

**Eastern Oregon Presbytery  
Committee on Ministry Manual  
Approved on \_\_\_\_\_**

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## **Section 1: Eastern Oregon Presbytery and its Committee on Ministry**

The Committee on Ministry (COM)'s purpose grows out of four primary commitments as outlined in G.0307 & G-30303 (2019-2021):

- 1) Serve as pastor, advisor, and counselor to the Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE's), and Certified Christian Educators of this Presbytery.
- 2) Facilitate relationships between congregations, Teaching Elders, CRE's and Certified Christian Educators.
- 3) Mediate difficulties on behalf of the presbytery between congregations, Teaching Elders, CRE's, and Certified Christian Educators.
- 4) Guide, nurture and oversee individuals in their preparation to become a Teaching Elder.

Therefore, COM shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to fulfill that responsibility as outlined in the Book of Order (G-2.0505 and G-2.07-2.11) and from EOP's Manual of Operations and shall

- a. Report to the Presbytery at the first meeting of the year that the "Terms of Call" for all Pastors working within the bounds of EOP meet the Presbytery's minimum required "Terms of Call";
- b. Grant permission to ministers to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery and report to Presbytery for approval at the next Presbytery meeting;
- c. Review annually the validated ministries of non-installed ministers and report to Presbytery for approval;
- d. Review annually the commission of Certified Ruling Elders and report to Presbytery for approval;
- e. Care and support the Retired Teaching Elders of EOP;
- f. When time is of the essence, COM may act to dissolve a pastoral relationship between a congregation and pastor when and if both the congregation and the pastor concur;
- g. Develop and empower task forces or individuals to address specific responsibilities as necessary;
- h. Perform such duties as Presbytery shall properly assign to COM in keeping with the Book of Order and Eastern Oregon Presbytery By-Laws;

i. Provide support to local congregations and other entities of Presbytery in times of crisis. Requests for support may come from the Presbytery, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery Council, local sessions, pastors, or individuals from churches within the Presbytery;

j. COM shall designate a person or persons, normally a Teaching Elder, whose task shall be to provide oversight and guidance for the education and training of Ruling Elders for special service as Commissioned Ruling Elders; and

k. COM shall designate a person or persons, normally a Teaching Elder, whose task shall be to provide oversight and guidance to inquirers and candidates in their efforts toward a calling to professional ministry. COM will functionally fill the role of a Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM).

**Membership:** COM membership shall consist of a minimum of five members with representation of both Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. These members shall:

- Attend regular COM meetings as called by the COM Chair or Presbytery.
- Have regular contact with assigned churches in EOP.
- Assume special assignments as requested.
- Work with congregations, sessions, and pastors of assigned churches when problems develop.
- Assist sessions, congregations, and pastors of assigned churches in times of transitions.
- Work with the Pastor Nominating Committee of assigned churches as advisor and resource person.
- Coordinate and participate in triennial visits to sessions, candidate interviews, and other times as required.
- Participate in COM retreat and training events, including Sexual Misconduct Training
- Abide by the “Code of Ethics for COM Members.” See Appendix 1A

## **Appendix 1A-Code of Ethics for COM Members**

- 1) I will keep confidential all information and discussions of the Committee on Ministry. I will not share it with colleagues, friends, spouse or anyone without permission except as required by law, the *Book of Order*, or the presbytery.
  
- 2) I will not give a reference concerning a teaching elder of the presbytery unless I have been listed by that person as a reference or otherwise approved in writing by that person. When giving references I will confine my answers to matters on which I have direct knowledge and competence or which could be substantiated by public records. I will not knowingly libel or slander a colleague in ministry.
  
- 3) I will be discreet in the way I conduct myself as a member of the Committee on Ministry. I will not knowingly take actions that would embarrass colleagues or signal others that “trouble” exists when they would not be entitled to that knowledge.
  
- 4) I will treat all my colleagues and churches of the presbytery fairly and equally.
  
- 5) I will avoid conflicts of interest by absenting myself from deliberations of the Committee on Ministry when matters are introduced which pertain to my personal interests or the interests of my particular congregation or a congregation I have served in the past.
  
- 6) I will not use my relationships with other members of the Committee on Ministry to attempt to influence the outcome of matters which pertain to my personal interests or the interests of my particular church.
  
- 7) I will be available within reason to ministers and session members of the presbytery who ask me to hear them. I will warn them that certain matters (as child abuse and sexual misconduct) must be reported to secular authorities and/or the courts of the Church.
  
- 8) I will not accept remunerations or personal gifts from ministers of the Word and Sacrament or congregations of the presbytery, except as honoraria for preaching, moderating session or a congregational meeting, or other reimbursable expenses agreed upon. I will report any and all such gifts to the Committee on Ministry and will accept its counsel in the disposition of such gifts.

9) I will respect the advice, counsel, and decisions of the Committee on Ministry and the staff of EOP. In working with congregations and teaching elders, I will remember that I am an agent of the COM. I will act only with authority given to me by the COM. I will fairly represent the position of the COM and will not present my own personal position or views as the position of the COM when my position or views may be different from those of the COM. I will comply with and be guided by the *Book of Order*.

10) I will conduct myself ethically in all the ways expected of ruling and teaching elders.

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**Signature**

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**Date**

## Appendix 1B: Motions - Examples

The following represent only the most common motions normally coming before presbytery.

1. State the Teaching Elder's full name in every instance: "The Rev. John Quincy Brown".
2. Whenever terms of call are given, verify that presbytery minimums are met.
3. Even if a pastor serves less than full time, vacation and study leave are quoted as four weeks and two weeks, respectively. This is because all their terms are prorated; e.g., a half time pastor receives four weeks of vacation at half time and two weeks of study leave at half time.
4. Whenever a Teaching Elder transfers into EOP, a two page document is placed in the COM's' Report for presbytery. this material includes:
  - a. One-page, front and back, statement of faith
  - b. One-page resume including brief outline of pastoral experience, educational background, and ecclesiastical status, and may include additional information such as other experience and community service.



**Form for Motions**

**Call of Pastor(Already Ordained)**

City, Name of Congregation

- A. Concur in the action of (church), (city), (state), taken at a congregational meeting held on (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to call The Rev. (name) to serve as their (full time or part time \_\_\_\_\_ %) (associate, designated, or co-) pastor beginning (date), with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each six years of service.			

- B. Request the transfer of The Rev. (name) from the Presbytery of (name) and enroll as a member of EOP upon receipt of transfer (or enroll following ordination, or [rarely] contract until approval of ordination and/or call). Resume and Statement of Faith attached.
- C. Grant The Rev. (name) permission to moderate the session until his/her installation.
- D. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity requirements have been met.
- E. Sexual Misconduct Policy sign-off has been received.
- F. Express appreciation to The Rev. (name) for his/her services as moderator of session (or as Interim Pastor) of the (name) Presbyterian Church.
- G. Appoint the following Administrative Commission to install The Rev. (name) as (associate, designated, co-) pastor of (church), (city), (state), on (date), at (hour):
1. Vice Moderator or his/her designee
  2. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  3. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  4. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_

**Call of Pastor (if calling a candidate not yet ordained)**

City, Name of Congregation

- A. Concur in the action of (church), (city), (state), taken at a congregational meeting held on (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to call The Rev. (name) to serve as their (full time or part time \_\_\_\_\_ %) (associate, designated, or co-) pastor beginning (date), with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each six years of service.			

- B. Request the stated clerk to enroll (name) as a Teaching Elder following ordination and installation and report these actions to the General Assembly, the presbytery of care and to the congregation of which the candidate was formerly a member. Resume and Statement of Faith attached. [see G-2.0704 for this language]
- C. Grant The Rev. (name) permission to moderate the session until his/her installation.
- D. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity requirements have been met.
- E. Sexual Misconduct Policy sign-off has been received.
- F. Express appreciation to The Rev. (name) for his/her services as moderator of session (or as Interim Pastor) of the (name) Presbyterian Church.
- G. Concur in the action of (church), (city), (state), taken at a congregational meeting held on (date) moderated by The Rev. (name), to employ (name) beginning (date), pending satisfactory completion of the requirements for ordination, his/her examination and ordination in (month and year), and call to serve as (associate) pastor.
- H. From the date of \_\_\_\_\_, until the time of his/her installation as (associate) pastor, (name) be granted permission to serve as a non-ordained employee of (church), (city), (state), at the same terms as for her/his employment as (associate) pastor.
- I. Appoint the following Administrative Commission to install The Rev. (name) as (associate, designated, co-) pastor of (church), (city), (state), on (date), at (hour):
1. Vice Moderator or his/her designee
  2. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  3. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  4. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_

**Designated Pastor (to convert call from designated to called)**

City, Name of Congregation

- A. Concur in action taken by (church), (city), (state), taken at a congregational meeting held on (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to convert the call of The Rev. (name) from designated pastor in order to serve as their (full time or part time \_\_\_\_\_%) (associate, co-) pastor beginning (date), with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each six years of service.			

- B. Appoint the following Administrative Commission to install The Rev. (name) as (associate, co-) pastor of (church), (city), (state), on (date), at (hour):
1. Vice Moderator or his/her designee
  2. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  3. Ruling Elder \_\_\_\_\_, name of congregation
  4. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Teaching Elder \_\_\_\_\_

**Dissolution**

City, Name of Congregation

- A. Concur in the request of (Teaching Elder's name) and (church), (city), (state), taken at a (session or congregational) meeting held (date), moderated by The Rev. (full name), to dissolve the (pastoral, associate pastoral, temporary, designated pastoral, interim pastoral) relationship between them effective (date). Prior to this effective date, (amount) days/weeks of accrued unused vacation time will be paid.
- B. Grant permission to the session to fill the pulpit.
- C. Appoint The Rev. (name) as moderator of session
- D. **[If applicable]** Concur in the request taken at a congregational meeting held (date), to grant The Rev. (name) status of Pastor Emeritus without remuneration.
- E. **[If applicable]** A severance package has been arranged retaining his/her compensation, pension, medical, death and disability for a period of four to six months. If he/she secures full employment before the severance period has elapsed, this compensation will cease. If he/she secures partial employment during the severance period, the church will make up the difference until (last day of the severance period).
- F. **[If applicable]** The parish associate relationship with The Rev. (name) concluded on (date).

**Enroll**

The Rev. (full name)

Request the transfer of The Rev. (name) from the Presbytery of (name) and enroll as a member of EOP upon receipt of transfer. Resume and Statement of Faith attached.

**Enroll Following Ordination**

The Rev. (full name)

Request the transfer of The Rev. (name) from the Presbytery of (name) and enroll as a member of EOP following his/her ordination and receipt of transfer. Resume and Statement of Faith attached.

**Retired**

The Rev. (full name)

Grant the status of Retired to The Rev. (name) effective (date).

**Increase (or Decrease) Pastor’s Time**

City, Name of Congregation

Concur in the action of (church), (city), (state), taken at a congregational meeting held (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to increase/decrease from \_\_\_% time to \_\_\_\_\_% percent time the pastoral relationship with The Rev. (name), beginning (date), with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			

**Interim Pastor**

City, Name of Congregation

- A. Concur in the action of (name) Presbyterian Church, (city), (state), taken at a session meeting held (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to invite The Rev. (name), to serve as their (full time or part time %) interim pastor beginning (date) and ending (date), with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			

- B. Request the transfer of The Rev. (name) from the Presbytery of (name) and enroll as a member of EOP upon receipt of transfer (or enroll following ordination, or [rarely] contract until approval of ordination and/or call). Resume and Statement of Faith attached.
- C. Grant The Rev. (name) permission to moderate the session.
- D. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity requirements have been met.
- E. Sexual Misconduct Policy sign-off has been received.

**Labor Inside the Bounds of Presbytery**

The Rev. (full name)

Grant permission to The Rev. (name), to labor within the bounds of EOP, contingent upon receipt of permission for The Rev. (name) to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery (name) and grant corresponding member status to The Rev. (name) for the term of service in EOP.

**Labor Outside the Bounds of Presbytery - Geographical**

The Rev. (full name)

Grant permission to The Rev. (name) to labor outside the geographical bounds of EOP, in (name) Presbytery upon consent of that Presbytery, effective (date), while doing (specify). [To be reviewed for renewal annually.]

**Labor Outside the Bounds of Presbytery - Ecclesiastical**

The Rev. (full name)

Grant permission to The Rev. (name) to labor outside the ecclesiastical bounds of EOP, in (name) [denomination/governing body] upon consent of that governing body, effective (date), while doing (specify). [To be reviewed for renewal annually.]

## **Member-at-Large**

The Rev. (full name)

Place the name of The Rev. (name) on the roll of Members at Large.

## **Parish Associate**

City, Name of Congregation

Concur in the action of (church), (city), (state), taken at a session meeting held (date), moderated by The Rev. (name), to (establish/renew) a parish associate relationship (with/without) remuneration with The Rev. (name). [To be reviewed for renewal annually.]

## **Release from Exercise of Ordained Office**

The Rev. (full name)

Concur in the request of The Rev. (name) to be released from the exercise of ordained office in accord with G-2.0507. [Possible addition: and to grant a certificate of membership to (church)]

## **Removal from Roll**

The Rev. (full name)

Remove the name of The Rev. (name) from the roll of EOP for the following reason: (Book of Order citation).

## **Sexual Misconduct Exemption Waiver**

The Rev. (name)

Grant The Rev. (name) a waiver of exemption from the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Refresher Course required by EOP due to the fact that he/she is no longer involved in active ministry.

## Temporary Pastoral Relationship

### City, Name of Congregation

- A. Appoint The Rev. (name), as their (full time or part time %) temporary pastor beginning (date), with annual terms as follows. This action in accord with action taken by the session on (date) with The Rev. (name) serving as moderator.

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			

- B. Request the transfer of The Rev. (name) from the Presbytery of (name) and enroll as a member of EOP upon receipt of transfer (or enroll following ordination, or [rarely] contract until approval of ordination and/or call). Resume and Statement of Faith attached.
- C. Grant The Rev. (name) permission to moderate the session.
- D. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity requirements have been met.
- E. Sexual Misconduct Policy sign-off has been received.

### Transfer Out

#### The Rev. (full name)

Transfer The Rev. (name) to (name) Presbytery upon its request so that s/he may accept a call to serve as (state the position and location).

### Validation

#### The Rev. (full name)

Validate the ministry of The Rev. (name) as (describe the position and location). [To be reviewed for renewal annually.]

## **Appendix 1C: Appeals of Decisions by COM**

The appeals process may take one of two forms. The first is the process available to any member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) as outlined in our constitution. The second is the process available to those within EOP in response to a decision made by the COM.

### **1. Appeals in the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

The *Book of Order* describes the process of filing a dissent or protest that any member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) may take. A written notice is to be submitted to the stated clerk at the particular meeting of the action that is being appealed. The dissent or protest shall be entered into the minutes as well as any possible response to the protest.

Section D-6.0000 describes the process for filing a complaint which initiates a remedial case. A written complaint must be filed within three months of the action protested. The complaint shall state the name of the complainant, the respondent, the details of the irregularity or delinquency, the reasons for the complaint, the interest of the complainant, the relief requested, and a certification that the complaint has been delivered. Once a complaint is received, the process as described in Section D-6.0000 is to be followed.

### **2. Appeals of EOP Committee on Ministry Decisions**

Congregations or a teaching elder who wish to appeal a decision of the COM should address the appeal to the Eastern Oregon Presbytery Council through the stated clerk of the presbytery. The Council will use one or more of the following processes:

1. It may render an advisory opinion on the merits of the appeal to both the COM and the appellant. Such an advisory opinion cannot override the inherent authority of the COM.
2. It may appoint a special committee to investigate the issues in debate and issue an advisory opinion to both the COM and the appellant. The special committee shall be composed of at least two non-COM members from the Presbytery Council not connected to the church in question. This special committee must be composed of at least one teaching elder and one ruling elder.
3. It may advise the appellant that the proper avenue of appeal is not to COM, but to Presbytery Council in cases of presbytery policy and operations, or to the floor of the Presbytery in cases of interpretation or discipline.
4. It may advise the appellant that he or she also has access to the processes for redress as outlined in the Rules of Discipline.



## **Section 2: EOP and Its Teaching Elders**

As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be teaching elders, so the church confirms that call through the action of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work may be helpful to the church in mission and is a call to validated ministry requiring ordination as a teaching elder. In the performance of that ministry, the teaching elder shall be accountable to the presbytery. Teaching elders have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery. [G-2.0502]

### **2.1 The Teaching Elders of Presbytery**

“A teaching elder is a member of presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry validated by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or retired.” [G-2.0503]

#### **2.1a Validated Ministry [G-2.0503a]**

See Appendix 2A for criteria for validation of ministry. 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).

#### **2.1b Member-at-Large [G-2.503b]**

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

presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of member-at-large shall be reviewed annually.” [G-2.0503b]

### **2.1c Retired [G-2.0503c]**

“Upon request of a member of presbytery, the presbytery may designate the member retired.” [G-2.0503c]

## **2.2 Roles and Functions of the COM Regarding Teaching Elders**

### **2.2a Conduct Annual Visits with Members**

COM shall visit regularly and consult with each Teaching Elder and report to the presbytery annually.

### **2.2b Receive Communications [G-3.0307]**

The COM shall be open to communication at all times with Teaching Elders, ruling elders, commissioned ruling elders, and Certified Christian Educators within the presbytery.

