

# **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

**PRESBYTERY OF  
WESTERN KENTUCKY  
JANUARY, 2019**

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## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Commission on Ministry is the entity of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky given the responsibility to oversee the work of congregations and ministers in the presbytery. As a Commission it has been authorized by the presbytery through the presbytery Manual for Administrative Operations to make and implement decisions regarding aspects of ministry on behalf of the presbytery. The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) does not specifically recognize a category titled "Commission on Ministry" but does identify the parameters of work overseen by administrative commissions of a presbytery. The purpose of the Commission on Ministry is, in accordance with the Book of Order and presbytery Manual for Administrative Operations, to provide and follow guidelines that govern areas of church life seeking to assure accountability for all those involved. As a connectional church it is essential that all entities and ministers, including both Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders (Lay Pastors), be responsible in fulfilling their calling, as reflective of the six Great Ends of the Church. The Commission on Ministry provides support, encouragement and guidance in this effort and is available to listen to and respond to needs and concerns. Though the Commission on Ministry has the authority to make and implement decisions delegated to it, the Presbytery in meeting has ultimate authority and can review and modify any decision of the Commission. The documents in the accompanying manual are to bring coherence and streamline the work of the church that all may be done for the glory of God.

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

**(G-3.0109b)**

**“Functions that may be entrusted to administrative commissions include, but are not limited to:**

**(2) (by presbyteries) ordaining and installing teaching elders;**

**(3) (by presbyteries) examining and receiving into membership teaching elders seeking admission to presbytery, including approval of terms of call and commissions for ordination and installation; and receiving candidates under care;**

**(4) (by presbyteries) developing immigrant fellowships, organizing new congregations, merging congregations, or forming union of federated congregations;**

**(5) (by presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly) visiting particular councils, congregations, or agencies over which they have immediate jurisdiction reported to be affected with disorder, and inquiring and settling differences therein, except that no commission of a presbytery shall be empowered to dissolve a pastoral relationship without the specific authorization of the designating body.**

**A commission of the presbytery, synod, or General Assembly shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly as equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work. A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designated council but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members.**

**Actions of a commission shall be regarded as actions of the council that created it. A commission may be assigned additional duties as a committee, which shall be reported as the report of a committee.**



## MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

possible reelection to additional terms. Team representatives have voice and vote at the first meeting following their selection.

The Moderator of the Oversight Commission will be the Immediate Past Moderator of the Presbytery. The Moderator of the Presbytery will serve as Moderator of the Oversight Commission in the absence of the Immediate Past Moderator.

The State Clerk of Presbytery or the Associate Stated Clerk, in the absence of the Stated Clerk, shall be the Secretary of the Commission.

### B. Permanent Judicial Commission

1. Shall function as follows: To fulfill the responsibilities described in the Book of Discipline, D-5.0000.
2. Membership
  - a. The Commission shall be composed of seven (7) members, with four (4) Ruling Elders and three (3) Teaching Elders. No more than one half of the members shall be in one class and only one Ruling Elder shall come from the same congregation.
  - b. Members will be elected for a term of six (6) years and will be divided into three classes, as equal as possible. Upon completion of their term of office, a member will not be eligible to serve on the commission for at least four (4) years. The Moderator, Stated Clerk or any member of the Presbytery staff are not eligible to serve on this commission.
  - c. Any vacancy due to resignation, death or any other cause shall be filled by the Presbytery.
  - d. The Moderator and Clerk shall be elected by the Commission.
3. Upon completion of the term of office, former members shall be placed on a roster for a period of six (6) years and may be called to serve on an investigative committee, if necessary, D-5-0206.

### C. Commission on Ministry (COM)

1. Shall function as follows:
  - a. Assume the responsibilities assigned to the Presbytery under the authority of G-2.01/G-2.05/G-2.06/G-2.07/G-2.08/G-2.09/G-2.10/G-2.11 and including the appointing and monitoring of Administrative Commissions (G-3.0109B/G-3.0303) and directing the meeting of sessions as needed (G-3.0203), which will be reported to the Oversight Commission and at the next meeting of Presbytery.
  - b. The Commission on Ministry shall provide for the oversight of Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE), including regular ongoing continuing education and training, and shall insure that they are assigned a Teacher Elder as mentor and supervisor.
  - c. To find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for services of ministers, to approve the examination of ministers transferring from other presbyteries, to dissolve the

pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, and to dismiss Teaching Elders to other Presbyteries, with the provision that such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

