraments may be administered only in that commission and during that time; the term is reviewed annually, is generally up to 3 years and may be renewed by the congregation and COM. The CRE must work under the supervision and mentoring of a Minister. In commissioning Ruling Elders to particular pastoral service, the Presbytery may authorize them to serve in validated ministries, moderate Session, administer the sacraments in that congregation, and officiate at marriages if permitted by law.

This authorization applies only with the Presbytery of their congregational membership and for the particular service to which they are commissioned. While all Presbyterians may offer themselves for service to the church, there is no reciprocity for commissioning to pastoral service, so Ruling Elders are not eligible for pastoral positions in Presbyteries other than their own. Should they relocate and move their church membership, they should consult with their Pastor and new Presbytery about mission needs for CREs.

The CRE appointed to a congregation shall be appointed a pastoral mentor by the COM. The role of the COM Liaison to CREs and Sessions is the same as for a fully-called Pastor.
TENTMAKING OR BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTRY
Many Ministers serve as Pastors of congregations and derive income from other employment. The Apostle Paul made tents for a living so that he would not have to burden the small fellowships of believers during the first century AD. From Saint Paul’s example, we have adopted the term “tentmaking” to describe this ministry model. Others refer to this as “bi-vocational ministry.”

Tentmaking Pastors serve as Pastors and manage their own businesses, teach school, coach basketball, serve as emergency medical technicians, farmers, photographers, Starbucks baristas, bus drivers, doctors, lawyers, computer programmers, spiritual directors, realtors, and more. While usually the secular position is for remuneration, there are a number of instances in which the secular position is a vocation for which a person does not receive monetary compensation. For example, both women and men have chosen to do child raising and home-making as their tentmaking vocation while serving part-time as Pastor of a congregation.

Tentmaking can be a very healthy and rewarding ministry for both Pastor and congregation. Studies done by the PC(USA) and other groups have shown high levels of satisfaction among tentmaking Ministers and the congregations they serve. It is important to remember that during the formation of the Christian Church in the Roman Empire, tentmaking was the norm rather than the exception.

Bi-vocational Pastors have natural daily contact with persons who are unchurched and who would be hesitant to come to a church, but who are spiritually hungry. Many new worshiping communities are led by tentmaking Pastors. Tentmakers find it just as easy to relate to spiritual seekers over the Starbucks counter or riding in an ambulance. Congregations served by tentmakers spend more of their resources of money and energy outside of themselves. Ministry is truly shared as Ruling Elders share responsibility for church administration and member care. While Pastors are concerned about being able to support a family adequately on a typical Pastor’s salary, many tentmaking Pastors have a larger total income than those who serve as full time Pastors.

DISSOLVING RELATIONSHIPS AND EXIT INTERVIEWS
The dissolution of an installed pastoral relationship may be initiated in one of three ways.

- At the request of the Pastor, co-Pastor or associate Pastor, usually when they have accepted another call for service or wish to retire. A Minister makes his or her request for dissolution to Presbytery and informs the Session so that Session may call a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of considering the Minister’s request for dissolution of the pastoral relationship. This request may also come in through the COM Liaison.
- At the request of the congregation, primarily when there exist difficulties between the congregation and the Minister. The Minister may or may not agree with the request of the congregation. At the request of the congregation, the Session shall call the meeting and request the Presbytery to appoint a moderator for the meeting.
- By Presbytery action, if the Presbytery feels it necessary, it may look into reported difficulties within a congregation. In the course of such an inquiry and after consultation with the Minister, the Session, and the congregation, the Presbytery may find it necessary to begin dissolution of the Pastoral relationship.

As soon as a request for dissolution of an installed pastoral relationship comes to the attention of the Presbytery, Presbytery should be prepared to assist the Pastor and congregation through the process of pastoral transitions according to the Book of Order and Presbytery policies and procedures.
Exit interviews are routinely conducted and are a helpful tool for the Presbytery to consider as a regular step in the departure of a Pastor. This is true whether the person leaving the congregation is a temporary Pastor who has served the church for a few months or an installed Pastor who is leaving after a number of years. Exit interviews can be an opportunity to reflect on the ministry the Pastor and congregation had together, its strengths and weaknesses, and be one step in the process of closure in the relationship between congregation and Pastor. Information gathered through an exit interview may also be helpful in informing the congregation’s future direction for ministry, especially as they call their next Pastor.

The Exit Interview is conducted by the COM Liaison with both the departing Pastor and the Session, and is generally accompanied by another COM member. The exit interview with the departing Pastor and the Session should be conducted soon after the Pastor announces his or her departure. Questions to be asked and topics to be covered may include:

- Elements that were good about the ministry
- Barriers to effective ministry (might be in the congregation, community, or with the Pastor).
- The relationship between the Pastor, the Session and the congregation, including any difficulties or conflict
- Advice the Pastor might want to give to the next Pastor
- Review with the Pastor of the Presbytery’s expectations regarding appropriate and inappropriate contact between the Pastor and congregation after the Pastor’s departure. This is especially important if the Pastor is staying in town or moving to a nearby location, and includes requesting signature on the Covenant of Closure

ETHICS FOR DEPARTING PASTORS
The bonds of care and love which have been forged between Pastor and congregation over the span of ministry together often leads to the desire to remain connected even after the pastoral relationship ends. While it is understandable when church members want a former Pastor “who knows us” to, for example, baptize a child, the bonds of care and love between the church members and the current Pastor in place cannot be forged and strengthened if a former Pastor steps in to provides pastoral service. When a Pastor is leaving a particular congregation or ministry setting where he or she has served in a pastoral role, Presbytery will want to ensure that expectations of departing Pastors are communicated clearly to both the departing Pastor and the congregation. The primary expectation is that when the pastoral relationship ends, so does the Pastor’s participation in any future pastoral service to members of the congregation, or any influence upon the direction for that congregation. COM has considered the question at length and approved the policy of asking the departing Pastor (or General Presbyter) to sign a Covenant of Closure, which has been approved by Presbytery. The COM can provide this document when needed.