### **2.2c Examine Teaching Elders for Membership [G-3.0306]**

Every Teaching Elder must be examined before becoming a member of presbytery. The purpose of the examination is to see that the individual has a valid call and is theologically within the standards of the presbytery. In addition, the examination seeks to assure a good match between the person and the field of ministry.

A criminal background check shall be conducted as a part of the executive reference check for Teaching Elders seeking to be received into the EOP. The cost of the reference check shall be borne by the presbytery. The background check shall be done before the COM interview of the candidate.

Each candidate shall have an initial examination for membership in EOP by COM (see Appendix 2B) and then have an examination in front of the entire presbytery at its next stated meeting or a specially called meeting of the presbytery council if there are time constraints. The purpose of the initial examination by COM is to make sure there are no major concerns with the candidate. If there are concerns raised in the initial interview, COM shall notify the Pastor Nominating Committee about those concerns. The PNC may then seek another candidate for examination by the COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of presbytery. COM shall report its concerns to EOP before the examination.

### **2.2d Implement Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity**

The COM is responsible for orienting every Pastor Nominating Committee regarding AA/EEO, and taking steps to assure that every search is conducted to fulfill AA/EEO requirements.

Thus, every Teaching Elder, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, age, marital status, or disability will be assured equal consideration by each search committee.

### **2.2e Dismiss Teaching Elders to Another Presbytery [G-2.0502]**

The COM, acting on behalf of presbytery, can grant transfers, or when it sees fit, deny transfers of its Teaching Elders to other presbyteries.

### **2.2f Grant Permission to Labor In or Out of Bounds [G-2.0502]**

Sometimes it is appropriate to grant a Teaching Elder permission to labor in a geographical or ecclesiastical boundary other than his or her own. The granting of permission must always be mutual, involving both ecclesiastical judicatories.

### **2.2g Receive Ministers from Other Denominations [G-2.0505]**

Occasionally ministers from other denominations may seek to respond to a call within the presbytery. In such cases, the requirements of the *Book of Order* will need to be followed closely. See Appendix 2D.

### **2.2h Provide Oversight/Ecclesiastical Services for Retired Pastors [G-2.0502]**

Presbytery is encouraged to receive, as active members, retired Teaching Elders living within its bounds. Where appropriate, it will encourage continued involvement in the life of the church, and, when necessary, will provide nurture and support.

## **2.3 Professional Ethics**

### **2.3a Code of Ethics**

Every Teaching Elder is held to a high standard of conduct as an expression of her or his ordination vows. EOP approves for its Teaching Elders the “Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” (Appendix 2E). These standards apply to all interactions personal and public with individuals, groups, and organizations whether those interactions are face-to-face, or through any form of media be it social, public, or private.

### **2.3b Required Trainings**

Every Teaching Elder of EOP is required to attend a presbytery sponsored and conducted workshop intended to prevent misconduct in the church in the areas of sexual misconduct, child abuse prevention, and harrassment prevention. Attendance at a similar workshop preapproved by EOP may be permitted in some circumstances. Presbytery will offer these workshops regularly.

All people active in any form of pastoral ministry are required to take a presbytery approved refresher training in each required area once every three years. Record of attendance is made a part of the permanent record of each Teaching Elder of EOP.

In addition to these trainings, EOP maintains “A Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct” and requires every Teaching Elder who is a member of presbytery to sign a statement indicating that he or she has read the document and acknowledges that the policy applies to himself or herself.

Exemptions from the requirement of attending a presbytery-approved Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Workshop may be granted only by formal action of the COM solely on the basis of either of the following grounds for exemption:

1. no longer doing any form of ministry and having signed a statement to that effect, or
2. being incapacitated by reasons of health and/or age.

Any person in a pastoral ministry failing to attend a training after three or more invitations shall be excluded from ministerial services which fall under COM authority. A notice will be sent out to clerks of Session in the presbytery that this Teaching Elder is not available for active ministry without the approval of COM.

The determination will be made by the COM and exclusions may include, but are not limited to, pulpit supply listing, interim ministry positions, moderating session and congregational meetings, validation of ministry, and service on presbytery commissions and committees.

### **2.3c Fiduciary Accountability**

Unethical behavior includes stealing, using church monies in ways other than those for which they were contributed, borrowing from members of the congregation for personal use, and failure to act responsibly with either church or personal finances.

### **2.3d Separation Ethics**

In all cases of the ending of a pastoral relationship it is imperative that the departing Teaching Elder have special responsibility for observing appropriate ethical standards so that a congregation can be free, in all respects, to make adjustments needed for changes in its pastoral leadership, both during an interim period and then in a new permanent pastoral relationship without influences from the departing pastor. For further information, see Section 4. All pastors leaving a church must sign off on the “Separation Ethics” form (Appendix 4D).

### **2.3e Personal Integrity**

Every Teaching Elder of presbytery is expected to conduct him or herself with integrity in every facet of life. Signs of such integrity include honesty, compassion, care and concern for the well-being of others, being accountable to presbytery and congregation in all matters of ministry, and “being appropriate” in necessary confrontations.

## **Appendix 2A: Criteria for Validation of Ministry**

1. The ministry of all Teaching Elders of EOP shall conform to the principles and requirements set forth in the *Book of Order* G-2.0503a.
2. Ministries beyond the jurisdiction of the church (see G-2.0503a) shall be validated and reviewed annually by the COM. It shall be the responsibility of the Teaching Elder engaging in such ministry to take the initiative for requesting validation of his or her ministry, and annual renewal of such validation. All such requests shall be evaluated by the COM on a case-by-case basis.
3. The presbytery requires that Teaching Elders whose primary work is in the secular realm have a validated ministry to remain on the active roll of Teaching Elders of the presbytery. Validation may be approved if the Teaching Elder is actively circulating a PIF or is available to the presbytery to fill full or part time temporary pastoral positions. Availability should include the potential for providing some pastoral care beyond the time required to prepare for and lead Sunday worship.
4. Continuing membership of a retired Teaching Elder, whether actively engaged in ministry or not, does not require annual validation.
5. Ministries other than pastoral ministries recognized in the *Book of Order* include “work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacrament at times and places authorized by the presbytery” (G-3.0306).
6. Validated ministries relating to other denominations or institutions shall be carried out in accountability for their character, conduct, and performance results to a board of directors, management committee, or other responsible body.
7. In accordance with G-2.0503a validated ministries shall allow the continuing member to participate actively in the worship and service of a congregation of this presbytery, or of a denomination with which the Presbyterian Church (USA) is in correspondence, and such participation is expected.
8. Nothing in this policy shall be understood as contradicting or invalidating other requirements set forth elsewhere for membership in EOP.

## **Appendix 2B: Examination of Teaching Elder Seeking Membership in EOP**

## **Purpose**

The *Book of Order* provides that the presbytery shall examine each Teaching Elder on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacrament, and the government of this church (G-3.0306). All those in pastoral roles seeking membership from other Christian traditions shall follow the same process as Teaching Elders in the PC(USA).

The examination and interview provide an opportunity for discussion of the individual's Statement of Faith, understanding of the Reformed faith, and experience in ministry and witness.

## **Responsible for Examination**

A COM Interview Team, comprised of a minimum of one teaching elder and a minimum of one ruling elder, will examine the incoming Teaching Elder in a face-to-face interview, and will make a recommendation to EOP regarding receiving each new Teaching Elder into the presbytery.

As part of the examination for membership in EOP by COM, each candidate shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G-2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a candidate which the COM has otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a departure, the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission must be done at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the departure is from an essential or not, and whether to approve membership into the presbytery. If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position, the Pastor Nominating Committee/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of the church seeking a pastoral staff position will be notified that action on the Teaching Elder recommendation for membership must be deferred until the next stated meeting of presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to recommend the person into membership. The PNC/APNC may then seek another candidate for examination by the COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of EOP.

This procedure applies only to examinations for reception of Teaching Elders already ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Candidates under care of this presbytery will be examined by the COM and presented for direct theological examination by the presbytery. Procedures for reception of ministers from other denominations are described in Appendix 2D.

## **Preparation by the Teaching Elder**

In preparation for the Interview Team examination, each Teaching Elder shall provide a current one page statement of his or her theological beliefs with implications for life and ministry in today's world, a one page copy of his or her education and work history, and the signed copy (Appendix 2E) of the "Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)" and EOP's

Sexual Misconduct Policy. Each person shall also be provided a set of the attached questions which may be asked as part of the examination (Appendix 2C).

Each Teaching Elder shall meet with the Interview Team for the interview which will start from, but not be limited to, discussion of the statement of faith and the person's work history. Other areas for conversation shall include self-care and professional ethics (code of ethics, sexual misconduct, fiduciary responsibility, separation ethics, and personal integrity).

### **Time of Examination**

The Interview Team shall interview and examine all Teaching Elders not members of EOP who are finalists for a pastoral call when they are brought to the community by a PNC/ANPC for interview and preaching in a neutral pulpit. The Interview Team will report to the COM only on the candidate whom the PNC/ANPC wishes to recommend to the congregation.

Teaching Elders who are seeking membership in EOP but are not finalists for a pastor call - e.g., candidate for a Validated Ministry, Retired Teaching Elder, etc. - may be interviewed at any time mutually convenient for the person and the Interview Team.

If the Interview Team has serious concerns, or if it expects serious concerns in the COM about whether

- a candidate adheres to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity;
- the applicant, if a finalist for a pastoral call, is an appropriate match for the calling congregation; or
- there are some other reasons the candidate may not be received as a member,

the Interview Team shall immediately notify the COM Chair and the Presbytery Executive, if either is not present at the interview and examination. If the applicant is a finalist for a pastoral call, the Interview Team shall also immediately notify the PNC/APNC. If the PNC/APNC continues to move toward a call, the Interview Team shall request the entire COM to consider whether the person is acceptable for membership.

All candidates for membership in EOP are to be examined upon the floor of presbytery by the presbytery. COM shall provide to the presbytery a copy of the candidate's statement of faith and education and work history. If the applicant is a finalist for a pastoral call, the examination shall occur before presentation of the person to the congregation for a call. On the basis of the report and recommendation of the COM, and the personal appearance when the person in question can respond to any concerns of the presbytery, presbytery shall take action on the request to concur in the pastoral call (if the applicant is the choice of a Pastor Nominating Committee for a pastoral call) and the request to receive the person as a member of EOP. If necessary, the presbytery may share in the reasonable expenses of a visit for direct examination by the presbytery. If there are time constraints due to when EOP meets to conduct the presbytery interview, the candidate may be interviewed by the EOP Council by request of COM and the PNC/APNC.

### **Examination Process Training**

COM will provide regular education for the examining task, and will regularly provide guidance and evaluative comment on their examining work.

### **Examination of Teaching Elders not Called to Congregations**

An Interview Team shall conduct the examination as though the Teaching Elder were being called to a pastoral position, and will make its recommendation to the COM for action.



## Appendix 2C: Interview Team

EOP, through its COM, examines all those seeking membership in the presbytery as an ordained pastor either in an installed or temporary position. The examination is to determine the recommendation to EOP of possible membership in the presbytery. Final examination for those seeking membership is done by EOP.

For the interview examination, the person seeking membership provides to the COM, prior to the interview:

- A one-page current statement of faith;
- A one-page copy of his or her education and work history; and
- A signed copy (Appendix 2E) of the “Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” and EOP’s Sexual Misconduct Policy (Appendix 2F).
- For those enrolled in another Christian church, a copy of their credentials of good standing in the ecclesiastical body to which they belong.

The interview will start from, but not be limited to, discussion of those seeking membership’s statement of faith, the person’s work history, in the case of a finalist for a pastoral call, includes the appropriateness of the “match” of the candidate with the church.

As part of the examination for membership in EOP by COM, each person shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G-2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a person which the COM has otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a departure, the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission must be done at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the departure is from an essential or not, and whether to approve membership into the presbytery. If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position, the Pastor Nominating Committee/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of the church seeking a pastoral staff position will be notified that action on the candidate recommendation for membership must be deferred until the next stated meeting of presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to recommend the person into membership. The PNC/APNC may then seek another candidate for examination by the COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of EOP.

Sample questions which may be asked in examination of those seeking membership into EOP:

1. **Personal Faith Experience**
  - How has the Gospel been good news in your life, and how might you share it with others?
  - Share highlights of your faith story.
  - What are the “growing edges” in your ministry?
2. **Theology and Sacrament**
  - Explain the meaning of Christ’s deity and humanity and their mutual relationship, and how that shapes your outlook on life and its problems and opportunities.
  - In view of the universality of God’s love, why are some people responsive to the call of Christ and others apparently not? In what sense, and to what extent, do you believe humanity is lost apart from Christ? What is the relation of Christianity to other religions and world views?
  - How do you explain baptism and the Lord’s Supper to children? To adults?
  - What elements of Bible content and Reformed theology give you most guidance in our present struggle for social justice?
  - Describe a possible sermon to illuminate one of the doctrines of the Apostles’ Creed and apply it to life situations and concerns.
3. **Polity and Program**
  - What is your understanding of how the pastor should exercise leadership in the congregation and session under Presbyterian polity?
  - What considerations should a session take into account in deciding whether to give money to either denominational or non-denominational causes?
  - Describe the *Book of Order’s* portrayal of the working relationship between presbytery and congregations. Mention the main practical issues that have arisen in your experience of that relationship.
4. **Mission and Constitution**
  - How do you balance denominational loyalty with personal freedom of conscience? Are there specific issues where this presents a problem for you?
  - How have you implemented evangelism, peacemaking, alleviation of hunger, and education into your ministry?
  - In your ministry, how do you seek to carry out our denomination’s commitment to inclusiveness and diversity?
5. **Ministry**
  - What goals have you set for your ministry?
  - (For pastoral calls) What are your perceptions of the congregation you are being called to serve: its goals, its style and character, its particular strengths, needs and potential?
  - How would you describe your leadership style? What are your expectations of leadership to be provided by others (e.g., session, governing board, colleagues)?

- What are your feelings about conflict? What is your preferred style (or styles) for responding to conflict, both within the congregation or group that you serve, and between you and others?
- Describe your commitment to presbytery and the mission program of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- What is your approach to, and your commitment to, professional development and personal growth? Give some examples of what you have done in this area.
- (For pastoral calls) What particular skills do you have in the congregation's top two priorities (Ministry Discernment Profile)?

## **Appendix 2D: Reception of Ordained Clergy from Other Denominations**

1. The ordained clergy of another denomination applies for membership to the stated clerk of EOP.
2. The minister is referred to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) for supervision and guidance until all requirements of G-2.0607 and 2.0610, including taking and passing the standardized ordination exams, have been met.
3. When the CPM certifies that the above requirements have been met, an Interview Team can be formed to determine whether the candidate is appropriate for the particular situation for which he/she is being called. The interview/examination will proceed as outlined in Appendix 2B.

## **Appendix 2E: Ethical Conduct Policy**

*Taken from the Minutes of the 210th General Assembly, 1998*

### **Life Together in the Community of Faith:**

#### **Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

As an ordained officer in the Presbyterian Church (USA), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made at my ordination, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry, and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

##### **Section 1**

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
2. Be honest, and truthful in my relationships with others;
3. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
4. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
5. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
6. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitative behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness responsive to God's reconciling will.

##### **Section 2**

I will conduct my ministry so that nothing need be hidden from a governing body (now called mid-councils) or colleagues in ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Preach, teach, and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
2. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
3. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my office and the positions of responsibility I hold;
4. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my ministry;
5. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the community of faith for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (USA) policy;
6. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, unless an individual is a danger to self or others;
7. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;
8. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit for all

sources used in sermons, papers, music, and presentations, and observe copyrights;

9. Refrain from incurring indebtedness that might compromise my ministry;
10. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;
11. Observe limits set by the appropriate governing body (now called mid-councils) for honoraria, personal business endeavors, and gifts or loans from persons other than family;
12. Accept the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable for my ministry;
13. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;
14. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and upon leaving a ministry or office speak and act in ways that support the ministry of my successor;
15. Participate in the life of a ministry setting I left or from which I have retired only as directed by presbytery;\*
16. Provide pastoral services for a congregation I previously served only as directed by the presbytery and provide pastoral services to members of other congregations only with the consent of their pastors;\* and
17. Consult with the Committee on Ministry in the presbytery of my residence regarding my involvement in any ministry setting during my retirement.\*

\*These standards apply only to pastors; they also apply to commissioned ruling elders when they are performing pastoral function.

### **Section 3**

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal.

Therefore, I will:

1. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;
2. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues in ministry;
3. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships, and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and
4. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion, and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

I have read and agree to the Ethical Standards for ordained officers of the PC(USA)

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Signature

---

Printed Name

---

Street Address

---

City, State, Zip

---

Email Address

---

Date

Please return to Stated Clerk of EOP

## **Appendix 2F: Sexual Misconduct Policy**

### **PRESBYTERY OF EASTERN OREGON**

#### **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES**

##### **I. Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations and the presbytery are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in scripture, and also of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all congregations, volunteers, employees, and members of the presbytery. This is a policy of the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon, which governs and protects employees, officers, members, and volunteers of the presbytery. This policy and its procedures shall be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct and their families.

##### **II. Standards of Conduct**

... As [God] who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; ... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, ... not under compulsion but willingly, ... not for sordid gain but eagerly. ... not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.

... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1, NRSV

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world." Book of Order G-2.0104.

The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of church officers, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisers of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. Sexual misconduct breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and families.

2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relation to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, client, or employee initiates or invites sexual contact in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's,



or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.