- d. To serve as an instrument of Presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the churches and for resolving difficulties.
- e. To be in correspondence with Synod and General Assembly committees dealing with similar areas of responsibility.
- f. To carry out those responsibilities, it shall focus on three main areas of responsibility:

- 1) Pastor-Parish Relations

- a) Report to the Presbytery of annually the type of work in which each Teaching Elder is engaged and review annual reports from those whose work is not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery with any recommendations for Presbytery action.
- b) Review covenants for Commissioned Ruling Elders and make recommendations for Presbytery action.
- c) Oversee on behalf of the Presbytery the process by which Teaching Elders are called to churches in the Presbytery.
- d) Conduct examinations and receive Teaching Elders transferring into the Presbytery.
- e) Oversee the Ordination and/or installation process for candidates for ministry and Teaching Elders transferring from other denominations.
- f) Review salaries and present to Presbytery requests for changes in terms of call.
- g) Train and work with pastor nominating committees in seeking pastoral leadership.
- h) Review at least annually the contracts of all non-installed Teaching Elders in the Presbytery.
- i) Counsel with sessions regarding supply relationships and provide a list of Teaching and Ruling Elders to supply vacant pulpits.

- 2) Conflict Resolution

- a) Select Teaching and Ruling Elders for involvement in Conflict Resolution Teams to respond to situations of conflict in churches.
- b) Review semi-annual contact reports and triennial visitation reports from those responsible for visitation as well as any other sources of contact with churches and pastors and respond to recommendations.

- c) Conflict Resolution Teams shall inform the Commission on Ministry as they respond an invitation to intervene in situations involving conflict.
- d) Establish training criteria and provide regular training opportunities for those interested in conflict resolution.
- e) Oversee the work of the "Conflict Resolution Teams" as they respond to particular conflict situations.

3) Session Visitation

Coordinate with the Visitation Committee to assure regular contact with sessions and respond to reports related to areas of concern.

2. Membership of the Commission:

- a. Commission shall be composed of fourteen (14) members with an equal number of Teaching and Ruling Elders. The Stated Clerk and/or the Associate Stated Clerk will serve on the Commission as a regular member. The Moderator of the Board of Trustees, when not serving as a regular member, will be an ex-officio member of the Commission on Ministry, with voice but no vote.
- b. It shall be divided into three classes (5-5-6) with members serving three-year terms. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than two consecutive terms or consecutive portions of terms.
- c. The Commission shall meet at least 4 times a year and when called by the Moderator.
- d. The Moderator of this Commission shall be elected by the Presbytery.

D. Presbyterian Women

Shall function as follows:

- a. Promote the ministries of Presbyterian Women's organizations in the local churches.
- b. Organize and lead Presbytery wide gatherings of Presbyterian Women on a semi-annual basis.
- c. Provide education for those issues and concerns that affect Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.
- d. Elect officers to represent the interests of Presbyterian Women and provide connection with Synod and General Assembly entities.
- e. The Moderator of the Presbyterian Women will serve as a member of the Oversight Commission.