- Attendance at any church events, including weddings, baptisms, and funerals.
- Continuation of future conversations about the church and congregation.
- Providing any leadership for congregational worship, education or fellowship events.
- How the Pastor is to respond to requests from church members, so as to not to pass the responsibility for the decision on to the Presbytery and/or the moderator of Session. While the Book of Order leaves open the possibility of providing future pastoral services at “the invitation of the moderator of Session,” the Presbytery may wish to engage the departing Pastor in conversation about how to handle such invitations.

TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS
Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the Presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a Pastor, or while the Pastor is unable to perform her or
his duties, Session, with Presbytery approval, may request the services of a Minister (PC(USA) or other), PC(USA) candidate, or Ruling Elder to fill a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call is issued and no formal installation takes place. The titles of this position are determined by Presbytery, and the term is usually only may be up to 12 months, but may be renewed. This individual is not ordinarily eligible for subsequent installation in that congregation.

When the Pastor is unable to function, or when there is no Pastor in position, Presbytery and Session have the opportunity to carefully describe a position which meets their very particular needs. Clearly no two situations are identical or have the same resources or expectations. The COM Liaison can help define the work and title the position in ways that are most appropriate to the setting. A temporary Pastor may be secured by a Session to serve as Pastor, carrying on the ministry of the church, while the search for an installed Pastor goes on. However, there is no requirement that pastoral vacancies must have a temporary pastoral relationship.

Temporary relationships are established by the Presbytery, do not last more than twelve months, and are renewable with Presbytery’s approval. Pastors who have had training to be an interim or transitional Pastor may be available to serve as a temporary Pastor. Often these Pastors have had special training for the unique ministry of serving churches in the midst of pastoral transition. Some have special skills and experience in helping congregations recover from a time of conflict or after the disclosure of clergy misconduct or other trauma. On occasion, the Presbytery may consider contracting with Ministers of other Christian churches to serve as temporary Pastors within the Presbytery. The Presbytery may temporarily enroll a Minister of another Christian church to do so. Temporary Pastors are not eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor of the congregation they are serving.

EXAMINING PASTORAL CANDIDATES
The Presbytery shall examine each Minister or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church. Pastor candidates who are candidates for first call, Ministers transferring from another Presbytery, partner Ministers under “orderly exchange”, Ministers transferring from another denomination, new immigrant Ministers from another denomination, honorably retired Ministers moving into the Presbytery, and individuals who may have laid aside ordination and want to resume active ministry, will all go through this process.

Seminary credentials and transcripts may be required, as is evidence of successful completion of the PC(USA) ordination examinations. COM will be engaged with congregations to ensure all examinations are in place for any called Pastor prior to entrance to the Presbytery.

Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life. The COM is responsible for ordination and/or installation 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. The COM shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.
MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND MINISTERS TRANSFERRING TO PC(USA)

Presbyterians are ecumenical and, as such, are involved with members of other denominations in ministry and mission. Christ’s mission is furthered by such cooperation. In some places there are not enough PC(USA) Ministers to lead PC(USA) congregations, and Ministers of other denominations are available to serve. In other areas, special mission needs are met by Ministers of other denominations. Such relationships offer great possibilities and some pitfalls.

The Presbytery of Cincinnati may allow Ministers of other denominations to serve in its congregations, if the Minister meets certain requirements as set forth by the COM.

- Written request and initial interview with General Presbyter and COM
- Transcripts (including Hebrew, Greek, Exegesis) from an accredited institution
- Ordination Exams
- Background Checks
- Letter from initial denomination confirming candidate is relinquishing rights and privileges there
- Examination of character by COM and full examination by Presbytery.

Pastoral service in PC(USA) congregations is open to ordained Minister equivalents, not “lay Pastors”. Ministers of other denominations may be considered for service by transfer of membership to become PC(USA) Ministers, under “orderly exchange”, if a Minister is a member of acceptable denominations, or is in temporary Pastoral relationships employed by the Session with approval of the Presbytery for a period of twelve months or less (renewable).

The role of the COM Liaison to such Pastors and Sessions is the same as for a fully-called PC(USA) Pastor.

Ministers of other denominations who are interested in becoming a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA) should begin the process of inquiry by consulting with the Presbytery in which they seek to serve to determine whether there is a need for their service and if so, to be guided through meeting the requirements. In order to become a PC(USA) Minister, a Minister of another denomination (including full communion partners) must meet the requirements in the Book of Order including education and ordination exams, and have a call to a PC(USA) ministry. Under certain circumstances, the requirements may be waived by a three-fourths vote of the calling Presbytery.