3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children, elderly, mentally and physically challenged. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

### *Definitions*

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

1. **Child sexual abuse**; including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation or prurient interest of the adult person or of a third person. The term "child" as used in this policy shall refer to persons under the age of 18 at the time of alleged sexual abuse occurred. If the alleged abuse occurred over a period of time, including before the victim's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the victim's age at the time of the initial occurrence of sexual abuse shall determine whether the victim is considered a child for the purposes of this policy. The contact or interaction may or may not involve touching. Sexual contact or interaction between a child and an adult, regardless of whether the child considered it consensual or the child has or had the ability to consent to said behavior under applicable state laws, is, for the purposes of this policy, always considered nonconsensual and to be forced.
2. **Sexual abuse as defined in the Book of Order**: "Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position." Book of Order, D-10.0401c.
3. **Sexual harassment**; defined for this policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
  1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;
  2. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
  3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
  4. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children
4. **Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.**
5. **Sexual contact** (such as offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling) **that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.**

6. **Sexual Malfeasance**; as defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.
7. **Misuse of technology**; use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.
8. **Church officers or officers**; as used herein, is a generic reference to deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders.
9. **Elders**; as used herein, is a generic reference to those persons who are ruling elders, commissioned ruling elders; and teaching elders.
10. **Teaching Elders**; as used herein, refers to those persons who are teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders.
11. **Employees of Presbytery**; members of Presbytery; for the purposes of this policy only, includes, but is not limited to, permanent and temporary pastors serving the congregations and ministries of the Presbytery.” .

### III. Church Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

#### A. Principles

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek justice, healing and assure the protection of all persons. Where possible, the privacy of persons should be respected and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

The presbytery has jurisdiction over its members, officers, and employees such that if a member, officer, or employee is alleged to have committed an offense against scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution, the church has the duty to inquire into the allegations; and, if the allegations are proven, to halt and correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and to ensure the safety of others in the community. Allegations of sexual misconduct are always considered allegations of offense against scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution that trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the Book of Order. In the case of an active non-member who is employed or volunteers with the church, the individual will be covered by the procedures of the personnel policies of the presbytery.

If the person accused of sexual misconduct is no longer a member, officer, or employee of the presbytery, but the conduct occurred while the person was acting on behalf of the presbytery, the

church does not have jurisdiction to correct the behavior, but it does have a duty to hear the allegations of offense and to take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm. The presbytery shall appoint an administrative committee or commission to hear the allegations of sexual misconduct.

The presbytery shall take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm through training, continuing education, and policy.

## *B. Reporting Requirements*

### *1. Reporting Sexual Misconduct*

A person needing to report that a member, officer, employee, or volunteer of the PC(USA) has committed sexual misconduct is encouraged to seek guidance from a PC(USA) teaching or ruling elder regarding filing the report.

**Congregation:** If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a member, ruling elder, deacon, volunteer, or employee of a congregation, the report of allegations should be made to the pastor, the clerk of session, or the chair of the congregation's personnel committee. If the accused is a member or officer of the church, the church will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If the accused is a nonmember employee or volunteer, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation.

**Presbytery:** If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a teaching elder member, the report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the person accused of committing sexual misconduct is the stated clerk, the report of allegations shall be made to the chair of the presbytery personnel committee. When the report of allegations is placed in writing, the presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a volunteer or nonmember employee of the presbytery, the report of allegations should be made to either the stated clerk, the presbytery executive, or the chair of the committee on ministry of the presbytery. The presbytery will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the presbytery.

### *2. Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct*

To the extent possible, the presbytery and its congregations shall ensure that its members, officers, and employees know of the existence of this policy and its reporting procedures.

It is the duty of the employees, officers, and members of the presbytery to ensure that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Each congregation is also responsible for instituting procedures and policies to ensure that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately, again, keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality and sensitivity, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below.

The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged by either the victim or the accused in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session with that person. The person's inquiry shall be limited to speaking with the person who divulged the alleged misconduct. The person initially receiving the information regarding the alleged misconduct is not to confront, question, or otherwise speak with the non-divulging person regarding the alleged misconduct as part of any informal inquiry. If the divulging person is a victim of the alleged misconduct; and, the person is hesitant to talk to "higher authorities," the person who has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to build trust and willingness to speak with the alleged victim, lest the church be unable to respond because no one is able to give firsthand information.

To the extent it is necessary to ensure that the allegations are submitted to the council having jurisdiction over the person accused of misconduct, the person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the PC(USA) and shall ensure that the written report is submitted to the council with jurisdiction over the accused.

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations shall request that the person making the report of allegations make the report in writing. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, the person who received the oral report shall make and submit written statement that complies with the requirements of the Book of Order to the council with jurisdiction over the accused.

A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense shall be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. If a clerk or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report also shall also be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order.

### *3. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse*

#### *a. Ruling and Teaching Elders, Deacons, Certified Christian Educators*

All elders and deacons are required to report knowledge of child abuse to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities according to the Book of Order. The Book of Order requires that

Any member of the church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the church or its congregation, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge, of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when

(1) such information is gained outside of privileged communication; or (2) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse. (G-4.0302).

All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or governing body representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports shall be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information, but no more than twenty-four (24) hours after than receiving the report.

Notwithstanding the person's obligations under this policy to report child abuse, or any other types of abuse, including elder abuse, no person shall be required to do so, if doing so would violate that person's duties and obligations under the Book of Order, federal, state, or local laws, or professional codes of conduct governing the confidentiality of information and communications received by that person.

Copies of the State of Oregon's mandatory child abuse reporting laws and mandatory elder abuse laws in effect at the time of the adoption of this policy are attached hereto for reference.

### *C. Responding*

#### *1. Accused Covered by Book of Order*

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the governing body will report to the governing body that an offense has been alleged and that the governing body will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order. The governing body shall appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee shall promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations and promptly contact civil authorities if it determined that the alleged misconduct may violate criminal laws. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

Governing bodies and entities shall fully cooperate in good faith with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed.

The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members.

A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders. A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the "Word imperatively demands it" (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a minister on administrative leave when allegations of child abuse have been received and the presbytery has followed the Book of Order procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether or not a teaching elder accused of child abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-10.0106). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also take into account secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction during an investigation of alleged sexual misconduct or during disciplinary proceedings resulting from the investigation of the alleged sexual misconduct, the clerk or Stated Clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the governing body and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the governing body. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the governing body at that time. If the person renouncing jurisdiction does so during a disciplinary process is a teaching elder, the stated clerk shall make his or her renunciation of jurisdiction public. G-2.0509.

This presbytery shall make all efforts to ensure that:

Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a disciplinary proceeding as the accused, that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). G-2.0509.

## *2. Accused Not Covered by Book of Order*

When the presbytery receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the presbytery will be guided by the personnel policies of the presbytery. The personnel committee will be initially responsible for the inquiry.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether or not the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to make a decision about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the actions that will be taken to address the allegations of sexual misconduct.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the presbytery

## *3. Governing Body or Entity Record Keeping*

The presbytery shall keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept

confidential as far as possible. In Case # 208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Discipline to say that a governing body or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other governing bodies or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall maintain the records while the inquiry is in process and will maintain such records in permanent fashion for every employee, including ministers and persons on the roll of the presbytery serving in validated ministries.

## IV Prevention and Risk Management

### *A. Liability and Insurance*

The presbytery and each of its congregations shall regularly inform its liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy shall include endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, day-care operations, shelters, or other outreach programs.

The presbytery and each of its congregations shall obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage should provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the governing body or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

### *C. Employment Practices*

#### *1. Record Keeping*

The stated clerk of the presbytery shall maintain a personnel file on every employee, including ministers and persons on the roll of the presbytery serving in validated ministries. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

#### *2. Prescreening Applicants*

The presbytery and its congregations shall confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The presbytery or the congregation (depending who is hiring the applicant) shall perform a background check, including a national criminal background check, on all applicants for employment.

Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct.

#### *3. References*

The presbytery is responsible for contacting references for prospective ministers, temporary pastors, employees, or volunteers of the presbytery. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the minister or employee's personnel file by the stated clerk.

In dealing with ministers when transferring from one position to another, the governing body should delegate responsibility for previous employer reference checks either to the general presbyter or at the request of the general presbyter to persons appointed by the committee on ministry who would report to the committee on ministry or committee on preparation for ministry.

The person within the governing body or entity authorized to give a reference is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant.

#### *4. Background Checks*

The presbytery is responsible for performing national criminal background checks on all employees of the presbytery, including permanent and temporary ministers, prior to allowing the person to be hired by the presbytery or one of its churches, regardless of whether the person is a temporary or permanent minister. Furthermore, if the person is not an employee or minister of the presbytery, but is a commissioned ruling elder, the presbytery shall perform a national criminal background check on the commissioned ruling elder before allowing the ministry to begin.

The Presbytery shall also perform national background checks on all ministers who are members of this Presbytery who do not have an active call or that have retired.

After the initial background check, the Presbytery shall perform subsequent criminal background checks every five (5) years on each employee, member, permanent or temporary minister, and commissioned ruling elder.

No later than ninety (90) days after adoption of this Policy, the Presbytery shall perform background checks on all of its employees, members, commissioned ruling elders, and its permanent and temporary ministers.

The Stated Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that the Presbytery performs its obligation pursuant to this Policy and shall keep records of performing said background checks in the Presbytery's records. The Presbytery shall be responsible for the financial cost of these background checks. The Executive Council shall be responsible for ensuring that the Stated Clerk performs his or her duties. The Chairperson of the Presbytery Personnel Committee shall ensure that the background check for the Stated Clerk is performed in accordance with this policy. He or she shall make a report to the Executive Council upon completing his or her duties pursuant to this policy.

The Presbytery's employees, its members, its permanent and temporary ministers, and its commissioned ruling elders shall cooperate in good faith and comply with the background check requirements. Upon receiving a written request pursuant to this policy, each employee, member, permanent and temporary minister, and commissioned ruling elder shall sign, date, and return the required written authorization within twenty-one (21) days of receiving the request.

#### *V. Prevention*

1. All congregations within Eastern Oregon Presbytery shall adopt rules and procedures that ensure a safe environment for all persons involved based on common



practices for the prevention of sexual misconduct. These rules and procedures shall be filed with the stated clerk.”

2. Each Session shall review its policy on an annual basis.
3. All members, officers, employees, and volunteers of Eastern Oregon Presbytery shall participate in Prevention Training established by the Committee on Ministry.
4. Healthy boundaries training shall be provided at a presbytery meeting every three years.
5. All churches shall provide for preventative training for its staff, leaders, and all who work with minors.

#### VI. Signature and Acknowledgment.

All employees, members, teaching elders, and commissioned ruling elders shall sign this policy as an acknowledgment of their receipt of said policy and their understanding of being bound by its terms and provisions.

As evidenced by my signature below, I have fully read and understand the Presbytery of Eastern Oregon’s *Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures* and I agree to be bound by its terms and provisions. I further agree to undergo a national criminal background check, pursuant to the policy herein, and to take any actions reasonably necessary to complete said background check, including, but not limited to, the signing of authorizations.

This document shall be signed in duplicate and an original copy shall be kept by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery in the presbytery's records with the other copy to be kept by the person required to sign this policy pursuant to its terms.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Stated Clerk for the EOP and Date

### **Section 3: EOP and Its Congregations**

The *Book of Order* directs the Presbytery to assist churches and clergy in the ministry of a particular congregation [G-3.0307].

To this end, the Presbytery, through the COM, shall visit with each session in the presbytery at least every three years. In addition, it is the goal of COM to provide assistance and support through a regular and continuing relationship with each session and its pastor(s), or those serving in pastoral roles.

### 3.1 Triennial Visits

Before making any Triennial Visit, every Visit Team member should read “The Mission of the Congregation.” [G-1.01].

When visiting a congregation, each member of the Visit Team should be positive and affirming in what they ask and hear, using the opportunity to encourage each congregation to achieve more faithfully the mission to which God has uniquely called it.

When visiting a congregation, each team should be perceptive and careful in making its assessments, challenging the session and pastor(s) to respond with energy, faithfulness and imagination to the ministry opportunities that are before them.

If at any time any member of the Visit Team becomes aware of alleged misconduct or unethical behavior, the COM chairperson or the stated clerk must be notified immediately.

#### 3.1 Steps for Triennial Visit with Session

1. Prior to meeting with the session:
  - a. Pray regularly for the congregation, pastor(s), and church leadership that you assist.
  - b. Contact the pastor/CRE and/or clerk of session two months prior to your anticipated visit to ask for a session meeting date that is convenient. Explain that you need 45 minutes to one hour on the docket. Invite the pastor(s) and/or clerk of session to meet with the Visit Team prior to the session meeting, if the pastor(s) and/or clerk of session desire to do so. Confirm by letter the date and time of the triennial visit with both the congregation and with the Visit Team.
  - c. Learn as much about the church as possible. Ask pastor/clerk of session/secretary to supply to the Interview Team:
    - a. names, addresses, and phone numbers of ruling elders and their specific committee assignments
    - b. the last two annual reports
    - c. a copy of the latest newsletter
    - d. a copy of the last mission study
    - e. visit the worship service if possible
  - d. Provide the church a copy of “The Triennial Visit” (Appendix 3A), and request that copies be made for every session member to have in advance of the meeting.
  - e. Urge full participation of the entire Visit Team.
  - f. Determine beforehand if time will be necessary during the visit for the Team to meet with just the pastor or just the session without the other present.
2. On the date of the triennial review:
  - a. Meet as the Visit Team prior to meeting to pray and to review the plan for the meeting. Decide who will ask what questions if the subjects are not addressed by the session.
  - b. COM liaison brings a copy of the current *Book of Order* to show and to explain why the Visit Team is present.

- c. Stay with your plan for the meeting but don't be rigid. See Appendix 3B to assist with questions.
  - d. Thank the session at the conclusion of the docketed time for this time shared and offer a prayer(s) for the congregation's ministry, pastor(s), staff, church officers, and leaders.
  - e. If it is a regular session meeting, stay for the entire meeting, if this is acceptable with the session; greet each session member warmly after the meeting.
  - f. Immediately following the meeting, the Visit Team should gather together briefly to discuss the visit, noting observations and impressions. This will clarify the areas needing attention and will provide information for the written report.
3. After meeting with the session:
- a. Send a thank you letter encouraging the clerk and the session to share any additional concerns with the Visit Team.
  - b. Call appropriate session committee chairperson(s) to provide those services or resources identified during the visit.
  - c. Members of the Visit Team shall appoint a recorder to write a report of the visit. Following approval of the Visit Team, the recorder will send copies of the completed written report to the clerk of session, pastor(s)/CRE, COM Chair, and executive presbyter. The report should include the need for help and resources as well as joys and accomplishments.

### **3.2 Mission Study Process**

COM will offer guidance to congregations desiring to engage in the mission study process (see Appendix 3C). COM recommends that congregations engage in a review and update of their mission study every 5-7 years.

### **3.3 Gracious, Just and Responsible Dismissal Policy**

The Gracious, Just and Responsible Dismissal Policy relates to congregations which may seek to withdraw from EOP and the Presbyterian Church (USA) [PC(USA)]. The presbytery desires to create a gracious process that is simple in administration. The Stated Clerk shall be informed by the leadership of the presbytery when it becomes aware, either through formal congregational action or through informal contacts with church leaders or members, that a congregation is in serious disagreement with the denomination. Discovery of a disagreement may come through a COM, an executive presbyter, or direct communication from the congregation to the office of the Stated Clerk.

#### ***Need to develop Dismissal Policy***

### **Appendix 3A: Triennial Visit: Procedure**

The Triennial Visit will take 45 minutes to an hour on the docket. To gain the maximum from this meeting requires that we look at ourselves and our common mission, and that we listen to each other as fellow members of the Body of Christ which is the Church.

1. Goals and objectives of the visit to your congregation are:
  - a. To listen to the unique story of the congregation being visited.

- b. To affirm and encourage each other in our journey as Christ's Church.
  - c. To respond to the needs identified by the session.
  - d. To celebrate the work of the risen Christ in the Presbyterian Church (USA).
2. A brief report will be completed following the visit which will be mailed to pastor or those fulfilling the pastoral role in the church, clerk of session, COM chair, and Presbytery Executive/Stated Clerk.

**Appendix 3B: Triennial Visit: Questionnaire**

Name of Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Clerk of Session: \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What signs of vitality and growth have been experienced in your

---

congregation since our last triennial visit?

2. What specifically have you done to encourage that vitality and growth?
3. What particular goals for vitality and growth are you setting for the coming year?
4. How can EOP assist you in accomplishing your particular goals?
5. How can you assist EOP in its work of nurturing vitality and growth in its congregations?

