

# Mission Presbytery Policies Concerning Ministers and Educators

<b>Powers Delegated to the Committee on Ministry by Mission Presbytery .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy for Minimum Terms of Call .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policies Concerning Christian Educators.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy for Pastor/Educator Leave .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to Sabbatical Leave For Pastors and Church Educators.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Sabbatical Leave Policy for Exempt Staff .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to the Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to Co-pastors .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy on Sexual Ethics.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy for Interim Pastors .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy Regarding Assessment and Appraisal of Pastors .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Ecclesiastical Endorsement of Ministers Serving in Specialized Pastoral Ministries .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Mission Presbytery Policy for Commissioned Lay Pastors .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Grievance Procedure .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Grievance Procedure Agreement .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Dissemination and Review Process for Mission Presbytery Policies Concerning Ministers and Educators.....</b>	<b>41</b>

## **Powers Delegated to the Committee on Ministry by Mission Presbytery**

In concurrence with the Book of Order G-11.0502h, Mission Presbytery delegated the following powers to the Committee on Ministry. The Committee on Ministry may:

1. Find in order calls issued by churches.
2. Approve and present calls for services of ministers
3. Approve the examination of ministers transferring from other presbyteries required by G-11.0402.
4. Dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur upon receipt of written concurrence from both parties.
5. Grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the presbytery
6. Dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, with the provision that all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery. (G-9.0403, G-14.0507)

These powers are all granted with the provision that all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

In addition granting these six powers to the Committee on Ministry Mission Presbytery has also given the COM power to approve administrative commissions to carry out those plans.

## Minimum Terms of Call, Effective January 1, 2008

Consistent with the Presbytery Policy approved February 28 - March 1, 2003, the Presbytery minister's minimum compensation package is to be adjusted by an amount equal to the "Consumer Price Index-All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) US City Average, All Items," as listed by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics on October 1 of each year. On October 1, 2007 the index was up 2.3% over the same time last year.

**Therefore, effective 1/1/08 the minister's minimum compensation package (minimum effective salary) in Mission Presbytery is \$35,023. Details of effective salary can be found at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org)**

Ministers whose compensation is above this amount are not affected by this change; however, this measure of annual increase should be taken into consideration by each congregation when minister, educator and staff salaries are reviewed.

Minister's **Minimum** Effective Salary for 2008 is: **\$35,023**  
Remember that the Minister's Effective Salary includes cash salary, utilities, and housing allowance or fair market rental value of Manse.

Board of Pensions dues in full: **31.5% in 2008** (\$11,032 using minimum)  
Four weeks vacation and two weeks study leave are standard.

In January 2001, the Committee on Ministry recommended that churches assist ministers in reducing their tax burden by offering an additional amount equal to one half of the Self-Employment Tax (Social Security Tax) which ministers must pay on their income (15% of Effective Salary). This in effect pays to your pastor the Social Security Taxes paid by the church on all church employees. *(Note: This payment is cash salary for IRS and minimum terms of call, but is not part of the effective salary on which Board of Pensions is paid.)*

Congregations unable to provide the minimum terms of call for a full-time minister are asked to specify the part-time status of the pastor, and the salary that matches it.

### Sample Terms of Call -- Examples only!

#### 1. Example *with* housing allowance

This is Effective Salary, on which Board of Pensions is paid:

Cash Salary	\$25,023
Housing	8,000
Utilities	<u>2,000</u>
	\$35,023

Board of Pensions medical, pension, and disability for the minister and family is 31.5% of the effective salary of \$35,023 or in this example: \$11,032

Reimbursable Expenses: (examples)

Automobile Allowance (IRS allows 50.5 cents/mile):	\$3,000
Continuing Education and Books:	\$1,500

#### 2. Example when rent-free use of a manse is provided

This is Effective Salary, on which Board of Pensions is paid:

Cash Salary	\$23,941
Utilities allowance	3,000

Equivalent value of rent-free use of manse (30% of 26,941):	<u>8,082</u>
Effective Salary is:	\$35,023

Board of Pensions is 31.5% of \$35,023: \$11,032

Reimbursable Expenses:	
Automobile Allowance (IRS allows 50.5 cents/mile):	\$3,000
Continuing Education and Books:	\$1,500

3. Example with housing allowance and SECA.

<i>This is Effective Salary on which Board of Pensions is paid:</i>	
Cash Salary	\$23,277
Housing	8,000
Utilities	<u>2,000</u>
	\$33,277

Board of Pensions is 31.5% of \$33,277 \$10,482

50% SECA	<u>1,746</u>
	\$35,023

Reimbursable Expenses	
Automobile Allowance (IRS allows 50.5 cents/mile):	\$3,000
Continuing Education and Books:	\$1,500

*This option does not reduce the minister's IRS obligation but reduces the church's payment to the Board of Pensions and ultimately may effect the pension the minister will receive.*

*Also: Employer contributions made to the PC(USA) 403(b)(9) Retirement Savings Plan administered by the Board of Pensions to match elective contributions by employees are not to be included in Effective Salary. Any match program must be available universally to all eligible employees.*

## Mission Presbytery Policies Concerning Christian Educators

### A. Floor Privilege

Grant the privilege of the floor with voice to the Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators (G11.0407) at all its meetings. In Mission Presbytery, Certified Christian Educators have "vote". Mission Presbytery grants the vote at Presbytery meetings to Certified Christian Educators under the following conditions:

1. That the Certified Christian Educator be an elder.
2. That the Educator be currently employed at least half time as a Christian Educator in this Presbytery.
3. That the privilege of vote be automatically terminated when employment, as in "2" ceases.
4. That such voting privilege be explicitly granted by vote of the Presbytery at the meeting immediately following the Educator's first becoming eligible by reason of employment or certification.
5. That the Session employing the Educator elect that person as a commissioner to each Presbytery meeting as a Commissioner in addition to those allowed by the Presbytery voting formula. Certified Associate Christian Educators have "Voice".

### B. Support via the Committee on Ministry

1. Include Certified or Certified Associate Christian Educators on the Committee on Ministry.
2. Annually publish the names, employment status and if employed as an educator, the compensation, of all Certified, Certified Associate and Enrolled Educational Assistant Christian Educators known to be in the bounds of Presbytery.
3. Include interview with Certified, Certified Associate and Enrolled Educational Assistant Christian Educators in all formal visits and work with congregations, especially in those situations in which the head of staff position has become vacant.
4. Provide assistance, support, counseling, and resources to persons, sessions, and churches in search of effective educational and teaching ministry.
5. Recognize and encourage the gifts and calling of persons for special service to educational ministries and provide specific assistance for their development.
6. Help to develop, participate and cooperate with the Educator Certification Council for the Church Vocations Unit in a program of certification for the following:
  - Enrolled Educational Assistant
  - Certified Associate Christian Educator
  - Certified Christian Educator
7. Provide encouragement, counsel, professional and personal support for those called to and serving in ministry in Christian Education within the bound of the Presbytery.
8. Counsel with sessions and personnel committees regarding job description, benefits, and study leave for Educators.
9. On behalf of the Presbytery, participate with the Associate Presbyter for Education and Congregational Nurture in the installation of a new church educator.
10. Have a new Certified Christian Educator give a Faith Statement at the stated Presbytery meeting following their arrival to their positions.