Recognizing our oneness in Christ, the PC(USA) has entered into agreements with sister denominations as “full communion partners”. Under these agreements, Ministers of one denomination may be invited to serve a ministry of another full communion denomination. This is called “orderly exchange”. This process applies only to Ministers and not to other ordered ministries or to locally authorized pastoral leaders such as CREs. Orderly exchange (provisions for availability) of ordained Ministers is for the sake of participation by the churches in the mission of God, and can be an important sign of our unity in Christ. This particular provision of full communion seeks to allow and encourage the more effective use and deployment of our churches’ ordained leaders in order to enhance our shared ministry mission. It encourages those in our churches who are responsible for the deployment of ordained Ministers to draw on the available Ministers of the other participating churches to meet mission needs.

The role of the COM Liaison to such Pastors and Sessions is the same as for a fully-called PC(USA) Pastor.
CONCLUSION
The Committee on Ministry is a critical and important element of keeping the life and work of the Presbytery, its Pastors, Sessions and congregations, in healthy synchronicity. The Liaison is the primary point of contact and support, providing both direction and encouragement, in the name of the One we serve, to our churches. This is a foundational and relational role, one to be taken on with humility and a sense of honor of having been called. Thank you for serving the Presbytery of Cincinnati!
APPENDIX 1
CALL PROCESS PRIOR TO ELECTING PNC

CHECKLIST FOR SEARCH PROCESS
FOR INSTALLED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS
PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)
Initial Work Prior to Electing PNC

☐ Session appoints a Mission Study Team, which completes a mission study and drafts a written mission study report. The congregation should be included in data and perception collection through a survey or series of conversations. The Mission Study Team should include members from the Deacons, Session and congregation.

☐ Mission Study Team finalizes report.

☐ Session then reviews and approves the mission study report.

☐ Session creates and finalizes a Pastor/associate Pastor job description, reflecting the missional needs identified in the mission study report.

☐ The COM Liaison brings the mission study report and Pastor/associate Pastor job description to COM for approval. If approved by COM, COM will grant session permission to call a special meeting of the congregation for the purpose of nominating and electing a Pastor/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC/APNC).

☐ PNC/APNC is elected by congregation. The Mission Study Team is disbanded.
APPENDIX 2
CALL PROCESS for INSTALLED PASTORS

CHECKLIST FOR SEARCH PROCESS
FOR INSTALLED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS
PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)

☐ Session appoints a mission study team, which completes a mission study and drafts a written mission study report. Session then reviews and approves the mission study report. Once it receives and approves the mission study report, session then creates a Pastor/associate Pastor job description, reflecting the missional needs identified in the mission study report. The COM Liaison brings the mission study report and Pastor/associate Pastor job description to COM for approval. If approved by COM, COM will grant session permission to call a special meeting of the congregation for the purpose of nominating and electing a Pastor/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC/APNC).

☐ PNC/APNC is elected by congregation

☐ The PNC meets with the General Presbyter and COM Liaison for a PNC orientation. Copies of the mission study of the congregation and job description are made available at this first meeting of the PNC. The General Presbyter and COM Liaison review recommendations for a good search process. PNC elects a chairperson and a secretary and schedules next PNC meeting. The chairperson is the primary contact with COM and all candidates, and the primary communicator back to session and PNC. The secretary keeps minutes, documents, and arranges meetings.

☐ The PNC develops a plan for every phase of its search and interview process. This includes:
  ➢ How initial interviews (sorting and screening interviews) will be conducted (usually remotely: Skype, Facetime, etc.)
  ➢ Identifying 5 reference questions to ask of each initial candidate for comparisons
  ➢ Selection of 2-4 candidates for face-to-face interviews
  ➢ Hospitality plans during candidate (spouse) visits
  ➢ Communication plan established, led by PNC chairperson

☐ The PNC completes the Ministry Information Form (MIF) using information from the mission study and job description. The completed MIF is reviewed and approved COM. Constructive feedback may be offered during this review by COM. Once COM approves the MIF, COM will then authorize the PNC/APNC to place the MIF online in the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) of the PC(USA).
☐ The chair of the PNC/APNC and the clerk of Session contact the clerk of the COM for User IDs and passwords for the MIF to be placed online through the CLC.

☐ The PNC should have a plan for every phase of its interview process, i.e., phone or Skype, face-to-face questions and hospitality plan, guide on how to listen to a sermon, and pertinent questions to be asked of all references. This is established and agreed to before any kind of matching or interviewing begins with Pastors.

☐ The chair of the PNC requests matching for the congregation’s MIF to Ministers’ Personal Information Forms (PIF). The chair will download PIFs received electronically and give hard copies to members of the PNC/APNC.

☐ The PNC develops a process to screen PIFs, ensuring that every elected member of the PNC has an opportunity to review every PIF.
   ➢ EEO requirements must be carefully observed.
   ➢ Minister in whom you are interested are informed ASAP.
   ➢ With self-referrals, Ministers are informed whether or not the PNC/APNC is interested in further conversation; if a self-referral PIF does not have a date/time attestation, the candidate should not be (or be very carefully) considered.
   ➢ Keep in close contact with Pastors in whom you are interested.
   ➢ Also keep track of details of the PIFs reviewed, as it will be important to the discussion you have with COM on the final candidate.