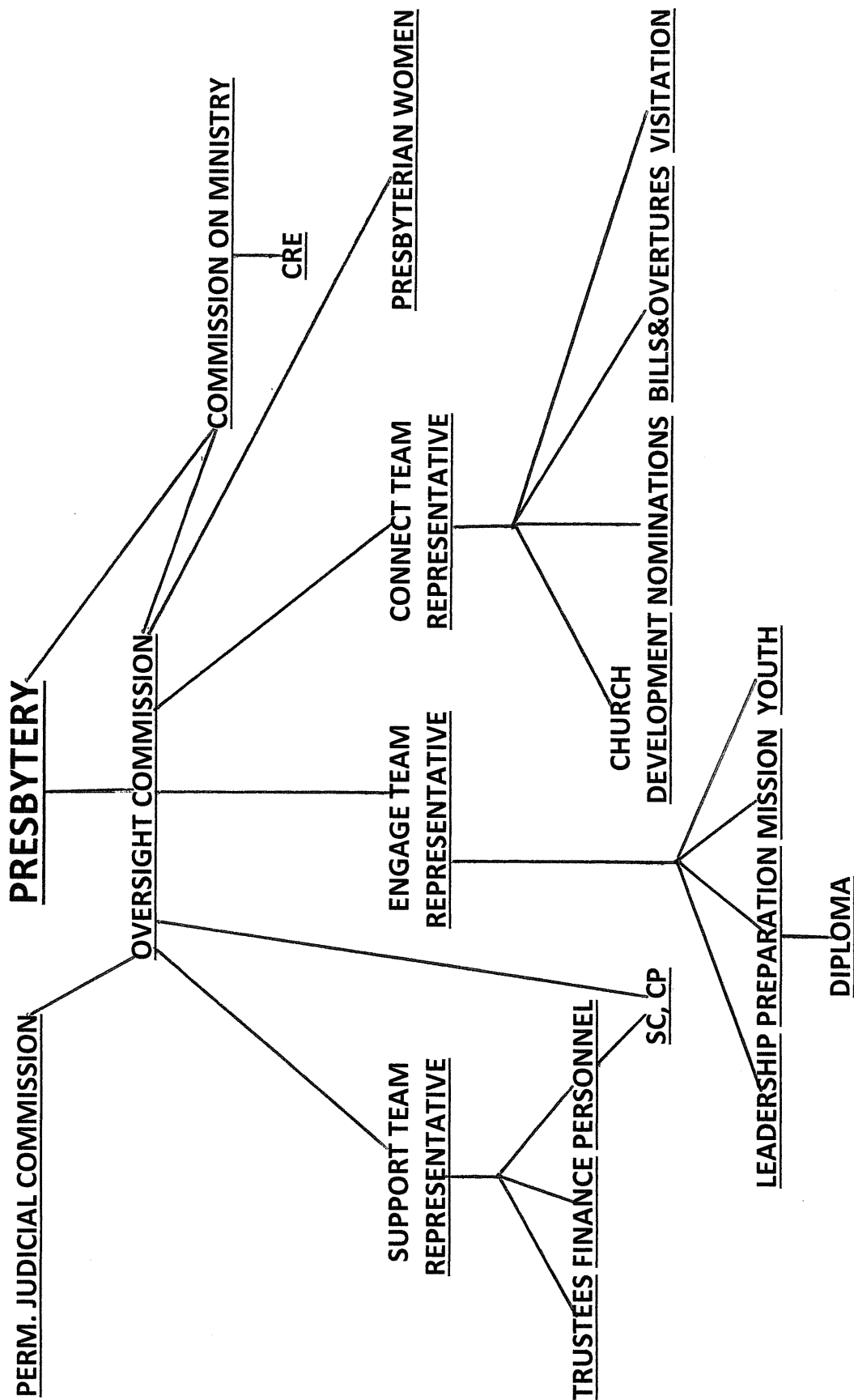
Membership: Officers shall include Moderator, Past Moderator, Cluster Leaders, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Search Committee Moderators, Peace and Justice Coordinator, Together-in-Service Coordinator, Study and Spiritual Development Coordinator, Horizon's Representative as elected by the membership representing local church Presbyterian Women organizations.

E. The Support Team

1. Shall function as follows:

- a. Provide the necessary financial and spiritual support to enhance the work of the Presbytery and its churches.

# **PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**



**B. HEALTHY BOUNDARIES**  
**(SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND**  
**CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION**  
**POLICY)**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **HEALTHY BOUNDARIES (SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY)**

**The Presbytery has responsibility to protect all those under its care, especially those most vulnerable. The Book of Order mandates that this be done through the adoption and implementation of sexual misconduct and child and youth protection policies by all councils of the church. Though not required by the Book of Order, the Presbytery of Western Kentucky also includes basic ethical standards involving many aspects of church life. And because of that, the title “Healthy Boundaries” is used to describe the full extent of accountability and responsibilities for both professional and lay leaders in the church. As the councils of the church include the session of the local church, the presbytery, the synod, and the general assembly, all are mandated not only to create standards but also to administer them in such a way that all those under their care are informed regarding their content, affirm reception of such standards, and covenant to be faithful in abiding by them. The following documents are provided as templates to accomplish this goal. The purpose of the policies is not to produce added burdens to the work of the church but to assure safety for all those involved in its programs. As these policies are adopted by the presbytery and each church session, they are to be an active part of ministry and should be reviewed on an annual basis and utilized extensively as an essential part of church life.**

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-3.0106)**

**“All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy.”**

## **(G-4.0301) Trust and Confidentiality**

**“In the exercise of pastoral care, ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders who have been commissioned by a presbytery to limited pastoral service, shall maintain a relationship of trust and confidentiality, and shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care.**

**When a person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned pastor may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information.**

**A minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned pastor may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent harm to any person.”**

## **(G-4.0302) Mandatory Reporting**

**“Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this 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 a confidential communication, (2) she or he is not bound by any obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future harm or abuse.”**

## **STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL PRACTICE**

### **Presbytery of Western Kentucky, Presbyterian Church (USA)**

#### **I. Overview**

It cannot be assumed that if one has professional training, ethical standards will automatically be observed. For there exist many situations in which basic knowledge and intentions can be compromised to the extent that harm is inflicted upon persons and institutions and professional reputations tarnished or destroyed. An understanding of ethical conduct and an ongoing reminder of its importance (and the principles involved) are essential for successful professional practice.