11. Conduct exit interviews with every Certified or Certified Associate Christian Educator on the termination of their employment/position.
12. Assist local congregations in the care of Christian Educators by establishing salary and benefit guidelines for Christian Educators.
13. Review terms of employment on an annual basis.
14. Provide support and mediation in conflict situations.
15. Serve as pastor and counselor to Certified Christian Educators of the presbytery, to facilitate the relations between congregations, ministers, and Certified Christian Educators. (G-11.0501a)

**C. Support via Education and Congregational Nurture Division**

1. Encourage and support all persons called to serve as Educators in the churches within the bound of Presbytery. Determine a structure to provide for the care and nurture of Educators.
2. Encourage and support participants in the process of becoming Certified Christian Educators.
3. Maintain Educator Certification Advisor's Notebook in the Presbytery office and Resource Centers and have it available for reference.
4. Designate certification advisor(s) and connect them to the Presbytery source in an appropriate way.
5. Hold a service of recognition at each level of certification during stated Presbytery meetings. The levels are Certified Christian Educator, Certified Associate Educator and Enrolled Educational Assistant.
6. Publicize the Church Leadership Connection (Call Referral) phone: 888-728-7228 ex 8550)
7. Encourage use of employment contracts and make contract models available.
8. Provide and promote educational opportunities that include Educators and sponsor colleague groups for Educators working toward certification.
9. Provide an attendance registration process for Presbytery meetings that include Church Educators as an identifiable group i.e. Certified Christian Educator, Certified Associate Christian Educator.
10. Include all Educators in general Presbytery mailings; include Certified and Certified Associate Educators in packets in advance of each stated meeting of Presbytery, responsibility of Stated Clerk (Certified Educators have "voice and vote" and Certified Associates have "voice" at Presbytery meetings).
11. Receive and disseminate information to Educators from and to other governing bodies.
12. Include Educators (and their spouses) in support retreats or groups.
13. Recognize/introduce Educators at Presbytery. Register all Certified Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators when transferring to the Presbytery with the Stated Clerk. (G11.306)

**D. Support via Associate Presbyter for Education and Congregational Nurture**

1. Report on the status of Christian Educators to the Presbytery at each stated meeting. In such reports, the following items are included:
  - a. Update on the number of Educators (certified and non-certified) in the Presbytery.



- 4) If Educator has earned doctorate in related field add 20%  
 (.20 X minimum) Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Certification (only one status applies)
- 1) If Educator is Enrolled Educational Assistant, add 5%.  
 Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) If Educator is Certified Associate, add 10%  
 Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) If Educator is Certified Christian Educator add 15%.  
 Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Complexity - Various characteristics of a position make it more complex and thus worth more to the church. Typical salary factoring includes such ingredients. It is recommended that the base salary be increased by 1% for each of the following that apply to the position.
- 1) Staff responsibility for more than one session committee.
- 2) Supervise daycare or weekday program in addition to education program.
- 3) Congregation is bilingual, multi-racial.
- 4) Church is under Administrative Commission or other conflict situation.
- Count the number above that apply and multiply by 1% of base salary (.01 X number of factors above X minimum) Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Experience  
 Add 1% per year of full-time experience as Church Educator (.01 X number of years X minimum) Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Calculate Salary

Presbytery minimum salary	\$ _____
Add/subtract for academic qualifications	\$ _____
Add/subtract for certification level	\$ _____
Add for factors of complexity	\$ _____
Add for years of experience	\$ _____
Total Salary	\$ _____

Other Compensation (benefits and payments to which an Educator is entitled) include:

- a. Social Security (FICA): Unlike clergy, educators are not self-employed and therefore must receive Social Security.
- b. Healthcare Insurance: Educators may be enrolled in the PC (USA) Board of Pensions Health Plan. For eligibility and guidance, call the Board of Pensions (1-800-773-7752) for their brochure on lay employees.
- c. Retirement Plan: See note about healthcare above.
- d. Vacation and Sick Leave: Four weeks of vacation and a minimum of ten (10) days of sick leave.
- e. Continuing Education Time and Expenses: It is recommended that two weeks be paid for Continuing Education and \$300.00 minimum allowance for Continuing Education expense.
- f. Other Professional Expenses: These expenses may be reimbursed by voucher; including such items as mileage,

books, professional magazine subscriptions, memberships in professional organizations.

g. Moving Expenses

## **Mission Presbytery Policy for Pastor/Educator Leave**

### 1. Maternity Leave

- a. A female pastor/educator wishing maternity leave shall submit a written request to the Clerk of Session and a copy to the chair of the Committee on Ministry (for clergy), ordinarily 30 days prior to the projected commencement of the leave.
- b. Maternity leave shall normally be for a period of four (4) weeks. Any earned vacation time and compensation, for that calendar year, may be added with the concurrence of the session to the maternity leave. Additional leave time and the level of compensation may be negotiated between the pastor/educator and the session.
- c. During the period of normal maternity leave all salary; housing and benefits shall continue to be fully (100%) paid.
- d. During the period of normal maternity leave the pastor/educator shall be relieved from all regular pastoral/educational duties (preaching, teaching, and visiting, etc.).
- e. Following maternity leave the pastor/educator shall present to the session a written certification from the pastor/educator's attending physician certifying the minister/educator's readiness to resume normal pastoral responsibilities.

### 2. Paternity Leave

- a. A pastor/educator wishing paternity leave shall submit a written request to the Clerk of Session and a copy to the chair of the Committee on Ministry (for clergy), ordinarily 30 days prior to the projected commencement of the leave.
- b. Paternity leave shall normally be for a period of four (4) weeks. Any earned vacation time and compensation for that calendar year may be added, with the concurrence of the session, to the paternity leave. Additional leave time and the level of compensation may be negotiated between pastor/educator and session.
- c. During the period of paternity leave all salary, housing and benefits shall continue to be fully (100%) paid.
- d. During the period of paternity leave the pastor shall be relieved from all regular pastoral duties (preaching, teaching and visiting, etc.).

### 3. Family Emergency Leave

- a. Family Emergency Leave is defined as a sudden emergency within a pastor/educator's immediate family (children, spouse, parents) that requires her/his presence, rendering the pastor/educator unable to perform regular ministerial functions for a period of time.
- b. Family Emergency Leave shall consist of two (2) weeks per year. This leave may not be accumulated.
- c. If possible, a request for leave shall be made to the session prior to the pastor/educator's absence. If a prior request is not possible, notice shall be given as soon as possible to the Clerk of Session so that a formal request can be communicated to the session.
- d. During the period of Family Emergency Leave all salary, housing and benefits shall continue to be fully (100%) paid.

4. Adoption Leave

- a. A pastor/educator seeking adoption leave shall submit a written request to the Clerk of Session and a copy to the chair of the Committee on Ministry, ordinarily 30 days prior to the projected commencement of the leave.
- b. Adoption leave shall normally be for a period of four (4) weeks. Any earned vacation time and compensation for that calendar year may be added, with the concurrence of the session, to the adoption leave. Additional leave time and the level of compensation may be negotiated between the pastor/educator and the session.
- c. During the period of Adoption Leave all salary, housing and benefits shall continue to be fully (100%) paid.
- d. During the period of adoption leave the pastor/educator shall be relieved from all regular pastoral/educational duties (preaching, teaching, and visiting, etc).

5. Return to Service

It is expected that upon completion of any of the above leaves the pastor/educator will return to service for a minimum of six-months.

## **Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to Sabbatical Leave For Pastors and Church Educators**

### **Policy Statement**

The Presbytery of Mission recommends to the sessions of its churches that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Church Educators be granted a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months after each six (6) years of service to an individual church.

*(This sabbatical is not mandated as part of the minimum terms of call. Any sabbatical, of any length, is based upon negotiations between the pastor and the session.)*

### **Rationale**

The purpose of a sabbatical is to enable the pastor/educator to be renewed through the vital pursuit of continuing education, extended time spent in spiritual formation, and fresh mentoring by respected teachers. A sabbatical enables a pastor/educator to return to the responsibilities of the parish with new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness. Also sabbaticals can allow a pastor/educator to commit to a longer term of service, which will benefit the life and mission of a congregation.