☐ The PNC checks references for Ministers in whom it is interested. Reference checking is primarily the responsibility of the PNC/APNC. For candidates of high interest, the PNC/APNC may wish to complete second and third level referencing, noting that this requires the permission of the candidate in writing.

☐ The PNC interviews potential candidates. Interviews may include telephone interviews, Skype or FaceTime, requests for video recordings of sermons or online links to sermons, and visiting churches (the latter only with the permission of the candidate), and finally face-to-face interviews. CONFIDENTIALITY MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCESS.

☐ The PNC may wish to have a few “final” potential candidates preach in a neutral pulpit in a church within the bounds of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, or in a neighboring Presbytery. For assistance in scheduling a neutral pulpit, contact the General Presbyter. Do not show up at their home church without permission; if you do go, only send a few of the PNC so you don’t stand out. If the candidate is laboring within the bounds of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, complete confidentiality must be maintained. No one, not even members of Session, can know the identity of the candidate until the time he or she is presented to the congregation for election.
☐ It is imperative that the PNC send a copy of the mission study to potential candidates prior to any face-to-face interviews with the PNC (and COM). The mission study provides the potential candidate with important information that the potential candidate will need when being interviewed by the PNC and COM.

☐ When the PNC is serious enough to have a face-to-face interview with a small pool of potential candidates (2-4), the PNC/APNC chair contacts the General Presbyter and lets him/her know that PNC/APNC would like to do a Presbytery-to-Presbytery check.

☐ When the PNC is serious enough to have a face-to-face interview with a small pool of potential candidates (2-4), the PNC/APNC chair also contacts the COM Liaison to schedule an examination for membership/fitness with the COM and the candidate (required). The COM Liaison will request a copy of the potential candidate’s PIF to circulate among members of COM in preparation for the interview. The COM will request that representatives of the PNC/APNC, including its chair, be present for the face-to-face interview with the candidate.

☐ The PNC chooses a candidate. The PNC/APNC informs the COM Liaison. The COM Liaison will provide the PNC with the necessary four copies of the Pastoral Terms of Call Form (including Board of Pensions information) to negotiate the terms of call.

☐ The COM Liaison informs the General Presbyter of the need for a background check for the candidate. The General Presbyter provides the information for permission to do a background check, and it is the responsibility of the chair of the PNC/APNC to ensure the candidate completes this process. The General Presbyter will send the candidate instructions for this process.

*Nota bene: the Presbytery-to-Presbytery background check, COM examination for membership/fitness, and the release form for permission to do a background check (in addition to the actual background check) MUST BE COMPLETED prior to any announcement or final selection of a candidate for the call, or any of the following steps.*

☐ The PNC negotiates the terms of call and communicates these to the COM through the Liaison. The COM must concur with the terms of call (TOC) created by the PNC/APNC. All TOC must meet the current presbytery minimum standards for TOC, unless agreed upon by COM.

☐ With COM’s permission, the PNC/APNC informs Session of its candidate and the terms of call. The PNC/APNC also requests that Session call a special meeting of the congregation for the purpose of nominating and electing the candidate as Pastor/associate Pastor. On this same Sunday, the candidate will preach in worship prior to the congregational meeting. The PNC/APNC contacts the COM so that it might appoint a moderator for this special meeting of the congregation. It is strongly
encouraged that the PNC/APNC schedules a reception to introduce the candidate and his/her family to the congregation, preferably prior to the congregational meeting.

☐ **Congregational voting must take place by secret written ballot.** Once the ballots are tallied, the ballots and tallied are filed in the church (personnel files for those called to pastoral service).

☐ **If the candidate is elected, the PNC/APNC makes sure that the four (4) Pastoral Terms of Call forms are properly signed (along with necessary forms related to the Board of Pensions).** Copies of the Pastoral call forms are delivered to the moderator of the COM and the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. If the COM Liaison is unable to be present, the PNC/APNC chair makes a written report to the COM Liaison that the call has been approved by the congregation.

☐ **The PNC destroys all confidential information,** such as PIFs of all Ministers considered. Having completed its work, the PNC/APNC is dissolved by the congregation (at the same time of the congregational meeting at which the Pastor is elected), with the thanks of the congregation.

☐ **The Pastor/associate Pastor, session, and the presbytery schedule a service of installation.** The Pastor/associate Pastor contacts the moderator of the Presbytery to begin the process of scheduling a service of installation, and the members of the Administrative Commission to install are forwarded by the Pastor/associate Pastor to the COM Liaison. On behalf of the presbytery, the COM approves the Administrative Commission to install the new Pastor/associate Pastor. An outline and requirements for this service of worship can be provided by the COM Liaison or Stated Clerk, or it can be found on the presbytery website.

☐ **A congregational support system is established for the Pastor/associate Pastor.** This may be a transition team or group appointed by session or the PNC/APNC.

☐ **The Pastor/associate Pastor is introduced** and welcomed at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery, after they have begun service in the Presbytery of Cincinnati.
APPENDIX 3
COVENANT OF CLOSURE

The Rev. _______________________________, the ________________________________ Presbyterian Church, and the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, having discussed the intent and requirements of the Presbytery’s “Ethics Regarding Former Ministers” enter into the following covenant:

1. I, the Rev. ________________________________ agree:
   - not to become involved in any leadership or advisory role (public or private) in the ____________________________ Presbyterian Church congregation;
   - not to intervene, support, or give advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement or dispute;
   - 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 both the Pastor and the Session (or the Session if the church is without a Pastor);
   - to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the congregation;
   - to consult with the Moderator of Session prior to visiting the congregation, attending worship or attending a special event;
   - to refrain from giving opinions or directions regarding church business;
   - to explain and affirm the above principles to the congregation in writing (by letter or newsletter) and/or the pulpit before departing.

