

**CRITERIA FOR VALIDATING MINISTRIES AND CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP**  
**Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbytery of Cincinnati**  
**Adopted November 8, 2005**  
**(editorial changes made to conform to the Book of Order 7/10/11, 11/6/18)**

**VALIDATED MINISTRIES**

The Presbytery of Cincinnati has adopted the following criteria for validating ministries of ministers.

In order for a minister's service to be designated as "validated ministry," it must meet the standards listed in G-2.0503a without exception.

A validated ministry shall:

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

Validated ministry within congregations of this church (G-2.0504)

Installed pastoral relationships (G-2.0504a) and temporary pastoral relationships (G-2.0504b) defined by the presbytery shall be considered to be validated ministries. Upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, the presbytery may approve other relationships between a session and a minister as "validated ministry in other service of this church." The designation of a minister as a parish associate or pastor emeritus/emera shall not be considered to be a validated ministry.

Validated ministry in other service of this church

Ordinarily, the following shall be considered to be validated ministries:

- Service as a staff member of a presbytery, a synod, or the General Assembly of this church or of an organization related to one of these governing bodies. Organizing pastors shall ordinarily be included in this category.
- Service to an organization sponsored by two or more denominations, one of which is this church, such as a federated church, a specialized ministry, an administrative office, or an interdenominational agency.
- Service in a PC(USA)-established partnership in mission with a church outside the United States of America. Upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, the presbytery may approve the following as validated ministry:
- Service within a congregation of the presbytery other than those defined above as "validated ministry within congregations of the church."

Validated ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church

Prior to engaging in this form of service, a minister shall submit in writing an explanation as to how it meets the standards listed in G-2.0503a without exception. COM shall review the rationale and, if satisfied that the requirements are met, recommend that the presbytery validate the ministry.

With regards to specific forms of services beyond the jurisdiction of the church, the presbytery may designate service within a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA) as validated ministry; it shall not designate service within an independent congregation or in a denomination that is not in correspondence with the PC(USA) as validated ministry. A self-employed minister in private practice cannot be considered as being engaged in a validated ministry unless he or she is accountable to an organization, agency, or institution in addition to the presbytery.

When a minister is engaged in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church as a chaplain, pastoral counselor, or campus minister, he or she shall ordinarily be considered as being engaged in a validated ministry, provided the requirements for accountability, mentioned above, are met. Ministers engaged in work as educators, administrators, social workers, consultants, or other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church, may be required to provide additional evidence that a substantial proportion of their work is devoted to exercising pastoral care of those for whom they are responsible. This evidence may be requested by COM in addition to the requirement to show accountability to the sponsoring organization, agency, or institution.

#### Honorably Retired (G-2.0503c)

An Honorably Retired minister may, with the presbytery's permission, engage in a validated ministry.

### **CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP**

Continuing members of the presbytery include members engaged in Validated Ministry (G-2.0503a), members-at-large (G-2.0503b), and members who are Honorably Retired (G-2.0503c).

Members engaged in Validated Ministry and Members-at-Large shall be responsible for participation in the life of the larger ministry of the church. This responsibility shall be fulfilled by:

- Praying for the church
- Attending presbytery meetings
- Serving the presbytery on a regular basis in an official capacity in addition to her or his primary call (e.g., presbytery committee, commission, council, or task group; mentor and supervisor to a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service; Lay School faculty).

In addition, ministers whose ministries are not within a congregation shall regularly worship with a congregation in the PC(USA) or a congregation of a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA). They shall also engage in the ministry of a PC(USA) congregation from time to time when invited to do so by appropriate parties. Examples of this service include but are not limited to:

- Serving as a Parish Associate
- Leading a worship service
- Moderating a meeting of the session or congregation
- Facilitating an opportunity for education, leadership development, or spiritual formation
- Counseling
- Serving as a consultant

Ministers who labor or reside outside the bounds of the presbytery and ministers whose physical or mental abilities limit their full participation shall fulfill the above expectations as they are able.

The Committee on Ministry shall counsel with each minister who consistently fails to meet the above expectations. When appropriate, the COM may encourage her or him to apply for release from the exercise of ordained office. (G-2.0507)

Honorably Retired

The presbytery membership of Honorably Retired ministers is defined by G-2.0503c.