### **The Process for Developing a Sabbatical Leave**

#### **Pastor or Educator Responsibilities**

1. Bring the sabbatical proposal before the session – at least in outline form - a minimum of six months before the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
2. Secure the approval of the session for the sabbatical proposal and work out the necessary coverage of pastoral and pulpit responsibilities.
3. Assure the session of continued service to the church for at least one full year from the conclusion of the sabbatical.
4. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the session before departing on a sabbatical.
5. Upon return, present a written and oral report of experiences, learnings and recommendations growing out of the sabbatical experience to the session. A written report shall also be sent to the Committee on Ministry.

#### **Session Responsibilities**

1. Receive “for approval” the pastor/educator’s proposal for a sabbatical, at least six (6) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
2. Continue terms of call commitments to the pastor/educator during sabbatical leave and budget for any additional, necessary pastoral leadership.
3. Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
4. Submit to Committee on Ministry in writing the sabbatical timetable and outline of plans. These plans will include, for pastoral sabbaticals, the names of persons who will provide pastoral leadership and care for the congregation in the pastor’s absence.
5. Receive a report of experiences, learnings and recommendations growing out of the sabbatical experience from the pastor/educator upon return.

#### **Committee on Ministry Responsibilities**

1. Review the sabbatical timetable and usage plan as submitted by the pastor/educator.

2. Serve as mediator in any concerns of session, educator or pastor relative to the sabbatical.
3. Assist the session, if necessary, to find, then approve, a moderator for the session during the pastor's absence.
4. Receive a report from pastor, through the session

**Additional Responsibilities/Information**

1. It is expected that pastors/educators will return to service for a minimum of one year following their sabbatical.
2. If agreed upon by session and the pastor, the sabbatical may be combined with study leave.

## **Mission Presbytery Sabbatical Leave Policy for Exempt Staff**

**Policy:** The Presbytery may grant Sabbatical Leave to the General Presbyter and Full-time Associate Presbyters. Sabbaticals shall be for no less than three months with pay, but vacation time may be added if necessary for the Sabbath leave designed. The leave will be for professional development and related to the life of the Presbytery. Only one presbytery program staff person may be on sabbatical leave at any given time.

**Eligibility:** The General Presbyter and full-time Associate Presbyters must have been employed with the Presbytery for a minimum of six (6) consecutive years and not interrupted by prolonged personal paid leave or leave of absence.

**Study Plan:** A detailed written plan of study with clearly identified goals and expected end-products must be approved by the Committee on Ministry and the Personnel Committee long enough in advance so that budget and staffing needs may be met during the time the Exempt Staff is on Sabbatical Leave.

**Reporting:** A written and oral report on learning in relation to agreed goals and expected end products must be reviewed with the Personnel Committee and Executive Presbyter (Except in the case of the Executive Presbyter) within one month after the completion of the leave,

## Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to the Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships

### Pastor's Responsibilities and Requirements

1. Voluntary Separation (Voluntary Resignation)
  - a. Voluntary separation may take place after written notice from the pastor requesting a dissolution of a pastoral call is given to the session and to the Committee on Ministry, and this request has received concurrence from both the session and the presbytery. Resigning pastors will be paid the cash equivalent of their unused earned vacation, but not continuing education funds, at the official date of the dissolution of the pastoral call by the session and the presbytery.
  - b. The pastor shall send a letter to the congregation which should include:
    - A statement of appreciation for the opportunity to have served the congregation and the pastor's plans for his/her new call.
    - The effective date of the dissolution.
    - A reminder to the congregation that after the pastor's relationship is dissolved, no further pastoral services shall be provided including baptisms, weddings, funerals, hospital calls, etc.
  - c. Normally a pastor shall leave no sooner than one month and no later than two months after giving notice of resignation.
  - d. No severance allowance will be provided by the church/hiring agency.
  - e. The pastor will remove all personal items from the church property by the effective date of dissolution. All property belonging to the church will be returned to the Clerk of Session or the person designated by the session. Arrangements for payment of any monies due to the pastor (salary, annuities, etc.) or repayment of any loan made by the church to the pastor shall be made by the effective date of dissolution unless stipulated in writing by both parties. Any funds in an existing "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" shall return to the church budget. When a pastor lives in a manse the session shall determine with the pastor the date by which the manse will be vacant.
  - f. The former pastor shall not provide pastoral services (baptisms, weddings, funerals, counseling, teaching, etc.) unless given permission by the current moderator and session. It is important that the congregation find its identity separate from the former pastor. Following the installation of a new pastor, the former pastor may provide pastoral services only at the invitation of the session ~~services~~ and in concurrence with the request of the new pastor.
2. Voluntary Separation (Retirement)
  - a. Retirement may take place after written notice from the pastor requesting a dissolution of a pastoral call is given to the session and to the Committee on Ministry, and this request has received concurrence from both the session and the presbytery. This notice shall contain the proposed date of retirement.
  - b. The pastor shall send a letter to the congregation which should include:
    - A statement of appreciation for the opportunity to have served the congregation and the pastor's plans for retirement.
    - The effective date of the dissolution.
    - A reminder to the congregation that after the pastors relationship is dissolved, no further pastoral services shall be provided including baptisms, weddings, funerals, hospital calls, etc., unless invited by the pastor with approval of the session.
  - c. Ordinarily, the period of time between announcement and retirement should be three to four months. Call the Board of Pensions, 1-800-773-7752, and ask for an application for

Honorable Retirement, or download a form from the website, [www.pcusa.pensions.org/Library/Forms/pen-001.pdf](http://www.pcusa.pensions.org/Library/Forms/pen-001.pdf)

- d. The pastor will remove all personal items from the church property by the effective date of dissolution. All property belonging to the church will be returned to the Clerk of Session or the person designated by the session. Arrangements for payment of any monies due to the pastor (salary, annuities, etc.) or repayment of any loan made by the church to the pastor shall be made by the effective date of dissolution unless stipulated in writing by both parties. Any funds in an existing "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" shall return to the church budget.
  - e. The former pastor shall not provide pastoral services (baptisms, weddings, funerals, counseling, teaching, etc.) unless there is no temporary, interim, associate or installed pastor. It is important that the congregation find its identity separate from the former pastor. Following the installation of a new pastor, the former pastor may provide pastoral services only at the invitation of the session and in concurrence with the request of the new pastor.
3. Reduction in Force (Layoff)
- a. Separation because of the elimination of a position, retrenchment in budget, or for other circumstances arising out of no fault of the pastor, is at the discretion of the session and the congregation with approval of presbytery.
  - b. Written notice will come to the Committee on Ministry from the session after consultation with the pastor about the termination of the call.
  - c. Six (6) months notice or pay in lieu of notice will be given. The pastor will be paid the cash equivalent of any unused annual leave.
  - d. The pastor shall send a letter to the congregation which should include:
    - A statement of appreciation for the opportunity to have served the congregation and the pastor's future plans.
    - The effective date of the dissolution.
    - A reminder to the congregation that after the pastors relationship is dissolved, no further pastoral services shall be provided including baptisms, weddings, funerals, hospital calls, etc.
  - e. The pastor will remove all personal items from the church property by the effective date of dissolution. All property belonging to the church will be returned to the Clerk of Session or the person designated by the session. Arrangements for payment of any monies due to the pastor (salary, annuities, etc.) or repayment of any loan made by the church to the pastor shall be made by the effective date of dissolution unless stipulated in writing by both parties. Any funds in an existing "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" shall return to the church budget.
  - f. The former pastor shall not provide pastoral services (baptisms, weddings, funerals, counseling, teaching, etc.) unless there is no temporary, interim, associate or installed pastor. It is important that the congregation find its identity separate from the former pastor. Following the installation of a new pastor, the former pastor only at the invitation of the session may provide pastoral services in concurrence with the request of the new pastor.
4. Involuntary Separation (Forced Resignation or Removal by Presbytery or an Administrative Commission)
- a. The terms of all involuntary resignations will be negotiated between the pastor, the session and the Committee on Ministry, before the session decides to call for a congregational meeting to request dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
  - b. Normally a minimum severance package shall consist of one (1) month's salary and housing for every year of service, with a minimum of two months severance provided, not to exceed a total severance package equal to six months of salary and housing.