With that in mind, the following values related to historical codes of ethical conduct and professional decision making should be considered:

1. **Autonomy:** To allow and encourage others the freedom to make their own decisions
2. **Obedience:** To observe and obey ecclesiastical and legal and ethical directives
3. **Conscientious Refusal:** The responsibility to refuse to carry out directives that are illegal and/or unethical
4. **Beneficence:** The commitment to help others
5. **Gratitude:** To pass along the good that we receive to others
6. **Competence:** To possess the skills and knowledge necessary to properly minister to those under our care and the effort to increase knowledge and stay current with appropriate trends in professional practice
7. **Justice:** Fair and equal treatment, to treat others in a just manner
8. **Stewardship:** To use available resources in a judicious and conscientious manner, to give back what we have received
9. **Honesty and Candor:** Tell the truth in dealing with parishioners, colleagues, the church in general, and the community in which we serve
10. **Fidelity:** To be true to our word, keeping promises and commitments
11. **Loyalty:** The responsibility not to abandon those to whom we minister
12. **Diligence:** To work hard in our chosen ministry, to be conscientious, careful and thorough in the ministry we provide
13. **Discretion:** Use of good judgment, honoring confidentiality and the privacy of others
14. **Self-improvement:** To work on professional and personal growth so as to be the best we can be
15. **Nonmaleficence:** The commitment to do no harm
16. **Restitution:** The willingness, when necessary, to make amends to those who have been harmed or injured
17. **Self-interest:** To protect self and personal interests so as not to compromise values and be accessible to serve the common good\*

*\*(adapted from, White, W.L, Critical Incidents: Ethical Issues in Prevention and Treatment of Addiction)*

Applying these values in the context of Christian ministry, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the rules of discipline of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is the basis for ethical conduct.



## **I. Guidelines for Ethical Behavior**

### **A. Cultural and Theological Awareness**

- 1. No two people possess the exact same sense of reality, even when there is a general agreement regarding self-description of values and priorities (Fundamentalist, Conservative, Progressive, Liberal, etc.).**
- 2. No two people have the same exact life experiences. Differing backgrounds and cultures can block communication and connection. Reality is often defined by the perception of that reality by each individual and the community to which they belong.**
- 3. Understanding one's own culture and values is essential in establishing limitations. Boundaries in dealing with others can provide insight when others might become critical or remain distant.**
- 4. Understanding and respecting the cultural context of the ministry placement and the values of those connected with it assists in being able to 'speak their language' and provide proper ministry.**
- 5. Those engaged in ministry do not need to agree completely with those to whom they minister in order for successful ministry to occur. However, they must exhibit maturity and be sensitive and diplomatic and respectful regarding the ways in which to provide service.**

### **B. The Placement of Power**

- 1. Being a professional means accepting the fact that a certain amount of power is accorded the ministry role. It can be used in both positive and negative ways.**
- 2. Parishioners will accord professionals at times almost unlimited power. However, ministry occurs most often when parishioners themselves are empowered to make decisions and contribute to the common good.**
- 3. It is always a temptation to manipulate people, based upon professional power, to respond in certain ways. Care must be given to ensure this does not entail harassment nor used to meet professional or personal needs.**
- 4. Parishioners can also assert power in unhealthy ways as the church community can become the context for them to deal with their frustrations in life. There is a need to be sensitive to and minister to the personal pain or injury that might be causing this. However, at times it must be dealt with as an aspect of church discipline so as to keep such behavior from damaging the life of the church.**

### **C. Self Care**

- 1. An important part of ministry is in teaching people how to care for themselves physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.**
- 2. An important way to teach self-care is to model self-care through proper diet and exercise, daily devotional and prayer time, and the establishing and maintaining of positive and nurturing relationships.**

3. Self-care can find outlets within church life (such as going for walks with parishioners in the morning). However, it is essential to meet most personal needs with those outside the church setting so as not to become entangled with the needs of parishioners.
4. Burn-out can be avoided by recognizing and setting limits on personal commitments. These include unrealistic expectations placed on self or others and taking adequate time for rest and renewal.
5. It is essential that ministry not consume the entirety of your time and energy. Hobbies and personal activities and other interests should be included in your schedule.
6. Cultivate your relationship with your significant other and/or professional friends and colleagues by spending quality time with them.