Interview Team Members

Present: Copies sent to:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor           | <input type="checkbox"/> COM Regional Chair          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk of Session | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Office COM Liaison |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                  | Re   |

**Appendix 3C: Mission Study Process**

1. The following principles for the mission study process are affirmed:
  - a. There will be continuity with the mission study process and the on-going life of the congregation.
  - b. There will be a broad based cross-section of involvement in the mission study process (including the pastor).
  - c. The focus of the mission study process will be on all facets of

- congregational life and not just when there is a pastoral search.
- d. The mission study process will be a process of discovery and not just of confirmation of the same old patterns.
  - e. The mission study process will provide flexibility (a tool box and not a cookie cutter) within certain defined areas that need to be explored.
  - f. The mission study process will be a search for God's will (God's call is the community's call).
  - g. The mission study process will expand and enhance the congregation's current planning process (start where the church is) while keeping focus on the "big picture."
2. The following elements of procedure for the mission study process are affirmed:
- a. Introduction of mission study process with session
    1. Session approves process.
    2. Session appoints Mission Study Task Force, or Session may become the Mission Study Task Force.
  - b. Orientation of Mission Study Task Force by EOP.
  - c. Assignment of responsibilities of Mission Study Task Force
    1. Who - study congregation membership
    2. What - assess programs
    3. Where - study community
    4. When - focus on next five years
    5. Why - theological rationale
  - d. Church Identity Celebration - Telling Our Story
  - e. Planning Workshop - Setting Goals
  - f. Creation of mission statement and goals
    1. How - annual objectives & action plans
  - g. Triennial Visits with session - share progress
  - h. Review and revision every five to seven years or as needed.

Variations to the above elements of procedure are possible with the approval of the COM.



3. The implementation of the mission study process is that:
  - a. Trained mission study consultants in teams of two or three will be provided. Individuals serving as mission study consultants will be selected by each COM from the following sources:
    1. current or former members of COM
    2. current or former members of Congregational Support Committee
    3. trained interim pastors
    4. others by special invitation
    5. Presbytery staff
  - b. The consultants will be trained regularly at a presbytery-wide training session.

## **Section 4: The COM and Times of Pastoral Transition**

The pastoral relationship in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a three-way covenant among a pastor, a congregation and a presbytery. All three parties must concur before the pastoral relationship may be established or dissolved. Most commonly, it is the pastor who initiates the dissolution of the relationship, ordinarily to accept another pastoral call, to enter another form of labor, or to retire from professional ministry. There are occasions when a congregation initiates action to end a relationship with a particular pastor. There are also occasions in which the presbytery may initiate the process.

In all cases of Presbyterian pastoral relationships, it is the presbytery (ordinarily with a recommendation from its COM) which must concur in both the creation or dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Moreover, the COM has responsibility for ongoing review and supervision of the relationship(s) between a congregation or other church body and its pastor or those in leadership positions.

### **4.1 Types of Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships**

There are three types or reasons for either voluntary or involuntary (forced) dissolutions of pastoral relationships. They are as follows:

#### **4.1a Request for Dissolution**

This is a voluntary dissolution which takes place between a pastor and a congregation for any of the following reasons listed in the *Book of Order*:

1. The pastor chooses to dissolve the relationship under G-2.0902 to take another call.
2. The pastor chooses to set aside ordination credentials and to ask the presbytery for release from the exercise of ordained office [G-2.0507].
3. The pastor chooses to accept membership in another denomination [G-2.0509], often in conjunction with renunciation of jurisdiction [G-6.0701].
4. The pastor chooses to retire [G-2.0503c].
5. The pastor chooses to resign, citing “personal reasons” rather than offering other reason(s) for resignation.
6. The pastor chooses to renounce the jurisdiction of the presbytery and denomination, ordinarily because of theological or relational matters of personal conscience [G-2.0509]

#### **4.1b Reduction in Work or Position**

This is a form of dissolution and separation resulting from the reduction or elimination of a pastoral position, due to financial limitations of the employing body, a change in the nature and style of the congregation’s mission or ministry, or for circumstances which are not the result of any fault or failure of the pastor.

#### **4.1c Dissolution for Cause**

There are specific causes to end the pastoral relationship which are cited by the congregation or other church body. They may include unsatisfactory performance, abuse or misconduct, insubordination, gross neglect in the care of church property or

funds, conduct inconsistent with professional ethics, or other specific causes.

“Separation for cause” dissolutions of pastoral relationships are to be clearly and thoroughly stated and are ordinarily only to come after other potential resolutions of difficulties have been attempted. Documentation of any and all allegations and attempts at alternative dispute resolution are to be presented to the presbytery, ordinarily through the COM. COM makes the final determination that the dissolution is “for cause.”

#### **4.2 Process for Voluntary Dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship (see 4.1a)**

The usual process for the voluntary dissolution of a pastoral relationship is as follows:

- A decision is made by the pastor to end the pastoral relationship.
- The pastor contacts the appropriate COM liaison to discuss time lines and processes [G-2.0902].
- The pastor notifies the session in writing, requesting that a meeting of the congregation be called for the purpose of acting on a request to dissolve the pastoral relationship.
- A meeting of the congregation is called [G-1.0502], and according to appropriate provisions of the bylaws of the particular congregation [if any], to dissolve the pastoral relationship. It is appropriate that the COM liaison assigned to the congregation or other approved COM representative be present at the meeting of both the session which calls the meeting of the congregation and at the meeting of the congregation itself. Ordinarily the pastor shall moderate this meeting. If this is impractical, he or she shall invite, with the concurrence of the session, another teaching or ruling elder of the presbytery to preside [G-1.0504].
- When congregational action on the pastor’s request to dissolve the pastoral relationship on a specific date has been taken, that recommendation is forwarded to the COM for approval.
- The COM will work with the departing pastor and the officers of the particular congregation to suggest appropriate transitional celebrations, to arrange for an “exit interview” with both the pastor and session separately. The purpose is to explain the requirements of “separation ethics,” and to reflect on the pastoral/church relationship. COM will also explain to the congregation and session the processes for interim pastoral services, to appoint a moderator of session when the church is without a pastor, and to answer questions which might arise regarding the process of selection of a new pastor.
- Under ordinary circumstances, a period of not more than 30-90 days should elapse between the date when the congregation acts on the dissolution of the pastoral relationship and the departure of the pastor. This amount of time is needed for appropriate closure between the pastor and the congregation and community and is not so long as to hinder the work of the church due to having a “lame duck” pastor.

### **4.3 Involuntary Dissolutions of Pastoral Relationships**

#### **4.3a Requested by the Congregation or Presbytery [G-2.0903 & G-2.0904]**

There are occasions in which dissolutions of pastoral relationships are involuntary, that is, when the pastor does not initiate the process. In some cases, the request for the dissolution comes from the congregation in a desire (for whatever reasons) to end the pastoral relationship. In other cases, the decision to dissolve the pastoral relationship may be initiated by the presbytery, through either the COM or an Administrative Commission. Often when a pastor becomes aware that there is substantial pressure for the pastoral relationship to end and the COM concurs, it is the pastor who will resign (even if there is no call to a new position present or pending). A resignation under pressure is an involuntary dissolution.

Except when dissolution is “by cause,” severance packages are to be provided for a minimum of four months to a maximum of six months dependent upon years of service and are paid when the church wishes to sever its relationship with a called pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. The severance package includes compensation, pension, medical, death and disability according to the last terms of call. If full employment occurs before the severance period has elapsed, this compensation will cease. If part-time employment occurs during the severance period, the church will make up the difference until the last day of the severance period. When dissolution “by cause” takes place, the congregation may still choose to offer a severance package. If providing a severance package causes undue financial hardship on the church, the church may work collaboratively with EOP to meet that obligation. All severance packages must be approved by COM.

#### **4.3b Death and Disability**

Another form of involuntary dissolution of the pastoral relationship is when a pastor either dies in office or becomes disabled to the extent that it is impossible for the pastor to provide an appropriate level of pastoral service. In such cases, the COM will be actively involved with the congregation and its officers in making arrangements for temporary pastoral services (including an appointed moderator of session) and in assisting the congregation, pastor and pastor’s family, and all others concerned in coping with what is ordinarily a time of special emotional stress and particular needs.

### **4.4 When Pastoral Staffing is Increased, Decreased, or Changed**

There are times when a congregation finds it necessary to change its staffing pattern, and a pastor’s job description may change over the course of a longer pastorate. Any change in the terms of call and duties of the pastor requires the approval of the congregation and concurrence by the presbytery upon recommendation from the COM.

#### **4.4a Increasing Pastoral Time**

In the case of a pastor employed in a less-than-full-time position, a request to increase the pastor’s time of professional employment shall be made to EOP through the COM, which will then review with the church and pastor the needs and desires

and abilities which have led to the request. If COM concurs, COM will approve the request and the revised terms of call and position description.

#### **4.4b Establishing Pastoral Positions**

In the case of a church desiring to increase its professional pastoral staff by the addition of an associate pastor or associate pastors or co-pastors, initial approval of the new position is required. Evidence of the ability of the congregation to provide appropriate financial support of a person in a new staff position must be demonstrated before the position can be “validated” by COM action and the church permitted to begin seeking candidates through the process described for selecting a new pastor. See Appendix 4A which elaborates on the procedures for establishing new pastoral positions.

#### **4.4c Reducing Pastoral Time**

If a congregation desires to reduce a full-time pastoral position to part-time, the COM will consult with the congregation and its officers regarding any and all circumstances which may have led to the proposal. If convinced that the proposal will not severely reduce the congregation’s abilities to minister effectively, and if the current pastor is willing to have the terms of call changed, and the reduced terms are approved by the congregation, the COM may approve the revision of the terms of call. If the installed pastor is unwilling to accept a reduction in terms of call and there seems to be no other alternative for the particular congregation served, this then becomes the basis for an involuntary dissolution of the pastoral relationship. In any case, a change in the terms of call is to come as the result of congregational action to request the change, with the request to come to the COM for action and approval.

#### **4.4d Eliminating Pastoral Positions**

When a church desires to “close” a pastoral position rather than to seek a new person to fill it, certain policies apply. The COM will consult with the church regarding the advisability of the elimination of any pastoral position. A decision to close a pastoral position must be approved by a congregational meeting and approved by the COM. (The policy of the EOP is that a position may not be reopened or re-validated for the presbytery through its COM for a period of two years after the position was eliminated.)

### **4.5 When a Pastor Retires**

#### **4.5a Eligibility for Retirement**

A pastor becomes eligible for full retirement benefits under the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at age 65 or later, although it is possible to retire as early as age 55 and receive partial benefits from the Benefits Plan. Planning for retirement is advised for every pastor, especially when the pastor reaches age 50. The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (USA) provides publications describing benefits available at retirement and conducts workshops to help persons approaching retirement (see Board of Pensions website at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org)).

#### **4.5b Consultation with COM**

When a pastor chooses to retire, the COM is to be consulted regarding appropriate time lines and processes and ethical standards which are to be observed in the transition process.

Although planning for retirement should be a long and careful process over the course of many years, it is not advisable for a pastor to announce to the congregation his or her intention to retire earlier than 30 to 90 days before the date at which the pastoral relationship is to be dissolved. The normal process for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship then is to be followed. The election of a Pastor Nominating Committee to secure a pastor to succeed the retiring pastor cannot occur until after the pastoral relationship has ended [G-2.0801].

Retired Teaching Elders are encouraged to transfer their membership to the presbytery in which they live and the presbytery is encouraged to receive them.

#### **4.5c Retired Status**

The designation of “retired” is made by the presbytery by action of the COM [G-2.0503c]. It may include a time of recognition and celebration at a meeting of the presbytery. See the Book of Occasional Services for retirement recognition information.

#### **4.5d Pastor Emeritus, Emerita**

When a pastor or associate pastor retires, a congregation may be moved by affection and gratitude to continue its association with the person by designating the retired pastor or associate pastor as “Pastor Emeritus/Emerita” or “Associate Pastor Emeritus/Emerita.” This is an honorary position which shall have no pastoral authority or duty. The proposal for emeritus/emera status is to come from the congregation from which a pastor has retired.

The request is not to come from the pastor nor may it be any consideration or requirement for the retirement of the pastor or associate pastor. Action to grant a Teaching Elder emeritus status is taken by the COM after consultation with the congregation and the person nominated.

#### **4.6 Effective Date of Termination**

Because the call of the pastor is established by a three-way agreement among the congregation, the pastor and the presbytery, the call cannot be terminated until these same three parties have acted. This means that the effective date of termination must be after the COM has concurred with the request of the congregation and the pastor to dissolve the pastoral relationship. If the congregation does not wish to continue the services of their pastor during the time between the vote to dissolve the relationship and the action of the COM, then the pastor may be placed on administrative leave with pay. Severance pay, if any, begins after the effective date of termination. Both the church and the pastor should consult with the Board of Pensions for extension of benefits past the date of termination.

#### **4.7 Exit Interview with Departing Pastor and Session**

Whenever a pastoral relationship has ended an exit interview will be conducted by the COM and EOP staff, usually the Presbytery Executive (Appendix 4B). During this interview the policy on Separation Ethics will be explained (Appendix 4D) and a copy of the Separation Ethics is to be signed by the departing Teaching Elder. The COM Liaison will meet with the Session of the church the pastor is departing from as soon as practical after that pastor's departure for an exit interview and to review the Separation Ethics that the departing pastor is required to adhere to (Appendix 4C).

#### **4.8 Separation Ethics**

A departing pastor, particularly after a long and successful pastorate, must be careful that formal and official pastoral relationships with a congregation and its members end with the dissolution of a pastoral relationship. The departing pastor shall exercise great care to not interfere in the process by which the church secures interim and installed pastoral services.

Whenever a pastoral relationship is concluded, there is the potential for confusion regarding appropriate conduct between the departing pastor and the former congregation. Any problems in this area are the responsibility of the COM. To prevent difficulties, so much as possible, separation ethics are discussed as a part of the exit interview (Appendix 4B), a copy of presbytery's Separation Ethics policy is given to the departing pastor (Appendix 4C), and the departing pastor signs off on a copy of the Separation Ethics. The Separation Ethics should be reviewed by the Session as well.

## Appendix 4A: Procedures for Establishing New Pastoral Positions

1. Ascertain the willingness of the congregation and session to support a staff expansion - spiritually, emotionally and financially. Determine the ability of the congregation to afford the additional financial obligation without affecting mission support of the whole church.
2. Conduct a mission study, with guidance of the COM, to determine the mission of the local congregation within the mission of the whole church. Conduct the mission study with prayer for the fulfillment of Christ's mission in the church and community. Make sure the study is thorough, interpretations are factual and conclusions are reasonable.
3. Consult with COM to determine how staff needs which emerged in the mission study may be met by volunteers and/or paid staff, whether ordained or non-ordained.
4. Divide staff work and time among all positions.
5. Write a position description for each staff position in the church. Write a position description stating the skills, style and kind of person needed to do the work (see *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*, published by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Churchwide Personnel Services).
6. Submit the position descriptions and person descriptions for the entire staff to the session for approval.
7. Ask the congregation to establish the new position.
8. Send a request to approve the position to COM. If approved, the search process for the new position may begin.



## Appendix 4B: Pastoral Exit Interview Guidelines

Before a pastor leaves a church to go to another position or retires, an Exit Interview by COM and presbytery staff should be scheduled during a meal or special meeting. Use the Exit Interview form below as a guide for the interview, and also as a guide for the written report of the interview to be kept on file in the presbytery office.

Benefits of the interview:

- The pastor can reflect on the time in the position with presbytery representatives.
- The pastor can receive feedback to help in the next position or stage in life.
- COM learns about the current status in the church from the pastor who is leaving.
- COM communicates and discusses the Separation Ethics policy.
- Appreciation is expressed for the ministry of the pastor.
- A written report of the interview is kept on file in the presbytery office for possible future reference.

---

### COM Exit Interview Guide and Report Form

Interview with The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_

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

Present (list the pastor, COM liaison and EOP Staff):

#### Topics discussed:

1. Church or position. (Present state of the congregation)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Pastor's sharing of insights on the work there. (How long there, what went well; concerns)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Pastor's future plans. (Next position, retirement plans, etc.)

4. Separation Ethics Agreement. (“ . . . was given a copy of the current “Separation Ethics” and each section was discussed. The signed “Separation Ethics Sign-off Form” is placed in the pastor’s file.
  
5. Board of Pensions. (Encourage pastor to contact the Board of Pensions about what benefits might be available under their new situation.)
  
6. Additional comments and/or concerns.

## **Appendix 4C: Session Exit Interview Guidelines**

This interview is to take place as soon as possible with the COM liaison after the conclusion of the pastoral relationship. The Moderator (appointed by Presbytery if vacant) will chair the meeting, and, if possible, all members of the session should be present. The COM liaison will lead the exit interview and the Clerk of Session will take notes following the format of the questions, with care to note pertinent information and comments.

### **1) Purpose of Meeting:**

1. To give the session a chance to voice its feelings and to be affirmed about the future
2. To provide a source of information for use by the COM in working with the church
3. To provide data/counsel for the next pastor
4. To give an overview of the pastor search process

### **2) Setting:**

If the pastor/associate pastor is leaving under duress/conflict, the session interview should be after the pastor has left the community. If the pastoral relationship has been a healthy one, the exit interview may take place before the pastor has moved. The pastor should not be present. It is important that the entire session be present if possible.

### **3) Questions to guide conversation:**

1. As a Session, what are your feelings at this point?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are your anxieties or regrets?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What do you feel good about?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What are the ways in which this church has been faithful in its mission(s)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What are the ways in which this church has been effective in the past two years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Describe three things your minister (or associate) tried to accomplish in the past two years.

7. Did the Session and congregation encourage and support the minister's ideas?
  
8. What are the weaknesses/challenges of this congregation?
  
9. What is the most important thing this church must not lose in the weeks and months to come?
  
10. Describe your annual review of the church's program and the pastor's compensation.
  
11. How did the housing arrangements work out with your pastor? Were there any challenges to the pastor/session in arranging adequate housing?
  