- Accrued vacation pay shall also be paid. The Committee on Ministry must approve any additional severance compensation. This package will be paid by the session/congregation.
- c. The pastor will remove all personal items from the church property by the effective date of dissolution. All property belonging to the church will be returned to the Clerk of Session or the person designated by the session. Arrangements for payment of any monies due to the pastor (salary, annuities, etc.) or repayment of any loan made by the church to the pastor shall be made by the effective date of dissolution unless stipulated otherwise in writing by both parties. Any funds in an existing "Pastor's Discretionary Fund" shall return to the church budget.
  - d. The former pastor shall not provide pastoral services (baptisms, weddings, funerals, counseling, teaching, etc.) unless given permission by the current moderator and session. It is important that the congregation find its identity separate from the former pastor. Following the installation of a new pastor, the former pastor only at the invitation of the session may provide pastoral services in concurrence with the request of the new pastor.
  - e. Responsibilities of Committee on Ministry to Pastors involved in involuntary separations:
    - The COM will remind pastors of the resources available through Mission Presbytery's Pastoral Care Division
    - The COM will recommend that the pastor receive pastoral care from a professional therapist. The Presbytery will share the cost of this service if necessary. This shared cost, if necessary, will be negotiated between the session and the Committee on Ministry.
    - The COM will send a team of its members to meet with the pastor in order to discuss the pastor's future plans, current needs and an exploration of learnings arising from the situations that led to the dissolution.
  - f. Responsibilities of Committee on Ministry to congregations involved in involuntary separations
    - The COM will send a team of its members to meet with the session of the affected church in order to explore learnings from the separation and to assist in discerning plans for the future.
    - The COM team will also review the pastoral call process and commit themselves to shepherding the church in its search for a new pastor.

While the above separation policies serve as a guideline for the dissolution of pastoral calls within Mission Presbytery, these policies assume that (a) pastors, sessions and congregations will respect the procedures outlined in the Book of Order of the PCUSA regarding dissolution of pastoral calls and that (b) ministers, sessions and congregations will respect the authority of Mission Presbytery to adjudicate the terms of separation when pastors and sessions are unable to negotiate mutual terms.

### **Session's Responsibilities and Requirements**

1. Receive a copy of the letter of resignation or request for retirement that will be then be mailed to the congregation by the pastor. In the event of an involuntary separation through the work of an administrative commission, the session shall notify the congregation of the separation.
2. Call a special meeting of the congregation to vote on the pastor's request to dissolve the pastoral relationship.
3. In the case of an involuntary separation through the work of an administrative commission the session will receive notification from the Administrative Commission.
4. Invite a representative of the Committee on Ministry to a meeting in order to provide information concerning the dissolution process, the interim period, and the pastoral search process.

## **Mission Presbytery Policy Pertaining to Co-pastors**

The book of Order in G-6.0202c states that “A particular church, with the consent of presbytery, may elect pastors to serve as co-pastors in exercising the responsibility of minister of the Word and Sacrament for the congregation.”

Mission Presbytery, while abiding by the Book of Order has placed the following restrictions on the office of Co-pastor:

1. Congregations are not allowed to initiate the position of co-pastor where the pastor is nearing the end of his or her pastorate. This is to prevent a church from bypassing the usual interim and search process.
2. The only exception to this restriction is that a co-pastor position can be formed in situations in which an interim who speaks the language of the congregation cannot be found.

## **Mission Presbytery Policy on Sexual Ethics**

All Ministers of Mission Presbytery are required to sign and abide by the following code of conduct in matters relating to sexual ethics.

---

### **FOR ALL MINISTERS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS OF MISSION PRESBYTERY**

Below is a code of sexual ethics for clergy, which was adopted by Mission Presbytery on October 30, 1992. Please read it carefully, sign, and return.

---

#### **Code of Sexual Ethics for Clergy**

1. Clergy are agents of healing and redemption. They are aware that sexual exploitation of spouse, family, colleagues, congregants, employees, or counselees is an abuse of the authority of their pastoral position.
2. Clergy are aware of their obligation to adhere to strict standards of confidentiality.
3. Clergy are aware of the long-term effects of all forms of sexual exploitation and seek to help victims cope with such damage through every available means.
4. Clergy are aware that sexual harassment and immorality are chargeable under church law and that they always bear final responsibility to their actions.
5. Clergy are aware of and willing to abide by denominational disciplines and policies in facing the consequences of their actions in any instance of sexual exploitation.
6. Clergy who learn of the sexually exploitative behavior of another clergy person accept an ethical and Biblical responsibility to report their knowledge of this behavior to the appropriate church authorities.
7. Clergy subscribe to policies for appropriate grievance procedures with regard to sexual misconduct.
8. Clergy are aware of their sacred calling as servants to God under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and accept their responsibility and accountability to the people entrusted to their care.

**Please sign below, make a copy for your records, and send the original to the Presbytery office. It will be placed with your personnel file.**

---

I have read and do understand the document above to be the policy of Mission Presbytery in regard to sexual ethics. As a clergy person, I subscribe to these affirmations.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Mission Presbytery Policy for Interim Pastors**

**The interim period between pastors is an opportune time for a congregation to assess themselves and their ministries. Ordinarily, all pastoral vacancies will be filled by an Intentional Interim Pastor (or Interim Associate Pastor). An Intentional Interim Pastor is one who is trained to lead congregations during the time between two installed pastors and who is devoted to this specialized ministry. The Interim Pastor undertakes the tasks of an installed pastor and of helping to prepare the congregation for its next installed Pastor.**

1. All Interim Pastors are required to have completed Phase One of Interim Training, and be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the intent and purpose of that training.
2. The following procedures, accountability, expectations and termination provisions will guide the agreement between the interim, the church and the Presbytery. (See sample contract.)
3. Under no circumstances will an Associate Pastor of the church with a pastoral vacancy be permitted to serve as an Interim Pastor (or 'acting' Interim Pastor) of that church.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. The Pastor (or Associate Pastor) will notify the Presbytery Committee on Ministry (COM) before announcing his/her resignation or retirement.
2. Representatives of the COM will meet with the session at the time the announcement is made. ~~They~~ COM will give information concerning the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the interim period, and the search process. Terms of dissolution are discussed and preparations are made for the congregational meeting. The session calls a congregational meeting to vote upon the resignation.
3. The COM Chairperson (or the COM committee member assigned to facilitate interim contracts) and the Executive Presbyter will provide résumés which are endorsed by COM, to the Session's Interim Search Committee.
4. The congregation's Interim Search Committee will make telephone contacts with the possible candidates, make reference checks, conduct interviews, and make a decision as to which person they wish to present to the Session. After the Session decides, the COM reviews the Session's choice. Upon approval by COM, the contract is completed and signed by all three parties (interim pastor, session and COM on behalf of the presbytery).