#### **D. Confidentiality**

1. The pastor-parishioner relationship, modeled after the Catholic confessional, has been respected as a necessary part of a healthy society.
2. Confidentiality in that context must be honored, whether by not disclosing private conversation, keeping written records safe from others obtaining them, and recognizing that most anything that is conveyed through modern technology (such as the internet) cannot be guaranteed to remain private.
3. Confidentiality only pertains to a relationship with a parishioner or client. It cannot be applied to that of a friend or acquaintance or stranger.
4. Duty to warn should be honored when there is a clear danger to another. Danger to self must always be responded to in an appropriate manner. However, there is no requirement to report a crime that has been confessed to you by a parishioner.
5. You cannot always avoid encounters with parishioners outside the church setting (such as the grocery store). However, it is best to limit the giving of advice or talking about sensitive matters publicly.

#### **E. Transference and Countertransference**

1. People in your ministry will often respond to you based upon an association with someone or something from their past.
2. Though the transference might be positive, it can also be negative, and cause disruption in your relationship and ministry.
3. In the same way, if you are responding to a parishioner with feelings of elation or dread, you might be experiencing transference of your own.
4. Personal supervision and consultation can be helpful in working through this so as to protect your own self-interest and ministry appropriately.
5. If you are responding to someone with emotions that are beyond what is customary to that situation (such as becoming overly angry over a minor mistake), you are dealing with something deeper. It is always good to analyze what that might be so as not to damage the present relationship or allow it to become a pattern with others.

#### **F. Dual Relationships**

- 1. As most professionals have skills in a number of different areas, the temptation often arises to engage in all of these in the ministry setting.**
- 2. Some of these, however, can be in conflict with each other. Providing long term counseling to a church member, for example, creates problems in that there are different expectations related to each (such as payment of a fee and unlimited accessibility) that can cause unnecessary concerns and even damage the relationship.**
- 3. Business arrangements with parishioners can also cause problems. Disappointments with the business transaction can become dissatisfaction with the pastoral relationship and can also bring conflict into the church.**
- 4. Professionals should not need the approval of the church for how they spend their free time (such as a private business practice). However, it is good to be upfront about such things, especially if it is in a public setting.**

#### **G. Financial Entanglements**

- 1. Church is a ministry but it is also a business. This means that there are always financial concerns which involve the handling of money.**
- 2. Even if a professional has expertise in money management (such as possessing an accounting degree), they should never handle money independently of some kind of oversight. This extends even to the point of not handling money at all, unless it is a special fund the Session has set aside for professional expenses.**
- 3. You might be completely honest when handling church funds and, therefore, conclude that it is not of personal concern. However, when conflict arises in the church, the first thing people will question is whether you were honest in your financial dealings. This can exacerbate the conflict (In essence, it is good to refrain from even the appearance of evil!).**
- 4. Encourage the Session to commit to a regular review of financial records, including budgetary matters and investments. Make sure, as best you can, that all financial matters are under their direction.**

#### **H. Practicing Beyond One's Expertise**

- 1. It is tempting, especially in a setting where resources are scarce, to engage in ministerial practice beyond one's training.**
- 2. Human beings and their personality and temperament issues are complex. Especially in the area of pastoral counseling and care situations can arise that, on the surface seem easy to handle, but quickly go beyond the limits of personal boundaries.**
- 3. Intentions might be noble However, getting involved in such situations can quickly get out of control as the professional becomes compromised before they are aware of what has happened.**
- 4. If you want to become more proficient in a given area, there is no substitute for professional training and supervision.**

**STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL PRACTICE  
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY  
PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL CONDUCT**

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF STANDARDS**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received on \_\_\_\_\_ (date), a copy of the  
“Standards for Ethical Practice” including “Sexual Misconduct Policy” and “Principles for  
Ethical Conduct” dated, \_\_\_\_\_, that I have read the standards and policies,  
understand their meaning, and agree to conduct myself in accordance with them.

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(signature)

This receipt of standards shall be distributed, collected, and maintained by the Presbytery of Western Kentucky on all Teaching Elders, including retired Teaching Elders, engaged in any form of professional ministry within the bounds of the presbytery, Commissioned Ruling Elders, full time, part time and/or temporary employees and volunteers.