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

2. The Session of ________________________________ Presbyterian Church agrees:
   - to respect the terms of the Covenant agreed upon above;
   - to interpret the terms of the Covenant to the congregation and to incorporate this agreement in the minutes of the congregational meeting when the Pastoral relationship is dissolved;
   - to incorporate this agreement in the Session Minutes.

____________________________________Date

Signature, Pastor
Signature, Clerk of Session
Signature, COM Representative
APPENDIX 4
COM LIAISON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Liaison should:
- Visit regularly and consult with each assigned Minister in the Presbytery
  - Meetings, coffees, cards and emails are all acceptable but at least one face-to-face per year
  - Report back to COM the type of work in which each Minister of the Presbytery is engaged
  - Require an annual report of each Minister performing work which is not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery or a higher governing body of the church
- Visit with each assigned Session of the Presbytery by the COM ministry Liaison at least twice per year
- When possible, try to worship with each assigned congregation at least annually
- Share appropriate information back faithfully and participate in the monthly COM meeting
- Promote the peace and harmony of the churches and their relationship to the Presbytery
- Counsel with assigned churches undergoing a Pastoral call: with the church’s Session, Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) and COM leadership
- When churches are in transition with regards to Ministers:
  - Counsel with Sessions regarding their Pastor Nominating Committees on calls for permanent installed Pastoral relations
  - Counsel with Sessions regarding the advisability of calling a designated Pastor
  - Conduct and file Exit Interviews when aPastoral relationship is dissolved, or other such documentation as required (including Covenant of Closure)
  - Counsel with Sessions regarding Temporary Pastoral Relationships, including support for discerning future needs
    - Provide advice on writing an MIF
    - Provide access to information on available Pastors, CREs, and qualified lay persons trained and commissioned by Presbytery for short-term pulpit supply
- Promote peace, harmony, and productive working relationships between Ministers, Sessions and Presbytery
- Oversee the assessment of Session records for each church annually – Minutes, Rolls and Records, Proof of Insurance, Sexual Misconduct and Child Protection Policies
APPENDIX 5
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms have been used in the context of the work of Presbytery committees and commission working as Pastor, counselor and advisory to Ministers and congregations as well as those dealing with preparation for ministry. Where references are in italics, there is no direct reference but an allusion may be inferred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/Initials</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA/EOE or EEO</td>
<td>Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer or Equal Employment Opportunity. The congregation and each council must follow its policy re AA/EOE during any search process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Pastor</td>
<td>A member of the pastoral staff of a congregation, elected by the congregation and called with the approval of Presbytery. This is one of the installed Pastoral relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-large Member</td>
<td>See “Member-at-large”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-vocational Pastor</td>
<td>A Minister who maintains a job outside of part-time pastoral ministry usually to enable the person to serve a congregation that could not provide full time compensation or work. Also called a tentmaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Pensions</td>
<td>The entity of the denomination which administers the benefits plan (pensions and health insurance) for Pastors and other church employees whose employers enroll them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of Confessions</td>
<td>The part of the constitution which includes the historic creeds and confessions adopted by the denomination as containing the essential tenets of the Reformed tradition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of Order</td>
<td>The part of the constitution which includes The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries</td>
<td>Geographically, the area encompassed by a Presbytery and Presbyteries included in a synod. Interpersonally, the limits of personal and professional space. Often referred to in relation to Pastor-parishioner and intra-staff relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call</td>
<td>Theologically, the understanding that God has chosen one to engage in ministry as a baptized member and/or in ordered ministry. Also the term applied to the covenant between a congregation and Pastor wherein a Minister responds to the “call” of the congregation to serve as Pastor. This term also applies to the specifics of the contract or covenant between the Pastor and congregation including compensation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidacy</td>
<td>The period of preparation for ministry as a Minister when one is enrolled as a candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>The status in the preparation for ministry process following inquirer focused on support, guidance, and evaluation of the candidate’s fitness and readiness for ministry as a Minister. Movement to candidacy requires approval of the Session and Presbytery of care. “Candidate” also is used to refer to the persons being considered during the search to fill a particular position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidating</td>
<td>Term frequently applied to the final step preceding nomination for election to the Pastorate in a congregation. Ordinarily refers to the day on which the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
candidate for the position preaches to the congregation and is presented to the congregational meeting.