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE INTERIM**

Ordinarily the Interim Pastor will:

1. Hold membership in Mission Presbytery.
2. Serve as Moderator of Session and head of staff. Interim Associate Pastors will not serve as Moderator or head of staff.
3. Provide preaching and worship leadership and officiate at weddings, funerals, and the sacraments.

4. Provide pastoral care for the congregation including hospital and crisis visitation with families and individuals.
5. Provide programmatic support for the church as approved by the Session.
6. Provide leadership concerning change and conflict management, healing, grief work, reconciliation, futuring, and other interim specialist skills, such as:
  - assist the church to claim its history,
  - help the church reassess its identity,
  - assist the church to cope with changes within the lay leadership.
  - help strengthen the church's connections with the denomination,
  - help prepare the congregation for new pastoral leadership.
7. Continue professional training by participation in Presbytery/Synod/General Assembly sponsored Interim Pastor support groups, study events and conferences.
8. Will not assist in preparation of Church Information Form. The COM liaison will assist in determining who will prepare the mission study.
9. Will not be involved with the Pastor Nominating Committee, except to be supportive and request adequate reporting to the Session and congregation.
10. Will not, under any circumstance, become the next installed Pastor, Associate Pastor, or in any official ministerial capacity with the church with which she or he served as interim.
11. Interims will submit a written report to the COM quarterly (with a copy to the Executive Presbyter). (It is suggested that COM provide a form for this reporting).
12. Be accountable to the Session (ordinarily through the Personnel Committee) and the Presbytery (through the COM).

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE SESSION**

1. Provide support and encouragement for the Interim Pastor.
2. Review the work of the Interim Pastor (ordinarily through the Personnel Committee) at six-month intervals.
3. The contract may be extended by mutual consent between the Interim Pastor, the Session and the COM. Review the contract with the Interim Pastor for changes and/or extensions, if any, at least 90 days prior to the end of the contract.
4. Participate in the governing bodies of the denomination.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION**

1. Maintain active participation in the life and ministry of the church.
2. Continue financial support of the church for its ministries and mission.

3. Support the Interim Pastor and the Session in the ministry of the church and the community.
4. Sustain a high level of lay leadership and shared ministry.
5. Offer insights during the interim period.

#### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY**

1. The COM and Executive Presbyter will provide professional and pastoral support to the Interim Pastor, the session and the PNC during the interim period.
2. The COM and Executive Presbyter will assist the Session and the Interim Pastor with emerging needs.

#### **INITIATION AND TERMINATION OF THE CONTRACT**

1. Ordinarily, the compensation package for an Interim Pastor is 100% of the compensation package of the previous pastor. The compensation package for the part-time interim Pastor is prorated accordingly. Compensation packages for Interim Pastor positions must meet the Presbytery minimum compensation guidelines for pastoral positions.
2. The contract should indicate beginning and ending dates.
3. The contract may be terminated by any party (Session, Presbytery, Interim Pastor) upon submission of a 30- day written notice.
4. At the end of the Interim Pastor's service to the church, the Interim Pastor will receive in pay, earned (prorated) but unused vacation time, continuing education time, and continuing education allowance.
5. For all interim contracts over three months duration, the compensation package will be paid up to an additional 60 days beyond the actual termination date if the Interim Pastor has not secured a new position. No vacation or continuing education time or allowance will be accrued during the 60-day period. This will require the church to, at least quarterly, place in an escrow account funds to meet this expense.
6. If the Interim Pastor terminates the contract, there will be no 60-day extension of the compensation package.

## Interim Ministry Contract

Between

THE SESSION OF \_\_\_\_\_

THE PRESBYTERY OF \_\_\_\_\_

And

THE REVEREND \_\_\_\_\_

### EXPECTATIONS OF THE INTERIM

**The Interim Pastor agrees that she or he will:**

1. Serve as Moderator of Session and head of staff. (Interim Associate Pastors will not serve as Moderator or head of staff).
2. Provide preaching and worship leadership and officiate at weddings, funerals, and the sacraments.
3. Provide pastoral care for the congregation including hospital and crisis visitation with families and individuals.
4. Provide programmatic support for the church as approved by the Session.
5. Provide leadership concerning change and conflict management, healing, grief work, reconciliation, futuring, and other interim specialist skills, such as:
  - assist the church to claim its history,
  - help the church reassess its identity,
  - assist the church to cope with changes within the lay leadership.
  - help strengthen the church's connections with the denomination,
  - help prepare the congregation for new pastoral leadership.
6. Continue professional training by participation in Presbytery/Synod/General Assembly sponsored Interim Pastor support groups, study events and conferences.
7. In no way seek to become a candidate for the position of installed pastor.
8. Not be involved with the Pastor Nominating Committee except to be supportive and request that they make periodic reports to the Session and congregation.
9. Establish regular office hours.
10. Work at least \_\_\_\_ hours per week
11. Be accountable to the Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry and to the Session through the Personnel Committee.
12. Be an active member of the presbytery and in the presbytery's Interim Pastor's support group.

### EXPECTATIONS OF THE SESSION

**The Session agrees that it will:**

1. Provide support and encouragement for the Interim Pastor.

2. Review the work of the Interim Pastor (ordinarily through the Personnel Committee) at six-month intervals
3. The contract may be extended by mutual consent between the Interim Pastor, Session and the COM. Review the contract with the Interim Pastor for changes and extensions, if any, at least 90 days prior to the end of the contract.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY**

**The COM and Executive Presbyter agree that they will:**

1. Provide professional and pastoral support to the Interim Pastor.
2. Assist the Session and the Interim Pastor with emerging needs.

### **TERMS OF THE CONTRACT**

The compensation package for an Interim Pastor is a minimum of 100% of the compensation package of the previous pastor. The compensation package for the part-time interim Pastor is prorated accordingly.

**A. SALARY**

Base Salary	
Housing Allowance	
Social Security Allowance (7.65% of effective salary)	

**EFFECTIVE SALARY** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. BOARD OF PENSIONS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(full coverage for pension and major medical)

**TOTAL BENEFITS** \_\_\_\_\_

**C. REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES**

Automobile expenses (@ IRS mileage rate)	
Continuing Education	
Actual moving expenses (if applicable)	

**TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** \_\_\_\_\_

**D. NON-CASH BENEFITS**

1. Vacation time will be four weeks per year including four Sundays, accrued at the rate of 2.5 days for each month of service.

**E. EXPENSES UNIQUE TO THE INTERIM PERIOD (as applicable)**

1. Actual moving expense will be paid on the basis of the lowest or best offered service of two competitive bids.

**F. INITIATION AND TERMINATION OF THIS CONTRACT**

1. This contract is for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ months beginning \_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_.

2. The contract may be terminated by any party (Session, Presbytery, Interim Pastor) upon submission of a 30- day written notice.

3. At the end of the Interim Pastor's service to the church, the Interim Pastor will receive in pay, earned (prorated) but unused vacation time, continuing education time, and continuing education allowance.

4. For all interim contracts over three months duration, the compensation package will be paid up to an additional 60 days beyond the actual termination date if the Interim Pastor has not secured a new position. No vacation or continuing education time or allowance will be accrued during the 60-day period. This will require the church to, at least quarterly, place in an escrow account funds to meet that expense.