## **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY**

### **Presbytery of Western Kentucky, Presbyterian Church (USA)**

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

**It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky of the Presbyterian Church (USA) that Teaching Elder members, Commissioned Ruling Elders members, employees and volunteers are to maintain the integrity of employment and professional relationships at all times. Sexual misconduct and harassment/abuse is a violation of the principles set forth in Scripture and also of employment or voluntary service and is never permissible.**

#### **II. Definitions**

***Sexual misconduct* is defined as including any and all of the following:**

- a. Child sexual abuse, meaning any contact or interaction between a child (18 years of age and younger) and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person, or any other conduct directed to children punishable as a sexual offense under state law. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. Any legitimate child sexual abuse allegations punishable under state law will be reported to the legal authorities immediately.**
- b. Sexual contact between two adults where one adult is not capable of providing informed consent due to mental or emotional disability. In such a situation, the sexual contact is always considered forced whether or not consent is provided.**
- c. Sexual harassment, meaning unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's employment or their continued status in an institution; 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or 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.**
- d. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.**
- e. Inappropriate sexual conduct, meaning offensive, obscene, or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, or unwelcome touching or fondling, that is offensive or injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.**
- f. Possession on church or presbytery property, or church or presbytery sponsored trips, of pornographic or sexually graphic material or accessing pornographic or sexually graphic web sites on church or presbytery property or church or presbytery sponsored trips, but not including materials possessed or accessed for the purpose of planned, legitimate, sex education courses.**
- g. Sexual malfeasance, meaning sexual conduct within a ministerial or professional relation. Inappropriate sexual conduct includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Extramarital sexual relations between members of a church or presbytery staff,**

though not punishable by law, is an ethical violation and will result in termination of employment.

### **III. Complaint Procedure**

Persons who believe they have been victims of sexual misconduct or harassment, or representatives of victims of sexual abuse, under the definitions of this policy, or mandated reporters, should contact the Stated Clerk or, if that involves a conflict of interest, the Coordinating Presbyter of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky. If it is determined that a written complaint is to be filed, such information will be forwarded to the Moderator of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery. If the Permanent Judicial Commission finds it is necessary to investigate the alleged offense, the allegation is referred to an Investigating Committee, consisting of at least two (2) members of the Permanent Judicial Commission, or those still eligible to serve, representative of gender diversity, church membership, and at least one (1) ruling elder. Following the inquiry of the Investigating Committee, the report, with recommendations, shall be referred to the Permanent Judicial Commission within (30) days. On receipt of the report of the Investigating Committee, the allegations may, or may not, be referred to the church judicial process. Those who serve on the Investigating Committee shall be knowledgeable of both civil law and church discipline (as presented in the most current Book of Order) and the Coordinating Presbyter will be responsible for providing any necessary training. Should the investigation stretch beyond the term of an active member, he/she will continue in service on the Investigating Committee until the current matter is resolved. The incident report, investigation records, and records of allegations, regardless of the results of the case, shall be retained and be sealed in a permanent file by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky. Presbytery's Personnel Committee in consultation with the Coordinating Presbyter, will determine to whom they may be released.

### **IV. Book of Order Guidelines**

- A. When a written statement of an alleged offense of sexual abuse toward any person has been received against a teaching elder( or Commissioned Ruling Elder or member of the Presbytery staff)...the Permanent Judicial Commission shall determine whether the accused shall be placed on a paid administrative leave during the resolution of the matter....While administrative leave is in effect, a teaching elder (or Commissioned Ruling Elder) may not perform any pastoral, administrative, educational, or supervisory duties, and may not officiate at any functions such as baptisms, funerals, or weddings (Book of Order, D- 10.0106).**
- B. Though five years is the customary time limit for filing charges in response to an alleged offense, for instances of sexual abuse of another person, the five year limit shall not apply. Charges may be brought regardless of the date on which an offense is alleged to have occurred (Book of Order, D-10.0401b).**
- C. Several charges against the same person may be filed with the council at the same time (Book of Order, D-10.0403a).**
- D. An administrative Commission may be established making pastoral inquiry into persons accused of sexual abuse of another person when jurisdiction in a judicial**

proceeding against such person has ended due to death or renunciation of the accused; such inquiries shall not be understood as judicial proceedings but shall seek to reach a determination of truth related to the accusation and to make appropriate recommendations to the designating council (Book of Order, G-3.0109b6).