<p>| Certification | The process of authorizing a person as qualified for a particular form of service or ready for movement within a process. For example, the certification of Christian Educators. Other organizations certify persons serving in some specialized ministries (Administrative Personnel Association, Presbyterian Association of Musicians [PAM], Presbyterian Church Business Administrators Association, etc.) A Presbytery can certify a Ruling Elder prepared to be commissioned to Pastoral service. |
| Certified Ready for Examination for Ordination | The official action taken by a Presbytery that allows a candidate, who has evidenced readiness to begin ordered ministry, to begin seeking a call as a Minister. |
| Certified Christian Educator | A person serving in educational ministry who has completed the educational and examination requirements specified by the Educator Certification Council for the title Certified Christian Educator. |
| Chaplain | A form of specialized ministry usually performed within an institutional setting (hospital, school, military, etc.). |
| Church Information Form | The resume prepared by a congregation seeking a Pastor or other church worker. Abbreviated “CIF.” See also MIF |
| Church Leadership Connection | The internet-based matching and referral system of the PC(USA). Abbreviated “CLC.” (See <a href="http://www.PC(USA).org/clc">www.PC(USA).org/clc</a> ) |
| CIF | Church Information Form. |
| CLC | Church Leadership Connection. |
| Clerk of Session | The Ruling Elder elected to serve as secretary and keeper of records and rolls for a Session. |
| Clinical Pastoral Education | An education program to learn Pastoral care in an institutional chaplaincy setting. Often candidates engage in CPE to further discern their vocation and gifts for ministry. |
| CLP | Commissioned Lay Pastor. Term is no longer used in the Book of Order. See “Commissioned Ruling Elder”. |
| COGA | Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. |
| Commission | Established by a council, a commission is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council. Presbyteries often establish commissions to install Pastors, ordain Ministers, and to carry out other administrative functions. A Permanent Judicial Commission is required to prosecute judicial cases brought before the council. |
| Commissioned Lay Pastor | Old term used for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) See “Commissioned Ruling Elder” |
| Committee on the Office of the General Assembly | The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) oversees and supports the ministry of the Office of the General Assembly and partner with OGA in carrying out work assigned by the General Assembly. |
| Cooperative Committee | Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. The committee which prepares the standardized ordination examinations and facilitates their evaluations. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Pastor</td>
<td>A Pastor who is called and installed, along with other Pastor(s), with equal responsibility for Pastoral ministry in a particular church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence, In</td>
<td>The status of formal relationship with and recognition of another denomination and the PC(USA). We are “in correspondence” with the highest council or governing body of a number of denominations. The ordination of Minister members of a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA) may be recognized by the PC(USA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>The generic or collective word for the governing bodies of the PC(USA). Includes Sessions, Presbyteries, synods and General Assembly. Replaces the previous “governing body.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant of Closure</td>
<td>A document signed by a departing Pastor noting intention to remain distant from the congregation to allow the new Pastor to create congregation care relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant Relationship</td>
<td>The relationship established between the Presbytery and inquirers and candidates which defines their mutual responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPE</td>
<td>Clinical Pastoral Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPM</td>
<td>Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Term is no longer used in the Book of Order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRE</td>
<td>Commissioned Ruling Elder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>The ordered ministry of those ordained to the ministry of compassion, witness and service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Pastor</td>
<td>An installed Pastoral position approved by the Presbytery for a designated term. Term is no longer used in the Book of Order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directory for Worship</td>
<td>The part of the Book or Order which provides the guidelines for worship and sacraments within the Reformed tradition as well as the theological foundation for the ministry of the congregation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissolution</td>
<td>The process of concluding relationship. A Pastor’s relationship to a congregation is dissolved when he or she leaves the position. A church is dissolved when it is closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emeritus</td>
<td>An honorary status which may be awarded to someone honorably retired from a particular position by election of the congregation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance Exam</td>
<td>The process a Presbytery uses to determine whether a Minister will be accepted for membership in that Presbytery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Executive Presbyter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exception</td>
<td>When a usual requirement for ordination is waived by a three-fourths vote of the Presbytery or when a candidate is given permission to meet the standard examinations requirement through an alternate means.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Presbyter</td>
<td>A term used for the chief administrative staff person for a Presbytery. (There are many other titles applied to a Presbytery’s administrative staff.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Church</td>
<td>See “Joint Congregational Witness.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Education</td>
<td>The part of the preparation for ministry process in which candidates serve as a student in ministry under the supervision of a Pastor or other staff leader and ordinarily as part of their seminary education. This is sometimes called Supervised Practice of Ministry or Contextual Studies. The placement of students in field positions is normally the responsibility of the seminary but should be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Assessment</strong></td>
<td>The examination of a candidate during the final year of theological education or when all other requirements for preparation are completed to determine the person’s readiness to begin ministry. A successful final assessment results in the Presbytery certifying a candidate “ready for examination for ordination, pending a call.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five Part Form</strong></td>
<td>The form which a Presbytery stated clerk must fill out in order to complete the transfer of a Minister from one Presbytery to another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form of Government</strong></td>
<td>The part of the Book of Order that defines organization and governance of the denomination and the responsibilities and standards to which the whole church holds each council and congregation accountable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formula of Agreement</strong></td>
<td>The agreement between the PC(USA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the United Church of Christ (UCC), and the Reformed Church in America (RCA) which provides for mutual recognition of ordination of clergy. See also “Full Communion”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations of Presbyterian Polity</strong></td>
<td>The part of the Book of Order that provides the theological and historical foundation for the other sections of the Book of Order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Communion</strong></td>
<td>An official relationship between the PC(USA) and those churches recognized by the General Assembly. Full communion includes the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of Ministers, as defined by ecumenical agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GAMC</strong></td>
<td>General Assembly Mission Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Assembly</strong></td>
<td>The council of the whole church, representative of the unity of the synods, Presbyteries, Sessions, and congregations of the PC(USA). It consists of equal numbers of Ruling Elders and Ministers elected by the Presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Assembly Mission Council</strong></td>
<td>The General Assembly Mission Council is the ministry and mission agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Six ministry areas carry out our missional work: Compassion, Peace and Justice; Evangelism and Church Growth; Racial Ethnic and Women’s Ministries/Presbyterian Women; Theology, Worship and Education; Vocation; and World Mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Presbyter</strong></td>
<td>A term used for the chief administrative staff person for a Presbytery. (There are many other titles applied to a Presbytery’s administrative staff.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GP</strong></td>
<td>General Presbyter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head of Staff</strong></td>
<td>The Pastor of a congregation who is the supervisor of other Pastoral staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honorably Retired</strong></td>
<td>The status which may be granted by a Presbytery to a Minister because of age or physical or mental disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HR</strong></td>
<td>Honorably Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inquirer</strong></td>
<td>A person enrolled in the inquiry phase of preparation for ministry. (see Inquiry below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inquiry</strong></td>
<td>The initial phase of preparation for ministry the purpose of which is to provide an opportunity for the church and for those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as Ministers to explore to explore that call together and determine the inquirer’s suitability for ordered ministry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>The act of the council which completes the call of a person to service in the church. Ruling Elders and Deacons are installed by the congregation. Ministers are installed by the Presbytery. A call is not complete and the person is installed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installed Pastoral Relationship</td>
<td>Installed Pastoral relationships are Pastor, co-Pastor, and associate Pastor. A Minister may be installed for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the Presbytery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Pastor</td>
<td>A temporary Pastor who has special training for the unique ministry of serving churches in the midst of Pastoral transitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intern</td>
<td>An inquirer or candidate for ministry may choose to seek placement in a congregation or other ministry setting as an intern. Such positions vary from a few months (e.g., summer intern) to year-long. They are ordinarily compensated and are often negotiated or arranged through the seminary. This is an optional component of the preparation process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating Committee</td>
<td>The committee, appointed by a council, whose task is to determine whether or not there is justification for a charge to be formally made and a disciplinary procedure to be initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Congregational Witness</td>
<td>When a PC(USA) congregation partners with one or more congregations of another denomination through federation, union, or some other plan for cooperative witness approved by the Presbytery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboring Outside the Bounds</td>
<td>Permission which is granted by a Presbytery for a Minister to Minister (work) outside the bounds of Presbytery of membership. All validated work of a Minister must be authorized by a Presbytery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger Parish</td>
<td>Two or more churches who wish to cooperate in ministry may be established as a larger parish. They may call a Pastor(s) together, coordinate ministry through a parish council, coordinate finances, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison</td>
<td>One who connects one group or person with another. Most often used when Presbyteries assigns a Liaison to a Pastor nominating committee seeking a new Pastor, to the Session of an inquirer or candidate, or to a particular inquirer or candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member-at-Large</td>
<td>A Minister who has previously been an active member of Presbytery 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 and the Presbytery’s own policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>One who teaches or serves as a role model and confidant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Word and Sacrament</td>
<td>Another name for Minister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Development Centers</td>
<td>Centers that provide career counseling services for those serving or seeking to serve in church vocations. (See <a href="http://www.ministrydevelopment.org">www.ministrydevelopment.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Information Form</td>
<td>The resume prepared by a congregation seeking a Pastor or other church worker. Abbreviated “MIF.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Study</td>
<td>An in-depth study carried out at times during the life of a congregation to evaluate a congregation’s present and assess its future mission and ministry goals. Sometimes done during a Pastoral vacancy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negotiation for Service: Approval granted by a Presbytery to a candidate under its care to negotiate for positions that will require ordination as a Minister. See “Certified Ready for Examination for Ordination”