5. If the Interim Pastor terminates the contract, there will be no 60-day extension of the compensation package.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Session (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interim Pastor (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee on Ministry Representative (date)

## Mission Presbytery Policy Regarding Assessment and Appraisal of Pastors

### Guidelines

1. It is the policy of Mission Presbytery that the Session of each congregation in the Presbytery will conduct an annual appraisal of all installed, designated, or stated supply pastors of the church. This appraisal also includes review of compensation.

*(NOTE: it is also highly recommended that the Session conduct an annual appraisal of itself and of its relationship with the pastor(s). Sample evaluation criteria for all three of these--pastor, session and relationships between the two--based on the Book of Order, are available on the Mission Presbytery Website.)*

The annual review of Session minutes by the appropriate Presbytery Committee will look for documentation that this review has been conducted. Absent such documentation, the minutes will not be approved. If there was a change of pastors during the year of session minutes under review by the Presbytery Committee on Minutes, an “exit interview” with the departing pastor, noted in the minutes, will suffice in place of an annual review.

2. Some guidelines and ground rules for the annual appraisal are:

A. Criteria for the appraisal must have been established and agreed upon by both the session and the pastor(s) at least three months prior to the actual conducting of the appraisal with such criteria being documented in the minutes of the Session.

*(NOTE: a variety of criteria are available both on the Mission Presbytery website and via the Internet. One set of available criteria is taken from the vows taken by a pastor upon his / her installation as pastor (see below). Also available on the website are criteria for evaluating sessions and for evaluating the pastors relationship with the session.*

*The simplest criteria are:*

- 1. What we want the pastor to keep on doing*
- 2. What we want the pastor to do less of or stop doing*
- 3. What we want the pastor to do more of or start doing.)*

B. The pastor and the session must agree on the purpose(s) of the appraisal. These may include:

- a. The creation of goals and objectives for the future.
- b. Identifying areas where forgiveness needs to be asked for and granted.
- c. Building and deepening relationships through self-disclosure and feedback.
- d. Strengthening open and honest communication between all parties.
- e. Identifying problem areas AND to generating solutions for those problems.
- f. Clarifying understandings and expectations for both the pastor and the session regarding the work to be done and the results to be accomplished.
- g. Affirming the current and directing the future performance of the pastor.

Again, the purposes agreed upon should be documented in the Session minutes.

C. The process should be marked by the quality of “speaking the truth in love” and should never be used to punish, attack or condemn.

- D. At the conclusion of the evaluation process the Session should conduct an evaluation of the entire process using, perhaps, the following questions:
- a. Were the criteria used in the evaluation appropriate and helpful?
  - b. Were the criteria established and agreed up on by both the session and the pastor(s) at least three months prior to the evaluation being initiated?
  - c. Were the purposes for conducting the evaluation clear and appropriate?
  - d. In light of what we have learned from this experience:
    - what would we do the same next time
    - what would we do differently next time

**Evaluation Criteria Based for Ministers of Word and Sacrament,  
Elders and Deacons based on Ordination Vows in the Book of Order**

*(The following list of evaluation criteria is based on the vows taken at ordination and / or installation of pastors, elders or deacons in the Presbyterian Church USA. They are based specifically on G-14.0403 in the Book of Order. Outward evidence or manifestations of living according to these vows are not always that easy to see or describe. Therefore, Pastors or Sessions choosing to use these vows as criteria for evaluation may wish to, first of all, use them as a self assessment and then see what the Session or the appropriate committee of Session would add to the self assessment---in light of the original purpose of the assessment.)*

What are some recent activities or behaviors that would serve as evidence:

1. a That you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior?
1. b That you acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church?
1. c That through him you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. a That you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal?
2. b That the Scriptures are God's Word to you?
3. a That you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do?
3. b That you are being instructed and led by our confessions as you lead the people of God?
4. That you are functioning as a minister of the Word and Sacrament (or elder or deacon) in obedience to Jesus Christ? Under the authority of scripture? Continuously guided by our confessions?
5. a. That you are being governed by our church's polity?

- b. That you are abiding by its discipline?
  - c. That you are a friend among your colleagues in ministry?
  - d. That you are working with your colleagues in ministry subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
6. a. That you are seeking in your own life to follow the Lord Jesus Christ?
- b. That you love your neighbors?
  - c. That you are working for the reconciliation of the world?
7. a That you are furthering the peace, unity and purity of the church?
8. That you are serving the people with:
- a. Energy?
  - b. Intelligence?
  - c. Imagination?
  - d. Love?
9. a. That you are a faithful minister?
- b. That you are proclaiming the Good News in Word and Sacrament?
  - c. That you are teaching faith?
  - d. That you are caring for the people?
  - e. That you are active in the government and discipline of the church by serving in the governing bodies of the church?
  - f. That in your ministry you are showing the  
love of Jesus Christ, and the  
justice of Jesus Christ?

## **Ecclesiastical Endorsement of Ministers Serving in Specialized Pastoral Ministries**

### **Are you a candidate seeking an “endorsement” for chaplaincy or pastoral counseling that the professional organizations require and don’t know where to go for that?**

### **Are you a presbytery staff person or serve on your presbytery’s COM or CPM and wonder what is expected when you are asked for an “endorsement?”**

This information will assist the Committees on Ministry and Preparation in working with persons seeking ecclesiastical endorsement. 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. The following information is intended as a resource. Additional information is available from the professional organizations or from certified chaplains and pastoral counselors serving in each presbytery.

Ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament 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 their faith group. Endorsement and validation of the ministry by the faith group 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 Leadership and Vocation Area of the National Ministries Division, has prepared this information to assist both those persons who are seeking endorsement, certification, and/or validation of a ministry of pastoral care and those presbytery committees that have responsibility for endorsing persons and/or validating ministries of pastoral care.

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** - An official declaration by the presbytery of care/membership, that a person has met its criteria to serve in a ministry of chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, or clinical education.

**Certification** - 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 Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy), declare a person to be in compliance with professional standards as delineated by that professional organization.

**Validation** - An official declaration by the presbytery of care/membership, that a ministry complies with all of the criteria enumerated in G-11.0403, without exception.

### **Description of Processes**

**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

**Certification** is the process whereby professional certifying agencies such as APC, AAPC, ACPE, and CPSP declare a person to be in compliance with the professional standards as delineated by that professional organization.

Certification is the work of the professional organizations. Certification ordinarily addresses such core standards as:

- Clearly articulated professional standards
- Defined admission standards
- Articulated training standards
- Clinical supervisory responsibility and accountability
- Articulated certification steps and standards
- Code of ethics
- Clearly published fees
- Sustainment training and ongoing certification
- Defined disciplinary process
- Continuing professional formation and peer review

**Validation** is an official declaration by the presbytery of care/membership, that a ministry complies with all of the criteria enumerated in G-11.0403:

- a. The ministry shall be in demonstrable 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.
- b. The ministry shall be one that serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others.
- c. The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. This will normally require a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent, and the completion of the requirements for ordination set forth in G-14.0402.
- d. The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery and to organizations, agencies, and institutions.
- e. The ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation.

Validation of a ministry is the work of the Committee on Ministry (COM) of the presbytery of care/membership.

Our current provisions for the validation of ministries have their roots in a document from the General Assembly in 1954. It is an excellent piece of work; and it represents the first time that the General Assembly addressed the issue of constitutional standards for presbyteries to follow as they considered "validating" the work of ministers not in local parish settings. You will be interested to know that the word "validate" and its various forms do not appear in the 26-page (single spaced)

report to the General Assembly. So the term dates to some time after 1954, at which time this particular document was called "Overture J."