- E. Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, 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 a confidential communication...(2)she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3)she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse. (Book of Order, G-4.0302)

**V. Other Guidelines**

- A. When accusations of sexual misconduct are brought against someone who is serving in a volunteer capacity, that person will be prohibited from serving in that capacity until the matter has been resolved.
- B. If alleged sexual misconduct is reported but the charges either dropped or a written accusation not filed, the Permanent Judicial Commission can, if it determines that the information received warrants it, conduct an investigation of the matter.
- C. The one accused of sexual misconduct will be notified of the receiving of the written allegations against him/her and given opportunity to respond as part of the investigative process.
- D. Ethical standards and legal standards do not always coincide. Even though a charge of sexual misconduct cannot be legally prosecuted, it can still be in violation of the ethical standards of the church and subject to church judicial process.
- E. All persons giving written agreement to the guidelines in this "Sexual Misconduct Policy" will be subject to the policy as long as they continue in membership or employment or in a volunteer capacity in the Presbytery of Western Kentucky.
- F. The Presbytery has the right to require a criminal record check as a prerequisite for acceptance as a member of the Presbytery, Presbytery staff, or a volunteer serving in a capacity that involves official contact with individuals or groups.
- G. No Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder who is a member of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky will be dismissed to another presbytery as long as formal charges of sexual misconduct brought against them have not been resolved.
- H. If a Teaching Elder, Commissioned Ruling Elder, employee, or volunteer, observes an incident of sexual misconduct, as defined in this policy, they have an ethical responsibility to file a written accusation on behalf of the alleged victim.
- I. The Presbytery through its appropriate Council or Commission, will determine the means by which the "Sexual Misconduct Policy" will be disseminated and all those for whom the policy applies will be mandated to provide written agreement to its provisions as a basis for initial or continued employment or volunteer service.
- J. This policy will be included in the Personnel Policies of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and will be available for public review and dissemination.

## **PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL CONDUCT**

1. Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders should cultivate a relationship with a colleague for the purpose of collaboration or mentoring so as to receive input in relation to the proper response to ethical issues.

*No matter how much professional training or experience you have received, dealing with human beings is complex in nature. Regular interaction with someone you respect will not only enhance the quality of your ministry, it will provide a trusted ally in case problems arise.*

2. Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders should be very cautious about the handling of church money and never agree to have access to funds separate from some kind of oversight.

*Almost all charges of financial misconduct arise when the professional handles money independent of any direct oversight. For not only does it provide a temptation to appropriate something for oneself, there are very few times when such independent handling of funds is a necessary or desired part of ministry.*

3. Encourage the Session to engage in an audit of church financial accounts on at least a regular basis.

*The Book of Order (G-3.0113) requires an auditing of all accounts on an annual basis. It is an excellent means for review of financial practices and a safeguard against mismanagement of funds. Encouraging your session to do this (though they might not comply with the annual requirement) frees you from any suspicion of personal interest regarding financial matters. Though an internal audit (involving church members not related to the church treasurer) can supplement an external audit and provide adequate results, care needs to be taken to insure that personal relationships among church members are not compromised in the process.*

4. Caution should be taken regarding being alone with someone of the opposite gender, especially when that person is a stranger or not well known.

*Almost all temptations to engage in sexual misconduct and charges related to it involve situations where two people are alone together. Though this cannot be avoided completely, special care needs to be taken when the other person is not well known or their character not fully understood, especially any hidden motives they (or you!) might have regarding the need for a private encounter.*

5. When involved in activities with persons under the age of 18 years old, every effort should be made for at least two adults to be present at all portions of the activity.



***Though many state laws eliminate automatic charges of sexual misconduct at the age of 16, the Book of Order (D-10.0401) establishes 18 as the standard age. As almost all charges of sexual misconduct occur in the context of private encounters and adolescents at times have difficulty understanding and controlling their intentions and emotions, a second adult to serve as witness and colleague is imperative. This includes activities on church property as well as when there is just one minor present.***

6. In transporting persons under the age of 18 years old, priority should be given to pick up last and return first those who are least well known to the adult supervisor.

***It is good practice, especially when not accompanied by another adult, to make it a habit, regardless of gender, not to be alone with a minor with whom you are not familiar during the process of transportation. This eliminates what might be an uncomfortable situation as well as any suspicion of ulterior motives.***

7. When engaging in pastoral counseling or care, knowing the limits of personal training, especially in relation to the setting of boundaries, is essential in limiting undue manipulation or exploitation by either party.