Neutral Pulpit: The congregation a Pastor/candidate being considered by a Pastor nominating committee preaches in prior to candidating as one of the final steps in the call process.

Nominating Committee: See “Pastor Nominating Committee”

Office of the General Assembly: The Office of the General Assembly serves as the ecclesiastical arm of the PC(USA). One of the six agencies of the PC(USA), it offers support in the areas of governance and structure.

OGA: Office of the General Assembly. Sometimes referred to as the Stated Clerk’s office.

Ordered Ministry: The term applied to Deacons, Ruling Elders, and Ministers in the PC(USA). Ordered ministries “order” the life of the church “so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish.”

Ordination: Ordination is the act by which the church sets apart persons to ordered ministry as Ministers, Ruling Elders or Deacons and is accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands.

Ordination Exams: Standardized examinations required of all candidates as a prerequisite to being examined for final assessment. Currently exams are administered in the areas of Bible Content, Biblical Exegesis, Church Polity, Theological Competence, and Worship and Sacraments under the direction of the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.

Ords: Shortened version of ordination exams

Parish: A congregation or group of congregations involved in a cooperative ministry. If an ecumenical parish, see also “Joint Congregational Witness.”

Parish Associate: A Minister who serves in some validated ministry other than the local parish, is a member-at-large, or is retired, and who wishes to define and maintain a relationship with a particular congregation. This is no longer defined constitutionally but a Presbytery may choose to define this kind of relationship.

Parish Council: The coordinating body of a larger or cooperative parish, usually composed of representatives of each congregation in the parish.

Pastor: The name given to a Minister called to serve a congregation.