Richard Zimmerman, "The Roots of 'Validated' Ministry,"  
*The Presbyterian Outlook*. May 31, 2004. Page 7

The *Book of Order* directs that the COM shall be guided by written criteria developed by the presbytery for the validation of ministry within its bounds (G-11.0403). These criteria shall be based upon the description of the nature of the ordained office found in G-6.0100 and G-6.0200.

Ministries in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church shall be reviewed by the Committee on Ministry in order to ascertain if the ministry itself is "consonant with the mission of the presbytery" (G-11.0411). In addition, the COM shall determine if the ministry meets the following standards (G-11.0403):

- The ministry of continuing members shall be in demonstrable 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.
- The ministry shall be one that serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others.
- The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. This will normally require the Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent and the completion of the requirements for ordination set forth in G-14.0402.
- The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery and to organizations, agencies, and institutions.
- The ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation.

In addition, it is wise for the COM to inquire concerning:

- The status of the minister in the ministry being reviewed pertaining to sense of call, suitability for the position, and capacity to fulfill all Constitutional criteria while serving in the ministry;
- If the ministry is carried out in accountability for its character, conduct and performance to a board of directors, a management committee, or others responsible for the total ministry program.

Each minister in a validated ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church shall complete the report requested by the COM annually.

While this information primarily refers to the endorsement, certification and validation of ministry for persons in pastoral care and counseling, it is hoped that this information is also helpful to COMs and CPMs as they work with candidates seeking ordination or ministers seeking validation of other specialized ministries.

Section Four of the *Committee on Ministry Handbook* contains an excellent discussion of the standards in G-11.0403 as they apply to validated ministries and selected *Book of Order* statements about validated ministries.

#### Best Practices

#### **Ideas for supporting persons in specialized pastoral ministries**

- ~ Recognize persons in specialized ministries at Presbytery meetings and in Presbytery minutes
- ~ Provide an annual review of ministry
- ~ Visit the place of ministry by EP, pastor to pastor, mentor, and/or COM liaison
- ~ Encourage persons with pastoral gifts to serve on Presbytery committees
- ~ Encourage specialized ministers to serve as parish associates in local congregations
- ~ Install persons in specialized ministries as is done with ministers in congregational settings
- ~ Provide friendship/support/peer-group for persons in specialized pastoral ministries
- ~ Provide retreats and educational events for persons in specialized pastoral ministries
- ~ Nominate certified professionals to sit on COM and CPM

#### **PROFESSIONAL PASTORAL CARE ORGANIZATIONS**

The following professional organizations will provide information about their certification requirements:

##### **American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC)**

9504A Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22031-2303  
703-385-6967  
[www.aapc.org](http://www.aapc.org)

##### **Association of Professional Chaplains (APC)**

1701 E. Woodfield Rd, Suite 311  
Schaumburg, IL 60173  
847-240-1014  
[www.professionalchaplains.org](http://www.professionalchaplains.org)

##### **Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE)**

1549 Clairmont Road, Suite 103  
Decatur, GA 30033  
404-320-1472  
[www.acpe.edu](http://www.acpe.edu)

##### **College of Pastoral Supervision & Psychotherapy (CPSP)**

P.O. Box 162  
432 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street, 2 - W  
New York, NY 10036  
212-307-1537  
[www.cpsp.org](http://www.cpsp.org)

##### **National Institute of Business & Industrial Chaplains (NIBIC)**

1770 St. James Place, Suite 550  
Houston, TX 77056  
713-266-2456  
[www.nibic.com](http://www.nibic.com)

The following documents, found on the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) web site, [www.professionalchaplains.org](http://www.professionalchaplains.org), can be helpful as Committees on Ministry and Preparation consider the endorsement process:

Common Code of Professional Ethics

Common Standards for Professional Chaplaincy

Professional Chaplaincy: Its Role and Importance in Healthcare

## Mission Presbytery Policy for Commissioned Lay Pastors

### Description of Lay Pastor

The commissioned lay pastor is an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. (G-14.0801)

### Purpose of Program

The Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP) program was created for the purpose of providing a course of study for lay pastoral leaders contracted to serve congregations, new church developments or validated ministries that are financially unable to call an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. In Mission Presbytery this is a vital opportunity for service because many of our more than 77 congregations of fewer than 100 members find themselves in this financial situation.

### Certified and Commissioned Lay Pastors

Completion of the Lay Pastor training program, including examination, allows an individual to become a Certified Lay Pastor. A Certified Lay Pastor is an elder who is equipped to receive a commission to a congregation, new church development or validated ministry. ***However, becoming a Certified Lay Pastor does not guarantee a commission.*** A Commissioned Lay Pastor is a Certified Lay Pastor who has received a commission from the Presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service.

### Quality of Life and Gifts Desired of a Commissioned Lay Pastor

Those called to be Commissioned Lay Pastors are to be men and women of *“strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.”* (G-6.0106) *“They are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness.”* (G-60106-b)

They are to possess *“suitable gifts and abilities, natural and acquired”* (G-60106) *which equip them “for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for administering Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, for praying with and for the congregation. With the elders, the ‘Commissioned Lay Pastor’ is to encourage the people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision making of the church, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole.”* (G-6.0202b)

***Prerequisites:***

1. Candidates must be an elder within the PCUSA.
2. Ordinarily the candidates must have completed the Mission Presbytery Lay Leadership Institute program.

***Application Process:***

Step 1: An elder within a congregation of Mission Presbytery will seek the endorsement of his or her session to apply to the CLP program. The elder shall have been a member of his or her particular church for a minimum of one year. The session is to consider the applicant's faith, gifts and sense of call in their decision to make an endorsement.

Step 2: The elder, once endorsed by his or her session, will make application to the Committee on Ministry CLP Subcommittee. This application will include the following:

- the elder's basic personal information (name, address, etc.)
- an endorsement letter from the elder's session
- a letter of reference from the elder's LLI supervisor
- a statement of the elder's faith and sense of call
- a history of the elder's service to the church (elder, Sunday school teacher, etc.).

A deadline for receiving applications will be set for each class. Applications must be received by Mission Presbytery prior to the deadline in order to be considered.

Step 3: The elder will request and receive an interview with the COM CLP subcommittee. During this interview the elder will be asked to describe his or her sense of call to the CLP ministry. In addition, the subcommittee may ask questions over any of the information received in the application. This shall also include consideration of G-6.0106b.

Step 4: Once the interview is complete the subcommittee will vote on the elders' applications. If more applications are received than there are spaces available, the subcommittee will attempt to select applicants in such a way as to reflect the diversity (racial, economic, male/female, geographic) within the presbytery.

**Educational Process (overview)**

Ordinarily the educational process will be composed of at least 6 weekend sessions. These sessions will cover the following topics:

1. Introduction to the Lay Pastor Program
2. Pastoral care
3. Christian Education
4. Preaching
5. Worship and Sacraments

## 6. Nuts and Bolts of Ministry

These classes will include outside reading (prior to class), written reports, lectures, class discussion and projects. Class size will be limited to 20 participants. A final comprehensive examination will be given following the final class.