12. Were there areas of conflict between you and your pastor?
  
13. How did the congregation relate to the pastor's spouse and family?
  
14. Comment on the community's acceptance of the pastor and family.
  
15. Other comments:

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Moderator: \_\_\_\_\_ Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 4D: Separation Ethics**

Ending a pastoral relationship can be a trying and traumatic experience for both the pastor and the members of the congregation and community which the pastor has served. This is especially true when the presbytery, for cause, takes the initiative to dissolve a pastoral relationship.

*In all cases it is imperative to provide space for the graceful work of the Holy Spirit during the interim times and new times. In this endeavor the departing pastor is responsible for observing appropriate ethical standards. A congregation must be free, in all respects, to develop new pastoral leadership, both during an interim period and then in a new permanent pastoral relationship.*

### **The Responsibility of the Departing Pastor**

When a pastor accepts a call to a ministry at some distance from the congregation served, opportunities for contact with members of the former congregation are likely to be limited or non-existent. Experience suggests that a Teaching Elder who ends a pastoral relationship with a congregation ought to move from the community in which he or she has served, but this is not always possible. When a pastor remains nearby, it is especially important that the wisdom of separation ethics be observed so that the new pastor and congregation will be able to form new pastoral relationships.

During the time between the announcement of the request for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship and the pastor's departure from the particular church, the pastor is to make it clear (both by written communication and in personal conversations) that the pastoral relationship is to end on a particular date and that it is the responsibility of the presbytery and the officers of the particular church to guide that congregation's life and work after the pastor leaves. The departing pastor is to make clear the following ethical standards required of departing and former pastors:

Broadly speaking, it is ethically inappropriate for the departing pastor to have any role or function or influence upon the life of the church after the date of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Specifically,

- a. All pastoral and professional relationships and responsibilities with the congregation are to end as of the effective date of the dissolution.
- b. The pastor, whether in a temporary or permanent called position, will not be involved in any way in the selection process of the subsequent pastor or pastors.
- c. The pastor, whether in a temporary or permanent called position, will not become engaged in conversations which may in any way offer opinions or criticisms about the life of the congregation or the performance of subsequent pastor or pastors.
- d. Any participation in the life or services of the congregation is ordinarily inappropriate. Any involvement may be only with the guidance and consent of the appropriate COM and at the request of the new pastor.

A pastor who has departed from a formal relationship with a particular congregation, whether that relationship was temporary or permanent, is to understand, affirm, and inform members that:

- a. Personal relations of friendship are to be affirmed and may continue, but are not to be confused with the pastoral relationship which has ended.
- b. Requests for pastoral ministries, such as calling, counseling, officiating at weddings or funerals or baptisms are inappropriate and will be refused as a matter of professional ethics, and
- c. Discussion of, or offering of, opinions about the particular church, its pastoral leadership, its officers, or its current health and ministries is unethical except as described in “d” below.
- d. A former pastor may discuss his/her former congregation with possible candidates for a pastoral ministry at that church, but is not to take the initiative in suggesting candidates for the position which s/he has vacated.
- e. It is wise for a pastor to encourage his/her family to practice the same separation ethics.

### **The Responsibility of the Newly called Pastor**

Experience has shown that a newly called pastor may find that developing a relationship with a former pastor who is still in the area may enhance the ministry to the congregation. Having a conversation about the congregation may assist in the beginning of a new chapter of ministry. In time, the former pastor might be asked to assist in some pastoral duties; usually this would be after the new pastor’s first year of ministry to the congregation, in order for the new pastoral relationships to be formed.

Specifically, this works best when the former pastor and his or her family follow the guidelines of separation ethics until the new pastor feels it is time to contact the former pastor. The former pastor should relate to his or her former congregation only at the invitation and supervision of the new pastor, and with approval from the COM.

I have received a copy, have read it, understand it, and acknowledge that the “Separation Ethics” as presented in the EOP COM manual.

---

Signature

---

Printed Name

---

Street Address

---

City, State, Zip

---

Email Address

---

Date

---

## Section 5: The COM When a Congregation is without a Pastor

### 5.1 When a Congregation is Without a Pastor

The Presbytery works with the session through the COM (typically that church's COM liaison) when a congregation is without a pastor. Appendix 5A lists the issues that need to be addressed in a time of vacancy.

It is the policy of the presbytery that, ordinarily, candidates for ordination are called to installed positions. However, if there is a possibility of calling someone to a temporary position based on the missional imperatives of that congregation that decision must be brought to COM for its consideration, advice and approval.

### 5.2 Temporary Pastoral Relationships [G-2.0504b]

The temporary pastoral relationships as decided by the presbytery are

- interim pastor, interim associate pastor, interim co-pastor
- supply pastor
- organizing pastor

**Persons being considered for a temporary pastoral relationship must be first vetted by the COM. All must sign off on the EOP sexual misconduct policy and complete a COM approved boundary training within two months of starting the position or submit proof of completing a COM approved boundary training within the last three years.**

#### 5.2a Interim Pastor, Interim Associate Pastor, Interim Co-Pastor

1. The Nature of Interim Ministries. An interim pastor/associate pastor/co-pastor is not installed because the session, not the congregation, votes to invite a person to serve in an interim capacity. The work of an interim has some very specific job expectations (Appendix 5B), and an Interim Pastor Selection Committee makes a much more limited search for an interim than does a committee seeking an installed pastor.

The interim relationship is formalized through a contract (Appendix 5B), and is signed by session representative(s), the successful candidate, and presbytery representative(s). The Interim Contract must be approved by the COM.

Ordinarily, the contract will be for a period of one year, and will contain a 30 day notice clause for either the pastor or the session to terminate the covenant.

Approval may be requested from the COM for an extension of the covenant should more time be needed before an installed pastor can be called. The church's relationship with an interim should not be ended without the approval of the COM. Quarterly reports need to be submitted to COM during the interim process (Appendix 5C) and the Interim is expected to meet with the Session's Personnel Committee at least quarterly to evaluate job expectations.

Note: Interim pastor relationships are permitted only when churches are preparing to seek an installed pastor in the near future. The interim covenant and terms of call must be approved by COM. The following are *ordinarily* ineligible to be considered for a pastoral position: the interim; current staff ordained or non-ordained; parish associate; temporary supply (unless six months have passed). If missional imperatives lead a congregation to ask for an exception, only the presbytery may grant this by a three-fourths vote. [G- 2.0504c]

The following procedures apply when the session has decided to seek an interim:

1. Interim Pastor. After the previous pastor has left, the session appoints an Interim Pastor Selection Committee. That committee prepares a position description for the interim pastor in consultation with its COM liaison. When the session and the COM liaison have approved the position description, the Presbytery Executive and COM liaison will provide Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) of up to five persons to the Interim Pastor Selection Committee which will check references, interview, and finally, negotiate with the person which it deems to be the best candidate. The candidate's name is then presented to the session which then votes to invite that individual to become interim pastor. When a person accepts the invitation of a session to serve as interim pastor s/he is declaring that s/he is not *ordinarily* eligible to become the next installed pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor of that church [G-2.0504c]. (See the above note.)
2. Interim Associate Pastor. After the previous associate pastor has left the position, or when the congregation of a church has voted to seek an associate pastor for the first time, and has received permission from COM to establish a position of associate pastor, the session appoints an Interim Associate Pastor Selection Committee.

The process will proceed very much as the interim pastor process (above) except that the pastor who is head of staff should be invited to be part of the position description development process and the establishment of the terms for employment. The head of staff also should interview any finalist candidates for compatibility. As in the case of an interim pastor, a person accepting the invitation by the session to serve as interim associate pastor also declares, by that acceptance, that he or she is not *ordinarily* eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or associate pastor of that church [G-2.0504c].

3. Interim Co-Pastor. The selection of an interim co-pastor proceeds very much as in both of the above situations. Interim co-pastor positions are permitted only if the church has had co-pastors for a period of at least three years prior to their seeking an interim and when they desire to continue to have co-pastors. As in the case of the interim pastor, an interim co-pastor cannot *ordinarily* be the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of a church s/he has served as interim co-pastor [G-2.0504c].



### **5.2 b Supply Pastor**

Supply Pastor. If the congregation is not ready to seek an installed pastor or if there are other factors in the life of the congregation that make inviting someone to serve the church in an interim capacity inappropriate, the COM liaison may choose to work with the session to establish another temporary relationship. The process for selecting a person to serve as stated supply is as follows:

- The Presbytery Executive, in consultation with COM liaison, suggests a name or names to the session.
- Session chooses from the supplied list.
- The supply pastor is approved by COM.
- The COM reviews every supply pastoral relationship on an annual basis.
- When a congregation elects a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to begin seeking an installed pastor, the supply pastor serving the congregation is ordinarily unable to serve as the next installed pastor of that church. [G-2.0504c]
- A supply pastoral relationship cannot be terminated without the approval of the regional COM. Appendix 5D shows a sample Supply Contract.

*Ordinarily* the supply pastor is not eligible to be the next called and installed pastor. However, G-2.0504c allows an exception.

### **5.2 c Organizing Pastor**

A person is called by the presbytery to provide pastoral services to a group of people who are in the process of organizing a church as a new church development. This relationship terminates when the church is formally organized by the presbytery. The organizing pastor may be called as the new congregation's installed pastor if COM approves. Otherwise, the new church will go through the process of calling an installed pastor.

The process for calling an organizing pastor is as follows:

1. A search committee and a COM liaison team will interview candidates for appointment by the presbytery as organizing pastor (the presbytery is the calling and appointing agency).
2. The New Church Development (NCD) team should have an opportunity to meet with the candidates.
3. The search committee then presents a candidate to the COM for approval.
4. If the COM concurs, the COM then refers the candidate to the presbytery for appointment as organizing pastor.

## **Appendix 5A: The COM and the Church Without a Pastor**

The COM will help guide the session of a church which is without a pastor in the following ways:

- Work with the session to see that the immediate needs of the congregation are met.
- Assist the congregation during the transition and the interim process.
- Name a temporary moderator of the session by COM action.
- Authorize the session to arrange for immediate pulpit supply by COM action, and provide a list of approved pulpit supplies who are willing to serve in that capacity.
- Discuss with the session honoraria and/or reimbursable expenses for persons serving as temporary moderators of the session or serving as pulpit supplies.
- Provide continuing support, encouragement, and guidance to the session, the Pastor Nominating Committee, and the congregation.

## Appendix 5B: Sample Interim/Transitional Pastor Contract

### SAMPLE CONTRACT FOR TEMPORARY PASTORAL

The following contract between the session of \_\_\_\_\_  
Presbyterian Church and the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, is for the  
purpose of providing pastoral services as \_\_\_\_\_ to the Church for a period  
of \_\_\_\_\_ (not to exceed 12 months). The contract is to begin on  
\_\_\_\_\_20\_\_\_\_.

#### DUTIES:

The pastor will be responsible to (please add or delete from this list):

- moderate the session and congregational meetings
- serve as Head of Staff
- lead worship and preach at regular Sunday services
- arrange for substitute preachers on any Sundays not present
- call on sick and home-bound
- provide administrative leadership
- officiate at weddings and funerals
- lead new member classes
- work with committee chairs
- represent the church in dealing with outside organizations
- pray for the church

The congregation and session will be responsible to (please add or delete from this list):

- support the pastor in his/her ministry
- provide regular financial compensation according to the terms outlined below
- provide a performance review to the pastor at least annually
- pray for the pastor during this contract period
- negotiate goals for contract period

During the length of this agreement, the pastor will be accountable to the presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will participate in the quarterly temporary pastors meeting sponsored by the presbytery. Should the Temporary Pastor have any serious differences or difficulties with any former pastor of this congregation, the matter will be immediately referred to the presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will not be involved in any way with the Pastor Nominating Committee, except to facilitate that committee's regular reports to the session and the congregation. Any concerns or suggestions about the congregation's search for a new pastor shall be carried to the presbytery liaison. It is understood by all parties that the pastor under contract may not be considered for the installed pastoral position in this congregation.

This agreement may be terminated by either party (session or pastor) upon 30 days written notice.

This agreement may be extended in one to 12 month periods, upon written notice to, and the approval of, the presbytery. It is understood that the pastor will participate in any training/discussions sponsored and/or requested by presbytery and will participate in an exit interview conducted by presbytery.

**TERMS:**

The pastor is employed on a ( ) full-time ( ) part-time basis, serving approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week, and will be compensated as follows:

**Effective salary**

**Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)**

Cash Salary	\$_____	Automobile expense (___per mile)	\$_____
Fair rental value of manse	\$_____	Business/professional expenses	\$_____
Housing Allowance	\$_____	SECA Supplement (up to 50%)	\$_____
Utilities Allowance	\$_____	Continuing Education	\$_____
Deferred Compensation	\$_____	Other allowances	\$_____
Other allowances	\$_____		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$_____</b>	Moving Costs (up to)	<b>\$_____</b>

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions

Paid Vacation \_\_\_\_\_

Paid Continuing Education \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVALS:**

The session approved this contract and its conditions on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: (clerk of session) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to accept the terms of this contract.

Signed: (pastor) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The presbytery approved this contract and its conditions on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: (pastor) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Signed copies to be given to: 1) the minister, 2) the clerk of session, 3) the presbytery and 4) the minister's presbytery of membership/care (if other than the presbytery of this congregation).*

**Original of this contract example can be found: <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/sample-contract-temporary-pastoral-services-word-d/>**

## Appendix 5C: Interim Pastor's Quarterly Report

_____ Church Name	_____ City, State
_____ Reporting period	_____ Name of person reporting

Complete and send to:

COM Liaison  
Regional Office

A. The Developmental Tasks of the Church: Please indicate in some detail your involvement and understanding of the process going on in the church for each of the following Five Developmental Tasks: (Developmental tasks belong to the congregation, and the interim pastor may only encourage and assist but cannot achieve.)

1. Coming to Terms with History: Understanding of where it has been coming from and how it got to where it is in order to release itself from the inappropriate power of the past.
2. Discovering a New Identity: Establish a clear sense of who it is in relationship to its many parts and its community. It knows what it dreams of becoming and doing.
3. Shifts in Power: Potential leaders feel the call; new centers of power coalesce; tenured leadership re-examines commitments and passions.
4. Rethinking Denominational Linkages: Communicating the richness of heritage and the usefulness of resources; collaborating between church and denomination on mutual needs.
5. Commitment to New Leadership and to a New Future: Covenanting between new leadership and the church systems to expect and have a dynamic future.

- B. Are there “problem areas” surfacing within the congregation you are serving? If so, what are they as you perceive them?
  
- C. What exciting areas of growth, change, and development are occurring within the life of the congregation?
  
- D. What basic observations do you perceive about the strengths and needs of this congregation?
  
- E. Do you feel a need for support and/or resources from another mid-council? If so, please specify.
  
- F. Please list any other information/concerns you deem important to communicate regarding the process and progress of the interim position you are serving.
  
- G. Date of last meeting with Personnel Committee of the Session

## Appendix 5D: Supply Pastor Covenant (Sample)

The following covenant between the session of \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_

The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ is for the purpose of defining the terms  
of the Supply Pastor position.

This covenant is for one year

**Beginning:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Ending:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Supply Pastor (circle appropriate response):

- Will become  Is a member of EOP.  
 Will  Will not serve as moderator of session.  
 Will  Will not serve as head of staff.

The goals for this relationship, approved by session and the COM are as follows:

**Annual Review:** The session and COM will conduct a review with the pastor each year before considering renewal of the covenant. Goals and terms may be revised at that time. Renewal of the covenant requires approval by the COM.

**Pastoral Search:** If the church, with COM approval, begins a search for a new pastor, the stated supply pastor becomes interim pastor, and is *usually* not be considered as prospective candidate, and may not be involved in the pastoral nominating process.

This agreement is for not more than 12 months. This agreement may be ended by the session upon 30 days written notice. The stated supply pastor may end the agreement with 30 days written notice and a forfeiture of any payment beyond the 30 day period.





## **Section 6: Selecting a New Pastor**

A pastor has a profound effect on the life of a congregation, influencing virtually every part of its life, sometimes for years beyond that particular person's tenure. This reality makes the selection of a pastor a critically important task. In order to obtain the best possible outcome, the selection process follows narrowly defined rules and procedures to form a three-way partnership among the pastor, the congregation, and the presbytery.

### **6.1 Overview**

The election of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) does not begin until the formal pastoral relationship is dissolved and that pastor has completed his or her time of ministry with that congregation (see Section 4). The COM works with the congregation while:

1. Temporary pastoral services are secured.
2. A PNC is elected by the congregation.
3. A Mission Study is completed.
4. The Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP-Formally known as Ministry Information Form or MIF) is completed.
5. Personal Discernment Profile (PDP's-Formally known as Personal Information Forms or PIFs) from applicants are received and screened. Rules regarding PDP's or resumes received outside of the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) are found in section 6.6.
6. Applicants are interviewed and finalists heard to preach (COM will also examine candidates at this time).
7. One candidate is selected by the PNC for nomination to the congregation for election.
8. The candidate is presented to the congregation for election.
9. The presbytery interviews the candidate and concurs with the call.
10. The person is installed.

### **6.2 Types of Pastoral Relationships**

"As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be Teaching Elders, so the church confirms that call through the action of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work may be helpful to the church in mission and is a call to be validated ministry requiring ordination as a Teaching Elder. In the performance of that ministry, the Teaching Elder shall be accountable to the presbytery. Teaching Elders have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery." [G-2.0502] A Teaching Elder may be called and installed as pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor, or they may be installed for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and the specific call. [G-2.0504 and G-2.0504a] Teaching Elders may also serve in temporary pastoral relationships approved by the presbytery but without a formal call or installation. [G-2.0504b]

In deciding what kind of pastoral services are needed, it is helpful to consider all the options.