Pastor Nominating Committee: The term applied to the search committee for a Pastor or associate Pastor.

PCC: Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates. See “Ordination Exams”

Personal Information Form: The resume prepared by a Minister or other church worker. Abbreviated “PIF.”

PIF: Personal Information Form

PNC: Pastor Nominating Committee

Polity: Term applied to the governance system of the church

Preparation Consultation: The conversation between a Presbytery and each of its inquirers and candidates to assess the progress of their preparation for ministry.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Presbytery</strong></th>
<th>The council composed of all congregations and Ministers within its district.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presbytery of Call</strong></td>
<td>The Presbytery to which a candidate is being called to a first ministry position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presbytery of Care</strong></td>
<td>The Presbytery under whose care a particular inquirer or candidate is enrolled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Part of the preparation process ordinarily required of all those entering the process during which their psychological fitness for ministry and their sense of vocation is examined by a psychologist or other professional counselor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pulpit Supply</strong></td>
<td>The person who preaches for a congregation that does not have a Pastor or whose Pastor is away. A Presbytery may provide a list of qualified pulpit supply to congregations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readiness</strong></td>
<td>The determination of one’s preparedness to proceed to the next step in the preparation for ministry process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Group</strong></td>
<td>Persons elected by Presbyteries to read and evaluate ordination exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Tradition</strong></td>
<td>The theological tradition of the Presbyterian and other Reformed churches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Release from Ordered Ministry</strong></td>
<td>When a person ordained to ordered ministry (Ruling Elder, Minister, or Deacon) is removed from office, either by their request or through disciplinary action of the council. If the release has occurred without prejudice, a person may seek to be restored to the office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Renunciation of Jurisdiction</strong></td>
<td>When a person ordained to ordered ministry communicates in writing their intention to renounce the jurisdiction of this church. In other words, leaves the church and refuses to be bound by its authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restoration</strong></td>
<td>When a Presbytery or congregation takes action to restore one previously released from ordered ministry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rules of Discipline</strong></td>
<td>The part of the Book of Order which outlines the procedures and processes by which the church responds to individuals and governing bodies who violate the constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ruling Elder</strong></td>
<td>The ordered ministry of those ordained for the spiritual oversight and governance of a congregation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ruling Elder Commissioned to Particular Pastoral Service</strong></td>
<td>A Ruling Elder, authorized by the Presbytery, to provide limited Pastoral service in one or more designated congregations or in a validated ministry of the Presbytery. This position had previously been called “Commissioned Lay Pastor.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Career</strong></td>
<td>A term applied to inquirers and candidates who have pursued one or more careers prior to coming under care (other than being a student).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session</strong></td>
<td>The council for the congregation responsible “for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Misconduct</strong></td>
<td>When a person violates the appropriate professional interpersonal boundaries with a subordinate or parishioner. Definition and disciplinary procedures are delineated in a council’s Sexual Misconduct policy, which all councils are required to have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solo Pastor</strong></td>
<td>A Pastor serving a congregation without associates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialized Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Validated forms of ministry other than parish ministry. These are defined by Presbyteries and may include Pastoral counseling, chaplaincy, campus ministry, council staff, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stated Clerk</td>
<td>One of the two required officers of a council, the clerk is responsible for maintaining the minutes, records, and rolls of the council. May also be the clerk of the permanent judicial commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stated Supply</td>
<td>A Pastor approved by the Presbytery to serve in a position that does not carry a formal call or installation. Titles and terms of service are determined by the Presbytery, but may not exceed twelve months though it can be renewed. Ordinarily a person serving in a temporary Pastoral relationship may not be eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor. See Temporary Pastoral Relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Pastor</td>
<td>A person under care in the preparation for ministry process who is serving in an approved temporary Pastoral position, as an intern, or during field education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervised Practice of Ministry</td>
<td>See “Field Education”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synod</td>
<td>The intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its regions. “Synod is responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its Presbyteries…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Elder</td>
<td>The ordained ministry of those ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament in the PC(USA). “Teaching elders shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Membership</td>
<td>A Minister of another Christian church, serving temporarily in a validated ministry of the PC(USA) or in an installed relationship under the provision of the Formula of Agreement, who is enrolled by a Presbytery for a period of service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Pastoral Relationship</td>
<td>A Pastor approved by the Presbytery to serve in a position that does not carry a formal call or installation. Titles and terms of service are determined by the Presbytery, but may not exceed twelve months though it can be renewed. Ordinarily a person serving in a temporary Pastoral relationship may not be eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tentmaker</td>
<td>See “Bi-vocational Pastor”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Call</td>
<td>The specifics of the Pastoral relationship extended by the congregation and approved by the Presbytery which includes the nature of the ministry to be carried out and the terms of compensation. A Presbytery must approve any changes in the terms of call and may determine minimum levels of compensation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>The process of transferring a Ruling Elder from one Presbytery to another, the membership of a Minister of another Christian church into the PC(USA), the care of a candidate or inquirer from one Presbytery to another, or a member from one congregation to another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Church</td>
<td>See “Joint Congregational Witness.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validated Ministry</td>
<td>A ministry in which a Minister is engaged that meets the requirements of the Book of Order and Presbytery’s criteria to be considered “validated.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocation</td>
<td>See “call”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoke</td>
<td>When two or more churches are served by one Pastor they are said to be yoked.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>