### **Educational Process (detailed)**

#### 1. Introduction to the Lay Pastor Program

At the completion of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *reflect on their sense of call to ministry*
- *offer an understanding of servant leadership*
- *discuss the limitations on the authority given to CLPs*
- *discuss the responsibilities of CLPs to their church entities and their relationship with the greater church*
- *explain the difference between a Certified and Commissioned Lay Pastor*

#### 2. Pastoral Care

At the completion of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *offer a Biblical perspective on pastoral care*
- *demonstrate active listening skills*
- *role-play a hospital call*
- *give an overview of the grief process*
- *explain when and how to refer individuals for counseling*
- *discuss appropriate boundaries (sexual, financial, interpersonal)*

#### 3. Christian Education

At the completion of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *offer a Biblical perspective on teaching ministry*
- *demonstrate a familiarity with faith development/formation*
- *discuss various learning modalities*
- *demonstrate an awareness of Presbyterian curriculum*
- *demonstrate an awareness of the Mission Presbytery resource centers*
- *discuss the dynamics of Christian Education in small membership churches*

#### 4. Preaching

At the completion of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *discuss the Reformed understanding of the importance of the proclamation of the Word*
- *explain the purpose and use of the lectionary*
- *explain the exegetical process*
- *discuss resources available for assistance in sermon preparation*
- *discuss a variety of preaching styles (expositional, etc.)*
- *discuss techniques of delivery*

#### 5. Worship and Sacraments

At the completion of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *discuss the reformed understanding of worship*

- *discuss the Reformed understanding of the sacraments*
- *explain the Book of Order rules and regulations of administering the sacraments*
- *describe and explain the elements and order of worship (for Service of the Lord's Day and Services of the Resurrection)*
- *Demonstrate the ability to appropriately conduct baptisms and to serve at the Lord's Table.*

#### 6. Nuts and Bolts of Ministry

At the end of this session the candidate should be able to:

- *explain the various roles and records (including minutes) required by the Book of Order and how they are physically kept*
- *demonstrate an ability to understand and interpret a church budget*
- *discuss the annual report*
- *demonstrate an understanding of how they are compensated and the tax implications there of*
- *explain the legal limits of their ability to perform weddings*
- *demonstrate their understanding of church incorporation and church tax issues*

#### **The Process of Contracting to be a Commissioned Lay Pastor**

1. Once a possible match with a qualified ministry has been found the candidate shall undergo a psychological evaluation and a criminal background check.
2. The candidate shall be examined for fitness to the task by the COM subcommittee on CLP as per the Book of Order. (G-14.0801) (Don's note: This would be changed to include examination by the Examinations Committee of COM)
3. The candidate shall interview with the appropriate "search" group from the church entity.
4. The church will seek presbytery permission to contract with the CLP.
5. The COM will assist the church entity and the CLP in creating a job description and acceptable contract terms (including salary, benefits and hours to be worked).
6. The COM will vote on the match and terms of the contract.
7. Presbytery will vote on the recommendation of the COM. (Don's note: This would be changed to: Presbytery will commission the COM approved candidate.)

#### **Qualifications to be a Commissioned Lay Pastor led church**

1. The church must not be able to afford the presbytery minimum salary package.
2. The church must make application to the presbytery.
  - the application will include a brief history of the church, current financial status, the mission study listed below, and a vote of the session to enter into the CLP process.
3. The church must be willing to engage in a mission study examining their current and future plans for ministry and mission.
4. The church must first be willing to consider alternatives to the CLP program such as service by a part-time Minister of Word and Sacrament, yoking or merging where

such alternatives are possible. This does not mean they must do so, only seriously consider the possibilities.

5. The church must be willing to compensate the CLP for their time and effort. This will include salary and professional allowances (mileage and continuing education).

#### **Requirements for Certified Lay Pastors moving to Mission Presbytery**

An already Certified Lay Pastor moving into Mission Presbytery may be considered for a CLP position after the following:

1. Receipt of a letter from the elder's previous presbytery of residence:
  - Certifying they were an elder in good standing in their previous congregation
  - Certifying that the elder had completed the previous presbytery's CLP program.
  - Listing the areas of study completed in the previous presbytery's CLP program
2. Being a member in good standing of congregation of Mission Presbytery for at least 6 months
3. Making application to Mission Presbytery
4. Receiving the endorsement of his or her session
5. Being examined by the CLP subcommittee of Mission Presbytery

#### **Parameters of Work**

1. This commission is valid ***only*** in one or more congregations, new church developments or other validated ministries of the presbytery ***designated*** by the presbytery.
2. With the permission of the session of the particular church and the approval of Committee on Ministry the Commissioned Lay Pastor may perform the services listed below. -
  - Administer the Sacrament of Baptism
  - Moderate the session of the congregation under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery.
  - Have a voice in presbytery meetings
  - Have a vote in presbytery meetings
  - Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or responsible presbytery committee, and when allowed by the state.
3. This commission shall be valid for a period of up to three years as determined by the presbytery. It may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery. G-14.0801b
4. An elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in a particular congregation may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform functions as a Commissioned Lay Pastor until appointed again to a particular congregation by the presbytery.

### **Support and Supervision of Commissioned Lay Pastor**

1. The COM will assign a mentor to work with the CLP.
2. The COM will provide resources for the continuing spiritual and intellectual growth of the CLP.
3. In conjunction with the session, the COM will conduct an annual review of the work of the CLP.

## **Grievance Procedure**

**PREAMBLE** – We declare that the members of \_\_\_\_\_ church are brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ. As brothers and sisters we attempt to love one another even as we have been loved by Christ. Yet we also recognize that people of good faith disagree about issues and actions, great and small. Therefore, this Grievance Procedure and Agreement is established as a process for the clarification of issues and the encouragement of reconciliation between members of Christ’s body when they disagree.

### **PROCEDURE**

- A. When a member has a concern or grievance involving the pastor, educator or a member of the church staff, such grievance should be reported in writing to the Clerk of Session. The Clerk of Session will respond in writing that the grievance has been received, and will outline the grievance process to be followed. Book of Order, D-10.0000.
  
- B. For all other matters relating to the ministry and mission of the congregation, the following procedure will apply.
  1. All complaints will be presented in writing to the Clerk of Session and the Moderator of the Session (pastor) with copies for the elders. “The Session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church.” Book of Order, G-10.0102.
  2. The Clerk, in consultation with the pastor will respond in writing that the complaint has been received and will inform the member when the Session will hear the complaint. A copy of this Grievance Procedure and Book of Order chapters G-5.0102 and G-10.0102 will be sent to the complaining member. The member shall sign, date and return the Grievance Procedure Agreement to the Clerk of Session or pastor before the complaint will be heard.
  3. The member will read the written complaint in person at the appointed Session meeting.
  4. Elders will ask clarifying questions to verify the complaint has been understood.
  5. Responses will be invited from the elders about the complaint.
  6. Follow-up questions from the member will be received.
  7. The Session will render an opinion, explanation or remedy if possible at that meeting. If further research or deliberation is needed by the elders, a written response will be delivered in a timely fashion.
  8. In every case, a written response will be recorded by the Session, and delivered to the member.
  9. “The Session of a church has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members of that church.” Book of Order, D-3.0101a.
  10. If no mutually satisfying conclusion or solution can be found for the member, the Session will look for other remedies. Any appeal of the session’s decision shall follow the Book of Order.

**Grievance Procedure Agreement**

Please sign and return to the Clerk of Session or Pastor. Thank you.

I accept and will abide by the terms of this Grievance Procedure Agreement.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

**Dissemination and Review Process for Mission Presbytery Policies Concerning Ministers and Educators**

1. Upon their adoption, a copy of these policies shall be sent to all pastors and clerks of sessions.
2. Upon their adoption, a copy of these policies shall be included in Mission Presbytery's Manual of Operations.
3. Upon their adoption, a copy of these policies shall be posted on Mission Presbytery's web site.
4. The Committee on Ministry, during its triennial visits shall inquire of sessions if they have reviewed these materials.
5. The Clerks Committee shall, when reading session minutes, look for evidence that sessions have reviewed these materials, and have completed a review of their pastors and sessions.
6. The Pastoral Care Division shall annually review these materials.
7. The Committee on Ministry shall annually review these materials.