### **6.3a Temporary Pastoral Relationships**

These are discussed in Section 5.

### **6.3b Installed Pastoral Relationships**

“The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A Teaching Elder may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the terms of call. When a congregation determines that its strategy for mission under the Word so requires, the congregation may call additional pastors. Such additional pastors shall be called co-pastors or associate pastors, and the duties of each pastor and the relationship between the pastors of the congregation shall be determined by the session with the approval of the presbytery. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as a pastor. The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation.” [G- 2.0504a]

Although an associate is normally ineligible to be the next installed pastor, an exception can be granted under G-2.0504b.

### **6.4c Designated Pastor [G-2.0504a]**

A designated pastoral relationship, full or part time, is a call to a Teaching Elder established by the presbytery for a term of not less than two nor more than four years. Ordinarily in EOP, designated pastor terms are written for terms of three years. The term is renewable and may be converted from designated pastor to pastor after two (2) years. The designated pastor relationships are only those of pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor.

Selection is from a limited group of candidates provided by the COM.

## **6.3 The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)**

The PNC can be elected only after the pulpit has been declared vacant by presbytery unless an exception is approved by COM. “The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a nominating committee, which shall be representative of the whole congregation. The committee’s duty shall be to nominate a pastor for election by the congregation.” [G-2.0802]

Nominees for a PNC can be proposed by a) the regular nominating committee of the congregation; b) a special committee appointed by session for this purpose; or c) the congregation at its meeting. In any event, it is required that the floor be open for nominations. Usually all persons nominated to serve on a PNC must be members of that particular congregation. The congregation may decide to include non-members on the PNC. Members of the church shall be the majority of the PNC if non-members are included. Either the session or the nominating committee may suggest a suitable number of members for the PNC, but the congregation, ultimately, will elect the number of its own choosing. A

position description for a PNC member is included in Appendix 6A.

The COM is the resource staff for the PNC. The COM liaison at the orientation meeting will provide a Pastor Nominating Committee Handbook, *On Calling a Pastor*. This handbook is produced by the PC(USA). The PNC is encouraged to give reports to the session and the congregation on its progress, but does not report the details of its work or on persons considered until it is ready to present a candidate. However, in all financial matters - costs for the PNC to do its work, financial matters for the MDP, and final negotiation on terms of call with a candidate - the PNC will seek guidance and instruction from the session. *On Calling a Pastor* can be found at

[https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/clc/pdfs/the\\_revised\\_on\\_calling\\_a\\_pastor\\_manual\\_march\\_2015.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1682633431409118&usg=AOvVaw2ljFWWunpKk2D1kiLinDXP](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/clc/pdfs/the_revised_on_calling_a_pastor_manual_march_2015.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1682633431409118&usg=AOvVaw2ljFWWunpKk2D1kiLinDXP)

#### **6.4 The Call Process**

The handbook *On Calling a Pastor* provides the necessary information for the call process. Extra resources can be found in Appendix 6C. Guidelines for conducting the congregational meeting are found in Appendix 6D. Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Standards are found in Appendix 6E. Plans for a Service of Ordination and/or Installation are found in the *Book of Occasional Services*.

#### **6.6 Applicants Not Referred through Church Leadership Connection (CLC)**

##### **6.6a Resumes and Self-Referred Personal Information Forms**

When a resume or PDP from a candidate is received in any other way than through the *Church Leadership Connection*, the committee must have both an attestation through the Stated Clerk and an executive reference done prior to considering that candidate.

##### **6.6b Applicants No Longer in PCUSA Ordered Ministry**

EOP takes seriously a dismissal from ordered ministry in the PCUSA. Before any individual who has been dismissed wishes to apply for a called or temporary position, and a nominating committee, search committee or session desires to consider that minister for the position, EOP shall conduct an investigation into the grounds of dismissal that includes a standard background check and executive reference check. After that investigation is complete, the EOP executive shall consult the findings with COM to determine if the individual is an appropriate candidate. If they are deemed an inappropriate candidate, PNC will be notified. Otherwise, a COM team composed of 3 members from COM, with at least one ruling elder and one teaching elder, will interview the minister, and, if at least 2/3 approve by vote, then that minister may be considered by any nominating committee or session in the presbytery. If the individual becomes the candidate then the procedures of G -2.0505 will be followed including an examination of the individual at a meeting of the presbytery.

## **Appendix 6A: Position Description for Pastor Nominating Committee Members**

### **Purpose:**

- To present a candidate for pastoral call to the congregation.

### **Accountability:**

- To the session for approval of the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP).
- To the congregation and to presbytery through the COM throughout the process.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Regular attendance and participation (release from other leadership responsibilities in the congregation is suggested while on the Pastor Nominating Committee [PNC]).
- Commitment to purpose.
- Commitment to the process as outlined in the handbook *On Calling A Pastor*, participation in the Mission Study, completing the MDP, reviewing PDP's, doing reference checks, interviewing by phone and in person, and participating in several neutral pulpit weekends before choosing a candidate.
- Understanding of the time (meeting frequently, usually weekly for 10-12 months or more if needed), energy, and prayer required.
- Cooperation and willingness to complete all tasks assigned.
- Willingness to support final choice of the PNC.
- Complete confidentiality and trust in others on the PNC.

### **Skills:**

- Group process.
- For some on committee: writing, leadership, computer, secretarial.
- Discernment.
- Communication and listening.
- Knowledge of Presbyterian polity helpful.
- Experience as a participating member of the congregation.

**Appendix 6B: Permission for Secondary References**

Name of church: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of candidate for position: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form by: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to: \_\_\_\_\_

The committee will begin to talk with the references that you listed on your application. Please inform us of any other persons you would like us to notify. We would like your permission to talk with others who know you and your ministry but who are not listed on your application. To indicate your continuing interest in the position at our church please sign the enclosed release at one of the three possible spaces and return.

I give my permission to the search committee of the above named church to talk with people not listed on my application about my ministry and qualifications for the position named above.

*The committee may talk to anyone they wish.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

*The committee may talk to anyone except (list names) . . .*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

*Please contact only the references whose names I have given you.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

## Appendix 6C: Interview Helps

Listed below are some areas of concern that any interview with a prospective pastor might include:

1. The image of the ministry:
  - What is the style of ministry?
  - How will lay persons be involved in ministry?
2. The nature of worship:
  - How does the candidate view corporate and private worship?
  - What role would the candidate play in the worship of the congregation, in setting the style of worship?
  - What does the candidate see as the nature of the sermon, the use of innovation in worship?
3. The pastoral role:
  - What does the candidate see as the purpose of pastoral visiting?
  - Of counseling?
  - How much will the laity be used in these tasks?
4. Evangelism:
  - What does it mean?
  - How will it be furthered?
  - What are the candidate's past experiences and new ideas?
5. Christian Education:
  - What is the candidate's training and/or experience?
  - What is the candidate's experience relating to volunteer leaders and teachers?
6. Stewardship:
  - Is the candidate able and willing to talk effectively about money and budgets?
  - What success has there been in previous stewardship efforts?
  - Is the meaning of stewardship seen more broadly than raising money?
7. Administration:
  - How will the candidate work at this?
  - Who else will assist?
8. Community involvement:
  - To what extent would the candidate spend time in community affairs, with community groups, in social action concerns?
  - How much will church members be encouraged to be a part of them?

9. Denominational involvements:
  - Is the candidate currently active in wider denominational interests?
10. Personal life:
  - How is the personal life separated from the professional life?
  - What habits have been established to see to it that the candidate has time for family and personal friends?
11. Conditions of the call:
  - Be specific about the preliminary salary and benefits offered: base salary, housing travel allowance, health and life insurance, vacation, sabbatical, continuing education, meeting expenses, and pension.

## Appendix 6D: Congregational Meeting for Calling a Pastor

1. Meeting is opened with prayer asking for guidance from God.
2. Moderator declares that a quorum is present and that the call of the meeting is in order.
3. Moderator calls for report from the PNC. PNC chair presents the name of their candidate and the reasons for selecting this nominee and something of his/her background, experience, and abilities.
4. A time of questions of the candidate by the congregation will commence.
5. Moderator puts the question, "Are you ready to proceed to the election of a pastor?" If there is a verbal yes indicating readiness, the moderator shall declare the name submitted by the nominating committee to be in nomination and the chair of the PNC shall read the terms of call from the call form.
6. Moderator asks a member of the PNC to escort the nominee from the room, to a previously agreed upon location, where s/he will await the outcome of the vote.
7. Moderator, in the absence of the nominee, asks if there is any further discussion.
8. Moderator asks if the congregation is ready to vote on the candidate and the terms of call.
9. Written ballots are passed out to members only. The vote is "yes" or "no."
10. Ballots are collected and counted. In most situations, it is a good idea to have session, prior to the meeting, determine the place where the count will take place and name a committee of three to collect and count the votes. The committee membership and counting place should be selected so as to dispel any possibility of suspicion about vote counting.
11. The Committee reports their count to the congregation. If it appears that a substantial minority of the voters are averse to the nominee who has received a majority of votes, and that they cannot be persuaded to concur in the call, the moderator shall recommend to the majority that they not prosecute the call. If the congregation is nearly unanimous, or if the majority insists upon their right to call a pastor (associate pastor, co-pastor), the moderator shall forward the call to the presbytery, certifying the number of those who did not concur in the call and any other facts of importance. A substantial minority is anything over 10%. If that percentage of members vote in the negative, it is recommended that a second ballot be taken after providing an opportunity for those who voted against the candidate and those who voted for the candidate to speak on the reasons for their vote.



12. The nominee is informed of the outcome of the vote in private, including the numbers for and against, and then asked to return to the room. If the count is unanimous, or nearly so, the nominee will usually indicate his/her willingness to accept the call.
13. The congregation elects persons to sign the call and present and prosecute the call before presbytery. The PNC members and/or the congregation officers (clerk, etc.) are often the ones elected to do this. The call is prosecuted by signing the call forms and delivering them to the COM liaison.
14. The moderator asks for a motion to dismiss the PNC with thanks.
15. The meeting is closed with prayer.

## **Appendix 6E: Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Standards**

### **1. Preface**

The Presbyterian Church (USA) is firmly committed at the General Assembly, synod and presbytery levels to the principle of inclusiveness. The mid-councils of our church believe that the spirit of Jesus Christ and the Gospel calls us and enables us to be inclusive of all who will respond to Christ's call.

A key expression of this is a specific commitment to affirmative action for equal employment opportunity (AA/EEO) relative to the call of pastors. It is the policy of EOP to provide equal employment opportunity for all persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, sex, age, marital status or disabilities. These principles apply to all Teaching Elders and pastors who can meet the requirements and perform the duties set forth in the position description.

Affirmative action involves positive action, sincere effort, deliberately including for consideration and inviting all whom Christ has called to serve.

### **2. Procedure for implementation in calling of pastors**

- a. The COM liaison consults with the session, congregation and the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) about their responsibility for AA/EEO. In order to proceed to pastor search, the session, congregation and the PNC shall each take action and authorize the clerk, moderator of the session, and chairperson of the PNC to sign off on the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP).
- b. The COM shall assist the PNC in developing non-discriminatory criteria for the selection of the pastor. Discrimination based on racial ethnicity, age, gender, marital condition or disability is illegal.
- c. The COM liaison in the course of working with the PNC shall, when necessary, challenge the members to stay with their commitment and shall, when appropriate, help them face questions and feelings which arise.

## Section 7: The Church as an Employer

Each congregation should have a Personnel Committee. The nature, function and responsibilities of this committee are outlined in *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*, published by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is available online. This section of the Manual discusses Personnel Committee concerns for pastoral employees. See 7.5 for information about non-pastoral employees.

### 7.1 Required Pastoral Compensation and Pastoral Employment Policies

Compensation for all ordained staff members is the responsibility of the congregation. The session, with its Personnel Committee and Budget/Finance Committee, proposes annual terms of call to the congregation for its vote. The Form of Government requires an annual review of the adequacy of a Teaching Elder's compensation [G-2.0804]. The Form of Government also requires submission of changes to presbytery for its action after congregational approval [G-2.0502]. (See Appendix 7A.)

Minimum Terms of Call: **COM shall review the minimum terms of call annually to determine if adjustments need be made.** See Appendix 7B for current minimum terms of call and what is used to evaluate if a call package meets minimum terms.

Part-time church professionals are compensated at the percentage of full time equivalency (FTE) of the minimum terms of call. All part-time professionals, whether in temporary or installed positions, with a 50% FTE (20 hours) or more will receive full benefits, including pensions, health insurance, study allowance, and professional expenses. Part-time professionals with less than 50% FTE (20 hours) will receive a percentage equal to their FTE of study allowance and professional expense. A consultation with the COM will be required to determine pension and health insurance requirements for the call. All church professionals are to receive 4 weeks vacation and two weeks study leave. Pay for each such week of vacation and study leave is to be the same as that church professional's pay for their typical work week

A pastor's compensation package shall include:

#### 7.1a Cash compensation, which can include

- cash salary
- cash bonus
- SE Tax reimbursement to Teaching Elders
- medical reimbursements if not part of a group plan

Teaching Elders serving in congregations are considered self-employed so far as Social Security is concerned, but are considered employees for income tax purposes. A W-2 must be issued each year.

A church may decide to pay the pastor's social security tax. If the church does pay the pastor's social security tax, the amount is reported as income for IRS purposes. If the congregation does pay the pastor's social security or a portion of it, up to 50% of the total social security payment need not be included in the pastor's effective

salary with the Board of Pensions. Pension payments are not required on that amount.

### **7.1b Housing**

Housing may be offered “in kind” in the form of a church-owned or rented manse, or provided through a housing allowance when the Teaching Elder owns or rents his or her own home. Often there are also separately stated utilities or furnishings allowances in the pastor’s terms of call.

Loans to Pastors: EOP has no funds available to loan for clergy housing. Any loan agreement involving the local congregation must be approved by the congregation and the Board of Trustees of EOP. Professional ethics forbid pastors borrowing from members of the congregation for personal use.

### **7.1c Board of Pensions and Fringe Benefits**

Teaching Elders are required to be enrolled in the denominational benefit plan, the Board of Pensions, and the church treasurer is responsible for prompt payment of dues. The plan includes provision for retirement, disability, survivor protection, and medical expenses. Please contact the Board of Pensions for complete information. Additional and specific information is available from the Board of Pensions Service Center, 800-773-7752 or on the Web at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org). See 7.7 for more information on the Board of Pensions. A church may also offer a medical expense reimbursement group plan and deferred compensation as other fringe benefits.

### **7.1d Professional Expenses Reimbursement**

A reimbursement policy under which a church agrees to reimburse those expenses for which a pastor makes an adequate accounting is the required way for a church to treat the business and professional expenses incurred by its pastor. Church treasurers should pay reimbursement only upon receipt of documentation (for example, a cash receipt, credit card statement or other written documentation that includes date, payee, amount and reason for expense). Travel allowances should be paid upon receipt of information as to the amount of miles traveled on church business in a given month, not as 1/12th of the budgeted amount. The result will be that the church reimburses the pastor for exactly the amount of mileage traveled. If the reimbursement is at the IRS allowable rate it is not necessary for the church to report this on the W-2 nor is it necessary for the pastor to report it on his or her tax return.

The same is true for education expenses, professional entertainment, books, subscriptions, and any other professional expenses. Unaccountable reimbursement should be listed on the W-2 and should be listed on the tax return deducted under miscellaneous expenses on Schedule A. Confidentiality can be maintained in discretionary funds if the pastor submits the amount and its purpose (food, gas, housing, etc.) while maintaining a separate confidential record.

### **7.1e Vacation/Holidays**

Vacation and Holidays. The length of vacation, any variations based on years of

service, and how much time, if any, can be carried over from one year to the next should be stated clearly in the terms of call. Annual paid holidays should also be made clear in the terms of call. Years of service to the church should be given consideration when considering vacation. Current presbytery policy is a minimum of four (4) weeks including four (4) Sundays.

### **7.1f Continuing Education**

There shall be provision for all pastoral staff to attend events and receive reimbursement for costs of approved continuing education activities. The Pastor and Personnel Committee should work together to devise ways the annual continuing education time and funds will be used. In addition to funds dedicated for continuing education, any continuing education expense may be considered a professional expense. Session shall approve all continuing education requests and pastors shall report back to session on the use of their time. Current presbytery policy is a minimum of two (2) weeks including two (2) Sundays with reimbursable expenses up to \$500.00. Study leave may accrue to a maximum of six weeks in three years.

### **7.1g Sick Leave and Family Leave**

All pastoral staff must be enrolled in the Paid Leave Oregon program through the state of Oregon. A church may choose to provide greater or equal benefits than what is provided by Paid Leave Oregon. For more information, please see [www.paidleave.oregon.gov](http://www.paidleave.oregon.gov).

When leave is expected or planned, such as for pregnancies, adoptions, or medical procedure recovery, session is to be notified, when possible, 60 days in advance so the work of the congregation, including the pastoral roles, may be filled during the leave of absence.

When a major illness or an on-going pattern of repeated illness develops, the pastor, Personnel Committee or session and the COM will confer to evaluate the employee's health, the specific realities of stress factors and the adequacy of support systems. The goal of the consultation is to identify options which would lead to better health and seek commitment to appropriate changes. Interim staffing may be considered. The three parties will then assess the prospects of adequate professional performance in the future and make recommendations for continuation or appropriate change in the pastoral relationship.

## **7.2 Recommended Pastoral Employment Policies**

### **7.2a Pastoral Sabbatical**

A sabbatical leave is an extension of the biblical concept of a Sabbath day and Sabbath year for renewal. Within the church, a sabbatical time for congregation and the church professional is an opportunity to disengage from regular and normal tasks so that values and directions may be seen in a new light and adjusted as that light may reveal. It is appropriate for sabbatical leave to include rest, family time, recreation, and study in a balanced way. EOP recommends a three month pastoral sabbatical after the sixth year of service that includes full pay and benefits during the sabbatical. See Appendix 7C for EOP Sabbatical Policy and resources in planning a sabbatical.

### 7.3 Pastoral Exchanges

Pulpit/pastorate exchanges which involve the pastors being in residence in each other's parishes for more than a few days should be formalized with the following actions:

- i. The EOP pastor requests permission to labor outside of bounds. This should be accompanied by an action of concurrence by session. If for over a month, congregational action would be appropriate.  
A pastor of EOP, working through the exchange pastor, should request permission to labor within the bounds of the judicatory of the host congregation.
- ii. Presbytery should be requested and take action granting permission for the visiting pastor to labor within our bounds. The visiting pastor shall submit a signed copy of the "Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct and Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct" and "Authorization for Background Check" forms. The name and judicatory of the visiting pastor should be provided so that our stated clerk can write a letter of welcome to the minister and communicate to the pastor's judicatory our action and request their complementary action granting permission to labor outside their bounds.

### 7.4 Honoraria

It is improper for a Teaching Elder serving a congregation to expect or receive honoraria for services to members of the congregation. When a Teaching Elder is working outside the bounds of the calling body, it is customary to receive honoraria for professional services rendered at weddings or funerals, for guest preaching, for lectures, for informal teaching, or for a variety of other services which might be performed in addition to the pastoral duties for which he or she is called and installed to service by a congregation or other employing body. It is, by definition, considered improper to have a "set" honoraria; the amount of the honorarium for a particular service is to be at the discretion of the person making the gift.

All financial arrangements regarding preaching, speaking, counseling, officiating at Sacrament or ordinances, or the provision of any other professional services are to be discussed in advance and agreements as to terms is to be fully understood by all involved in the professional-service relationship.

Congregations utilizing the professional services of a Teaching Elder who are not in their employ are to be responsible in providing fair honorarium for services provided and for the direct reimbursement of expenses involved, such as travel or materials. Financial arrangements are to be agreed upon in advance of the professional service provided.

**Congregations shall reimburse those who moderate session or congregational meetings for mileage. In addition, they may choose to give an honorarium of between \$50 and \$150. Presbytery shall cover mileage over 50 round trip miles and presbytery will also cover lodging and meal costs up to \$175 for distances of more than 200 total miles or extraordinary circumstances. Minimum guidelines for preaching are \$75-\$200**

**plus travel.**

## **7.5 Non-Pastoral Compensation**

The community of God's people should reflect qualities of respect and economic justice for the persons who work for the church. All employed church staff are to be given written employment agreements specifically outlining such details as number of hours of work per week, salary, Social Security, pension, health benefits, vacation and holidays, continuing education, and review and grievance procedures. Non-pastoral employees are also required to be enrolled in Paid Leave Oregon if they are not independent contractors.

A position description shall be written for each position and discussed carefully with each employee prior to the date of hiring. This description should include a list of areas of responsibility. It should also identify the persons to whom the employee is accountable. Review and updating of position descriptions is essential and should be done annually. Sample copies of various position descriptions can be found in the *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*.

It is encouraged that all employed church staff persons have an annual performance review with the participation of the employee, supervisor and Personnel Committee. The adequacy of compensation should also be reviewed at this time [G-2.0804]. Help for conducting this review can be found in *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*.

## **7.6 Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity**

The PC(USA) is committed to being an equal opportunity employer. Positive steps are to be taken at all levels to see that staff become inclusive of minorities and women. Under Oregon law, all churches employing more than four persons are enjoined from "discriminatory practices based on race, color, age, national origin, or non-job related handicap or disability." All congregations are to provide such equal employment opportunities and take positive steps to open employment and advancement to persons, regardless of their race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability.

## **7.7 Board of Pensions**

The Church's concern for the well-being of its servants is reflected in the establishment of a Benefits Plan protecting members against the loss of income resulting from major medical expenses, retirement, disability and death. Because of the Church's Benefits Plan, administered by the Board of Pensions, members can carry out the ministry of the Church, secure in the knowledge that they have adequate and continuous benefit protection. Participation in the Benefits Plan is contained in the Terms of Call for pastors serving a congregation(s). Those in called/installed positions are mandated to be enrolled; temporary positions (scheduled for 20 hours or more per week) are eligible but not mandated. Teaching Elders serving in other valid ministries (scheduled for 20 hours or more per week) are eligible

to participate in the Plan. In addition, seminary students (inquirers or candidates and their dependents) enrolled full time may be covered for medical benefits through the plan. Participation in the Benefits Plan is also offered to lay employees as long as they are employed at least 20 hours per week, and their employing organization has elected to enroll them.

Additional and specific information is available from the Board of Pensions Service Center, 800-773-7752 or on the Web at [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org).



## **Appendix 7A: Policy on Reduction of Terms of Call**

It is the policy of EOP that any reduction in terms of call relative to compensation or percentage of full time shall be subject to the following:

1. Full review by the COM, including careful consultation with the session and pastor or pastors involved.
2. Concurrence by the presbytery in a specific action. This action is to be separate from the annual approval of changes in terms of call.
3. Six months' notice from time of official action for implementation by the congregation involved.

If the pastor(s) and the congregation agree, and the COM agrees that it is appropriate, an exception to the six months' notice may be granted.

The COM should give careful consideration to the following:

1. The level of commitment to ministry of the pastor and of the congregation.
2. The adequacy of the congregation's program relative to potential with special attention given to stewardship and evangelism.
3. The socioeconomic environment in which the church exists.
4. The quality of relationship between congregation and pastor.
5. Short and long range strategy concerns for the ministry of this congregation.
6. Options available for congregation and pastor.

## **Appendix 7B: Minimum Terms of Call of EOP 2023**

This page is updated annually

**Salary Package** (Includes Salary, Housing, SECA, & Other Comp)- \$49500.00  
(Previous Years Min: 2022-\$27,600.00, 2021-\$45,350.00, 2020-\$44880.00)

**Pension/Med Insurance**-Established by General Assembly/Board of Pensions

**Professional Expense**-\$2000 per year. Mileage reimbursement is recommended at the current IRS rate. (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>)

**Paid Vacation**-One month, defined as 30 days, including 4 Sundays

**Study/Continuing Education Leave**-Two weeks, including two Sundays. \$500 minimum per year; time and money each accumulative to three years.

Study leave is provided for the purpose of maintaining and improving a minister's ability to perform pastoral or staff specialist functions more effectively or to contribute to professional growth. Prior consultation with the session is required before study leave is taken.

Study leave may accrue to a maximum of six weeks in three years.

Unused study leave time or money is not transferable to a new employing organization. Ministers planning retirement must use all accrued study leave prior to said retirement or forfeit it.

**Paid Family and Sick Leave**-Teaching Elders are required to be enrolled in Paid Leave Oregon.

**Sabbatical or Other Leaves**-EOP recommends that call packages include a minimum 3 month sabbatical at full pay after 6 years of service. During the sabbatical year, full vacation and continuing education shall be granted. When a pastor will be away from a church for six weeks or more, COM shall be notified at least a year in advance before the leave if possible. In consultation with the session and COM, a pastor may postpone their sabbatical.

*Please note that Effective Salary and the figures EOP looks at to determine if a pastor has reached minimums may not be the same.*

**APPENDIX 7B: EXHIBIT 1, PRESBYTERY TERMS OF CALL REPORT FORM**

UPDATED ANNUALLY

**Clerk of Session:** Please complete this report for the ordained teaching elder on your church staff, and then give it to the minister to complete and return to the COM Chair by March 1, 2023.

The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ is called to serve \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church in the city of \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_.

The call is for \_\_\_\_ full time (40 hours/week) or \_\_\_\_% FTE (serving approximately \_\_\_\_ hours per week) with the following terms:

**Salary Package**

**Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)**

Cash Salary	\$ _____	Professional Expenses	\$ _____
Fair rental value of manse	\$ _____	(\$_____ Per Mile Mileage Reimbursement)	
Housing Allowance	\$ _____	Continuing Education	\$ _____
Utilities Allowance	\$ _____	Other Allowances	\$ _____
Deferred Compensation	\$ _____	Other Allowances	\$ _____
Employing Org Contribution	\$ _____	Other Allowances	\$ _____
SECA Supplement	\$ _____		
Other Allowances	\$ _____	<b>Other</b>	
<b>Total Salary Package</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>	Moving Costs (up to)	\$ _____
		Other	\$ _____

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(39% Total Effective Salary as Defined by BOP)

Paid Vacation \_\_\_\_\_ (4 weeks per year min)  
 Paid Continuing Education \_\_\_\_\_ (2 weeks per year min, accruable over 3 years)  
 Paid/Unpaid Maternity/Paternity Leave \_\_\_\_\_

In the \_\_\_\_ year of service, the congregation will provide for a \_\_\_\_ month Clergy Renewal Leave, continuing the salary and benefits for that period, and providing for pulpit supply in the pastor's absence. Year eligible: \_\_\_\_\_

We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

Terms of Call were approved at a congregational meeting held on (date) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Clerk of Session Date

Teaching Elder:

My terms of call were reviewed with me by the Personnel Committee or Session: Yes No

I have or have not accepted the terms reported above (please circle).

I have \_\_\_\_ full years of pastoral experience since ordination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Minister's signature Date

*Per the Book of Order, changes to the pastor's Terms of Call must be approved at a congregational meeting. If there are no changes, Session may approve the Terms of Call. COM highly recommends that Session report the Terms of Call to the congregation even when no changes have been made. (G-2.0804)*

**Appendix 7B: Exhibit 2: Compensation Policies and Guidelines for Pastors and Churches in EOP**

This spreadsheet was created to help pastors and churches understand how their Terms of Call Package affects Board of Pensions Effective Salary, IRS income and SECA calculations, and what is included when determining if the Call Package meets Presbytery Minimums.

<b>Salary Package Items</b>	<b>Incl. in BOP Effective Salary</b>	<b>Incl. in IRS Income</b>	<b>Incl. in SECA calc.</b>	<b>Incl. in Presbytery Minimum</b>
<b>Cash Salary</b> (Before payroll deductions)	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Housing Allowance, Utilities, Furnishings</b>				
Housing allowance-(no manse)	Y	N	Y	Y
If Manse is provided				
-Manse Rental Value	Y	N	Y	Y
-Manse Utilities & Furnishings	Y	N	Y	Y
-Manse Utilities paid by church	N	N	Y	Y
<b>SECA 50% or less</b>	N	Y	Y	Y

<b>SECA</b> in excess of 50%	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Bonuses, Gifts from the Church, Loan Forgiveness, Interest Forgiveness</b> (if paid by the church)	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Church Contributions to Deferred Comp Plans</b>				
Church contributions to BOP 403(b)				
-If pastor does not contribute	Y	N	N	Y
-If pastor does contribute	N	N	N	Y
Tax sheltered annuity plan	Y	N	N	Y
Home equity allowances	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Other Allowances/Comp</b>				

Healthcare reimbursement acct (HRA) and/or Health Flexible Spending Acct (FSA) paid by church	Y	N	N	Y
Down payment/mortgage assist. allowances (doesn't include payments where shared equity is result of such payments)	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Other Allowances/Comp</b> continued				
Housing assistance, down payment assistance, loans, etc. where church is reimbursed when pastor sells home	N	N	N	N
Severance Pay	Y	Y	Y	N
Allowances for Non-Vouchered expenses (books, car, study allowances)	Y	Y	Y	N
Other (i.e. overtime)	Y	Y	Y	Y

Imputed value of “death benefit” reported on employees W2	N	Y	Y	N
Gift contributions to Pastors BOP 403(b)	N	N	N	Y
Moving/Relocation reimbursement	N	Some Y	N	N

## **Appendix 7C: Sabbatical Leave Policy and Resources**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Sabbath rest is built into the fabric of creation and is necessary for the well-being of community, for it reminds persons who they are and who God is. Jesus offered this invitation to his disciples: “Come and rest awhile” (Mark 6:31). Amidst the constant demands of ministry, Jesus knew the need for Sabbath time. Sabbatical is a time to receive, to be nurtured, to dig deeper into one’s self and one’s relationship to God. It is also a time to find one’s own roots and stories, to be renewed, refreshed, and revitalized by the breath of God. Eastern Oregon Presbytery (EOP) highly recommends sabbaticals and feels they are a wise and healthful investment for Pastors and their congregations.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of a sabbatical is to provide an extended time away from normal duties for rest and renewal. It is qualitatively different from “vacation” or “days off.” It is a time to deepen one’s relationship with God and to clarify one’s calling. We all experience renewal in different ways; therefore each Pastor is encouraged to prayerfully discern the type of experience(s) that will renew his or her spirit and provide new life and creativity and energy for continued faithful ministry. A sabbatical plan needs to fit each individual pastor and Church. The sabbatical will provide growth opportunities and the potential for new life for pastor and the Church. Church leadership and other volunteers will have the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for the life and well-being of the Church. To further help during the sabbatical time, the congregation may develop partnerships with other Presbyterian churches. With all these new opportunities taking place, new gifts and graces for ministry will emerge that will enrich the on- going leadership of the Church.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

EOP recommends to the sessions of its churches that pastors be granted a compensated (full pay and benefits) sabbatical of at least three months after every six years of service to an individual church. Sabbaticals should be in the terms of call of all new Pastors. EOP also recommends adding sabbatical time to all Pastors currently serving (also adding them retroactively to date of hire). The number of years before leave is available should be a topic of discussion when reviewing terms of call annually with the congregation.

## **Planning**

- The pastor shall submit his/her intent to take a sabbatical leave to the church's session and COM at least a year before the beginning of the leave.
- Upon receiving the request from the pastor, the session shall appoint a sabbatical team to work with the pastor on planning out the leave. It is recommended that this team have representation from Session and the congregation. It is the responsibility of this team to notify the congregation about the upcoming leave as soon as possible.
- COM and other members of EOP will be available for consultation in planning the leave.
- The sabbatical team will develop a written plan that should include the pastor's activities, renewal opportunities, and expected outcomes during his/her leave. The plan should also include a plan for how the church will fill the pastoral roles while gone, including pastoral care, preaching, moderating Session, and administering the sacraments. The plan should include how and if continuing education and vacation time will be used in conjunction with the sabbatical leave.
- The sabbatical team will present the plan of activity for the leave to Session for its approval at least (6) months prior to the start of the sabbatical.
- The plan will then be forwarded to COM for review.
- At the completion of the leave, the pastor will report to Session and COM a report of activities and highlights of the leave. The pastor may be invited to also share their experiences with EOP.

## **FUNDING**

We encourage congregations to make budget provisions for a sabbatical fund, contributing a certain amount to the fund each year until there is enough in the fund to finance a sabbatical. Funding could be used for hiring someone to fill the pastoral roles during the time the pastor is gone or increase the opportunities for rest and renewal for the pastor during leave. Grants are also available to assist pastors and churches during this time.

## **RESOURCES**

Web Sources:

Pastoral Sabbaticals: The Right Questions

[https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/pastoral-sabbaticals-the-right-questions/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=sharpspring&sslid=Mzc0sjCxMDY2MDc1AQA&sseid=MzlyMjG3MDG2MAMA&jobid=5c35730f-cf95-4344-80d4-b0e4f2b9633f](https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/pastoral-sabbaticals-the-right-questions/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=sharpspring&sslid=Mzc0sjCxMDY2MDc1AQA&sseid=MzlyMjG3MDG2MAMA&jobid=5c35730f-cf95-4344-80d4-b0e4f2b9633f)



The Transformational Effects of Sabbatical in Leadership Development  
<http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jbpl/vol5no1/6turner.pdf>

Sabbatical Leave Handbook <http://www.lreda.org/content/sabbatical-leave-handbook>

Sabbaticals – The Necessary Option <http://pinmin.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Sabbatical-Policy-Booklet.pdf>

Congregations Need Sabbatical and Jubilee  
<http://www.abpnews.com/blog/leadership/congregations-need-sabbatical-and-jubilee-2013-11-01/>

Renewal Time: Planning Your Sabbatical (Near bottom, mentions congregational sabbatical)  
<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2007/05/renewal-time-planning-your-sabbatical.html>

Pastor's Sabbatical Spurs Congregations Creative Streak <http://www.ucc.org/news/pastors-sabbatical-spurs.html>

Going on Sabbatical Together  
<http://spselca.org/documents/SPSDocuments/Sabbatical%20Going%20on%20Sabbatical%20Together%20Handout.pdf>

How to Score Your Sabbatical  
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2012/summer/scoresabbatical.html> How to Plan Your Sabbatical <http://calclassis.org/how-to-plan-your-sabbatical/>

Caring For the Pastor: The Sabbatical  
[http://www.alliancenet.org/CC/article/0,,PTID314526\\_CHID598014\\_CIID2309204,00.html](http://www.alliancenet.org/CC/article/0,,PTID314526_CHID598014_CIID2309204,00.html)

Rationale for Sabbatical Leave <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/ministers/rationale-sabbatical-leave/>

Don't Make Your Pastor a Statistic <http://www.9marks.org/blog/dont-make-your-pastor-statistic> Pastor Burn-Out Statistics <http://www.pastorburnout.com/pastor-burnout-statistics.htm>

My Sabbatical and My Evolution as a Leader-Coach  
[http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy\\_sabbatical/FredNelson\\_My\\_Sabbatical\\_and\\_My\\_Evolution\\_Sabbatical.pdf](http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy_sabbatical/FredNelson_My_Sabbatical_and_My_Evolution_Sabbatical.pdf)

What Difference does a Pastoral Sabbatical Make: What Pastors and Congregations Have to Say

[http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy\\_sabbatical/SheldonSorge\\_What\\_Difference\\_Sabbatical.pdf](http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy_sabbatical/SheldonSorge_What_Difference_Sabbatical.pdf)

Taking a Sabbatical From Church <http://theamericanjesus.net/?p=10957>

Clergy Renewal Programs (Part I): Taking Time to Renew Ministerial Vocations:  
[http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy\\_sabbatical/TracySchier\\_Clergy\\_Renewal\\_I\\_ClergySabbatical.pdf](http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy_sabbatical/TracySchier_Clergy_Renewal_I_ClergySabbatical.pdf)

Clergy Renewal Programs (Part II): Renewal is Key to Pastors' Sabbaticals  
[http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy\\_sabbatical/TracySchier\\_Clergy\\_Renewal\\_II\\_ClergySabbatical.pdf](http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/sites/default/files/transcripts/clergy_sabbatical/TracySchier_Clergy_Renewal_II_ClergySabbatical.pdf)

Sabbatical Resources <http://nextchurch.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/SabbaticalResources.pdf>

Sabbaticals for Pastors <http://wscal.edu/resource-center/resource/sabbaticals-for-pastors>

The Dark Side of Sabbatical (A guide on what NOT to do and how to avoid certain pitfalls or mistakes) <http://www.faithandleadership.com/content/the-dark-side-sabbatical> Unusual Sabbaticals [http://www.lynnebaab.com/articles\\_unusual\\_sabbaticals.htm](http://www.lynnebaab.com/articles_unusual_sabbaticals.htm)

Sabbatical Leave Resources <http://www.pointloma.edu/experience/academics/centers-institutes/center-pastoralleadership/church-relations/sabbatical-leave-resources>

Pinterest Page on Sabbatical Ideas <http://www.pinterest.com/ladyrev60/sabbatical-ideas/>

## BOOKS

Planning Sabbaticals: A Guide for congregations and Their Pastors by Rev. Robert Saler  
[https://www.amazon.com/Planning-Sabbaticals-Guide-Congregations-Pastors/dp/0827231792/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=saler+sabbaticals&qid=1621361905&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Planning-Sabbaticals-Guide-Congregations-Pastors/dp/0827231792/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=saler+sabbaticals&qid=1621361905&sr=8-1)

The Alban Guide to Clergical Renewal: <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781566994873>  
<http://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?sts=t&tn=Clergy+Renewal%3A+The+Alban+Guide+to+Sabbatical+Planning> [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&fieldkeywords=Clergy%20Renewal%3A%20The%20Alban%20Guide%20to%20Sabbatical%20Planning](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&fieldkeywords=Clergy%20Renewal%3A%20The%20Alban%20Guide%20to%20Sabbatical%20Planning)

A Sabbatical Primer for Pastors: How to Initiate and Navigate a Spiritual Renewal Leave by David C. Alves [http://www.amazon.com/Sabbatical-Primer-Pastors-InitiateSpiritual/dp/1495255166/ref=sr\\_1\\_8?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669388&sr=8-8&keywords=sabbatical](http://www.amazon.com/Sabbatical-Primer-Pastors-InitiateSpiritual/dp/1495255166/ref=sr_1_8?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669388&sr=8-8&keywords=sabbatical)

Journeying Toward Renewal: A Spiritual Companion for Pastoral Sabbaticals by Melissa Bane Sevier [http://www.amazon.com/Journeying-Toward-Renewal-SpiritualSabbaticals/dp/1566992737/ref=sr\\_1\\_10?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669491&sr=8-10&keywords=sabbatical](http://www.amazon.com/Journeying-Toward-Renewal-SpiritualSabbaticals/dp/1566992737/ref=sr_1_10?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669491&sr=8-10&keywords=sabbatical)

The Sabbath by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (not about Sabbaticals specifically, but Sabbath in general – filled with beautiful, inspiring, profound truths about the Sabbath.) [http://www.amazon.com/The-Sabbath-Abraham-JoshuaHeschel/dp/0374529752/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669277&sr=8-1&keywords=heschel](http://www.amazon.com/The-Sabbath-Abraham-JoshuaHeschel/dp/0374529752/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1402669277&sr=8-1&keywords=heschel)

## SABBATICAL GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

### **Start early with grants!**

Lilly Endowment Grant Website: <https://www.cts.edu/cpe/clergy-renewal/> (Up to \$50,000 (15k for congregation, 35k for pastor)

Louisville Institute's Pastoral Study Projects are available for amounts up to \$15,000. <https://louisville-institute.org/programs-grants-and-fellowships/grants/pastoral-study-project/> Applications due September 1 for June-May of the following year.

Board of Pensions Sabbatical Support provides up to \$5,000. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and must be received 45 days before the start of the sabbatical. <https://www.pensions.org/your-path-to-wholeness/assistance-program/receiving-assistance/sabbath-sabbatical-support-grants>

## **Section 8: COM and Commissioned Ruling Elders**

### **8.1 Preface**

The COM of EOP shall provide for the support of the commissioned ruling elder (CRE) process as outlined in the *Book of Order*, G-2.10, to train and assist Ruling Elders to serve in a validated ministry in the presbytery.

### **8.2 Steps in Process**

1. A completed application form including pastor's statement (Appendix 8A), plus the Statement of Christian Experience, and sexual misconduct policy sign-off is turned into the COM chair or liaison. Applicants are also required to undergo a criminal background check paid for by EOP.
2. If deemed necessary, COM shall have oversight for preliminary screening and psychological testing. The cost of the testing will be borne equally between the presbytery, the applicant, and the local congregation.
3. On the basis of application and screening, COM decides whether to accept the applicant into the program as a trainee. COM shall report the names of trainees to the next meeting of the presbytery.
4. Depending upon the validated ministry that the applicant wishes to pursue, COM will work with the CRE to tailor a training plan of action.
5. The COM appoints a mentor for the trainee for the purpose of encouragement, spiritual guidance, and assistance. Ordinarily, the mentor is not the trainee's pastor but is another pastor from EOP. With permission from COM, the mentor may be a pastor not located in EOP or someone with extensive pastoral experience in the PC(USA).

6. At the completion of training, COM will determine whether the trainee is qualified to serve. Those who have completed CRE training may be listed as supply preachers and/or as qualified to serve as CREs in other validated ministries. COM shall report the names of those declared qualified to serve as CREs to the next meeting of presbytery.

7. There may be situations where individuals and Ruling Elders preach occasionally or frequently in EOP who do not wish to pursue a commissioning as a CRE. Those individuals and Ruling Elders shall be in conversation in COM about commissioning and educational options to further their growth in leadership to and for a local congregation.

### **8.3 Relationship with the Local Congregation**

The session shall, in consultation with the COM, create a temporary position and write a job description that is acceptable to the COM. The COM is responsible to determine whether a person qualified to serve as a CRE is suitable to the particular situation.

Depending on the commission, there shall be a written contract between the CRE and the local session, covering remuneration and expected duties (Appendix 8B). The level of remuneration is individually negotiated between the person, the session, and the COM, and reported to presbytery. Those who have completed CRE training and are providing Sunday pulpit supply should be remunerated at the same rate as other preachers on the presbytery's pulpit supply list (see Section 7.4). COM shall review the CRE contract annually, and evaluate the effectiveness of the relationship in accordance with G-2.10. COM shall revoke the commission of any CRE who does not abide by the provisions of the job description or whose work is deemed inadequate to meet the needs of the particular congregation or the presbytery.

CRE's can be commissioned to specific ministries for a congregation or within EOP. If a CRE position has been established to serve a congregation where no one else is available and the CRE is a member of that congregation, COM should consult with the CRE and the session of potential problems in placing CRE's in their own congregations. It is strongly recommended that the CRE not be commissioned to serve a church where the CRE is a member of the session.

If a CRE is not commissioned to moderate session, COM encourages the session of the church the CRE is serving to regularly invite CRE's to their meetings.

If issues with a CRE arise, the session of the church the CRE is ministering in shall first contact the mentoring pastor and then the COM liaison or chair.

### **8.4 Educational Requirements**

CRE's are commissioned for a variety of validated ministries, thus the training for the CRE shall be customized for the individual CRE. The expense of training courses and materials is usually the responsibility of the CRE. EOP may assist in expenses if the need arises.

Training may be in one or more of the following areas:

1. Bible: Bible content, principles of Biblical interpretation, use of Biblical reference material, how the Bible relates to Presbyterian Church (USA)'s polity, use of scriptures in ministry, the Bible and spiritual growth, how the Bible came to us.
2. Reformed Theology: history of theology including the theology of Sacrament, the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessional tradition of the Presbyterian Church (USA), prayer and spirituality.
3. Polity: organization of Presbyterian Church (USA), the *Book of Order*, responsibilities of session, small group theory and practice, the appropriate uses of power, role and boundaries of the pastorate, definition of misconduct, principles of Reformed polity, the larger mission of the church.
4. Preaching: constructing a sermon, exegesis for preaching, rhetorical skills (both verbal and non-verbal), oral expression as different from the written word, history and traditions of preaching, preaching in different contexts, preaching through the lectionary.
5. Leading Worship: theology and practice of worship, Directory for Worship, planning of liturgy, funerals, weddings, the church year, the practice of leading worship.
6. Pastoral Care: pre-marital counseling, grief work, home and hospital visitation, crisis intervention and referral.
7. Teaching: varieties of ways that people learn, faith development, self-perception as a teacher, Presbyterian Church (USA) curriculum, integration of learning with worship and preaching.
8. Church Administration: long-range planning, stewardship, and management.

The COM will decide how much training and what training is acceptable. Possible formats for training include existing opportunities such as theological education by extension, training by local pastors, seminars in conjunction with presbytery meetings. COM has the discretion to accept other education and/or life experiences as fulfilling requirements.

In addition, the presbytery requires successful completion of the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Workshop.

All active CREs shall participate in continuing education as directed by the COM and shall report their continuing education activities and plans to the COM. Failure to participate in continuing education approved by the COM shall be grounds for revoking the CREs commission in accordance with G-2.1004.

### **8.5 Recognition of Competency**

COM will consider previous training and experience in the eight areas of competency. Credit or non-credit courses may qualify, at the discretion of the COM. Oral or written examination by the COM can determine if self-study has been adequate. The trainee can "test out of" particular requirements.

## 8.6 Mentoring

The COM shall designate a mentor for each active CRE. Mentor and CRE shall meet no less than quarterly, jointly providing an annual report to COM. The COM is responsible to screen potential mentors and shall keep a list of active and honorably retired pastors who are interested in being mentors. The CRE may suggest a mentor with whom the CRE would like to work (Appendix 8C for the position description for the Mentoring Pastor and Appendix 8C: Exhibit 1 for a copy of the Annual Report Form of the Mentoring Pastor).

The COM shall review the work of the CRE annually and decide whether to continue the commission, in accordance with G-2.1001. The COM having congregations served by CREs is encouraged to report to the COM what is helpful and not helpful in the policy and training of CRE.

### **Appendix 8A: Application for Commissioned Ruling Elder Training Program**

To those called to exercise special functions in the Church, God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, those who undertake ministries should be persons 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. They must have the approval of God's people and the concurring judgment of a council of the church.

Persons aspiring to special service as a commissioned ruling elder should demonstrate characteristics that set them apart for selection by the Church for such service. Applicants should be persons of faith, dedication and good judgment. They should be "persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit" (G-2.0301).

An applicant for commissioning as a commissioned ruling elder should understand that it is important that such persons receive full preparation for their tasks. Applicants must be willing to accept the care and guidance of the presbytery in their course of study and practical training in preparation for commissioning and in their continuing education. Applicants must also be willing to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for their special ministry.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*street – city – state – zip*

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of which Presbyterian Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Date ordained as elder: \_\_\_\_\_

deacon: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your present activities in the life and mission of the church:

Present employment, including description of nature of the work:

Educational background, listing school, location, year of graduation, diploma or degree, and areas of study:

Are there factors in your life which limit your ability to receive training, or to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder, such as physical or mental disability, family situation, or employment status?

**References:** Please give the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three different people, other than the pastor of your home church, who are familiar with your potential to serve as a commissioned ruling elder.

**Session Recommendation:**

We, the session of \_\_\_\_\_  
Presbyterian Church, meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ date

have interviewed the member of this congregation named above. We recommend that the COM train this person in the Commissioned Ruling Elder program of the EOP.

\_\_\_\_\_

Clerk of Session



**Christian Experience:** Please attach a 300-600 word story of your faith journey that includes how your faith has influenced your life, how you see yourself as being called to participate in this training program, and what gifts or talents you bring into the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program.

**Signature:** I hereby apply for admission to the Commissioned Ruling Elder Training Program of EOP. I understand that successful completion of the program is a requirement for commissioning as a ruling elder by the EOP.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

**Appendix 8B: Commissioned Ruling Elder Covenant (Sample)**

The following covenant between the \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian  
session of \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is for the purpose of  
and Elder \_\_\_\_\_  
defining the terms of the Commissioned Ruling Elder Position.

\_\_\_\_\_ This covenant is for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ beginning

This Position Description for this position is attached to this covenant.

The goals for this relationship, approved by the session of \_\_\_\_\_  
Presbyterian

Church of \_\_\_\_\_ and the COM, are (list goals):

The session and COM of the presbytery will conduct a review with the Commissioned Ruling Elder before considering renewal of the covenant. Goals and terms may be revised at that time.

Renewal of the covenant requires approval by the COM.

This agreement is for \_\_\_\_\_ (up to three years). This agreement may be ended by the session upon 30 days written notice. The Commissioned Ruling Elder may end the agreement with 30 days written notice and a forfeiture of any payment beyond the 30 day

period. \_\_\_\_\_

The terms to be reviewed annually are as follows:

The Commissioned Ruling Elder is employed on a 40 hour per week full-time/part time (50%, 75%, etc.) basis, serving approximately \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

Compensation:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			

Adopted by the session:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioned Ruling Elder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Session

\_\_\_\_\_  
Moderator of Session

Approved by COM: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed: COM Chair

Elder \_\_\_\_\_ is appointed by the presbytery as CRE beginning \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ and may be considered for renewal. \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with G-2.1001, the COM of EOP authorizes that the Commissioned Ruling Elder

1.      May  May Not Moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned.
2.      May  May Not Administer the Sacrament.
3.      May  May Not Officiate at marriages where permitted by state law.
4.      May  May Not Have a voice and vote in meetings of presbytery (such vote to be counted as a ruling elder commissioner for purposes of parity).

### **Appendix 8C:           The Mentoring Pastor**

The mentoring pastor is the primary resource for the ongoing study of a person interested in becoming a Commissioned Ruling Elder, and for the CRE working in a commissioned position.

Individuals, those in training or commissioned, encounter situations and circumstances which require consultation with a pastor who has more extensive preparation and experience. Mentoring pastors must be willing to share of themselves to help the individual realize his/her call to ministry as a CRE. Consequently, the mentoring pastor must be a person who can develop collegial relationships and establish trust and confidence with the CRE.

The mentoring pastor will be chosen by the CRE with the assistance and approval of the COM. Information will be provided for the mentoring pastor regarding all components and requirements of the CRE process, including the requirements of the mentoring pastor position.

### **Job Description**

The mentoring pastor will:

1. Meet with the individual on a regular, consistent, continuous, mutually agreed upon basis. A minimum of quarterly meetings are recommended.
2. Provide spiritual, emotional, and practical support to the CRE.
3. Be involved in making recommendations for education and training of an individual in the CRE process, or for continuing education for the commissioned.
4. Observe the CRE in areas of commissioned responsibilities, for example preaching, teaching, visitations, and administration of the Sacrament.

5. Be part of a yearly evaluation: reviewing meeting times, mentor/CRE relationship, work accomplished, goals and objectives, continuing education and relationship with congregation and session. For the CRE this would be the COM's meeting for the annual renewal of the CRE's contract.
6. Complete the Annual Report for the COM following the yearly evaluation and mail to the COM.
7. Contact the COM liaison when and if there are any concerns regarding the CRE.

**Appendix 8C: Exhibit 1: Mentoring Pastor Annual Report**

Date:

Commissioned Ruling Elder:

Church or Project being served:

Mentoring Pastor:

Liaison to COM:

1. Did the arranged meetings and communications happen as planned? Why or why not? When are the agreed upon meetings to take place? For what duration?
2. Did the relationship meet the needs (emotional, spiritual, practical) of the CRE? Why or why not?
3. What work has been accomplished during the past year?
4. What goals and objectives were met and which ones were not? Explain.
5. Was the prescribed education completed? Why or why not?
6. Describe the relationship with the CRE and the congregation and session.
7. List the strengths and weaknesses of the CRE.
8. What goals and objectives have been selected for the coming year?
9. What continuing education is planned for the coming year?

Other comments:

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Mentoring Pastor

Commissioned Ruling Elder