***Violations of ethical standards as well as sexual misconduct are more likely to occur when the professional engages in practice that is beyond their level of expertise, especially if no training or supervision is being received. It is much better to be knowledgeable of and refer to someone with proper training than risk doing harm to the parishioner or client and incurring a possible lawsuit.***

8. Confidentiality of information must be protected when dealing with persons who are considered parishioners.

***Most all courts of law honor confidentiality between clergy and parishioners. It is imperative that what is spoken does not go beyond the counseling session, including any written documentation, and only divulged in the context of professional supervision or consultation. When danger to self or others is suspected, every attempt must be made to encourage the parishioner to self-report before other actions taken.***

9. Acts of physical affection, such as a hug, should be engaged in with discernment regarding the perception it might have upon the parishioner and in most cases limited to a public setting.

***There is nothing wrong with gestures of physical affection in a public setting. However, perception is reality and caution should be taken regarding how this might***

***be received by the parishioner. It is always good to allow the parishioner to initiate any gesture and respond only to the extent by which it was given.***

10. Engaging in dual roles, such as that of long term counseling and pastoring the same person, or being involved in a business relationship with a parishioner, should be discouraged as a conflict of interest.

***Dual roles can be confusing for the parishioner as there are often differing expectations involved. Dissatisfaction in one area can be translated to another area and even result in complaints regarding your professional work. It is best to limit your involvement to one role, if possible, and make counseling referrals as necessary.***

11. Every effort should be made to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships with significant others and the enhancement of personal health and wellness so as to avoid depending upon parishioners for the meeting of these needs.

***Violations of ethical standards and sexual misconduct occur most often when the professional is failing to take care of their own emotional and relational needs and, as a result, depend upon parishioners to meet those needs. Times of rest and renewal and the setting of limits regarding the extent of professional work are essential for long term personal health and professional survival.***

12. As a professional any relationship with a parishioner or lay person is always unequal in nature and the professional is more responsible to make sure that proper boundaries are maintained.

***Two adults engaging in a consensual relationship can feel like it is equal in nature. However, being a professional means you are judged by a higher standard if a violation of ethical standards or sexual misconduct occurs. Though the other person consented does not eliminate your responsibility to know better what is appropriate.***

13. Personal relationships with particular church members should be engaged in with proper discernment in relation to feelings of favoritism that might arise.

***Professionals need friendship. It is best to establish them away from the context of your professional setting (with other professionals). However, it is natural to form friendships with parishioners and you will feel closer to some than others. Care needs to be taken to make sure that the needs of all are given equal attention and be sensitive to jealousies that will arise that might interfere with your ministry.***

- 14. Appropriate termination is an essential part of pastoral work and should be followed so as to insure proper spiritual health for parishioners and congregation.**

***A time will come in every pastoral ministry for termination of the pastoral relationship. Whether the pastoral relationship has been short or long in duration, adequate notice should be given to the session and the congregation to provide for appropriate closure regarding a meaningful way for all involved to be able to say 'good bye.' However, following termination it is customary for both the former pastor and parishioners to experience a sense of grief and loss. When this happens it is essential for the former pastor to seek out a setting where such feelings can be processed as they may include not only grief but also some anger as a result of the nature of the termination. Also, it is normal for some parishioners who have felt emotionally close to the pastor, to express those emotions personally to the former pastor (including a wish that the pastor had not left) following termination. The former pastor must recognize these as normal expressions of grief and not a request for continued involvement with the parishioner and/or the congregation and leave to the interim pastor and/or the appropriate committee of presbytery to assist with the parishioner and congregational grief process.***

- 15. Following termination of the pastoral relationship, continuing involvement with parishioners or the congregation should be reflective of the guidelines of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).**

***The Book of Order (G-2.0905) states: "After the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, former pastors and associate pastors shall not provide their pastoral services to members of their former congregations without the invitation of the moderator of session."***

***This stipulation is necessary so as to promote and protect the well-being of the congregation and enhance the ministry of the current pastoral leadership. For it is tempting, especially where strong emotional bonds have been established with particular parishioners and the former pastor continues to reside in the local community, to provide pastoral services such as hospital and home visitation. In addition, a former pastor can be asked to conduct wedding or funeral services. In all of these it is essential to use discernment in limiting contact with parishioners and always inform the current moderator of session regarding such pastoral services. And, especially in the case of wedding or funeral services, permission of the current moderator of session to assist in such services should always be requested. For ongoing involvement in a former congregation hinders the new pastoral leadership from establishing the relationships necessary to maintain healthy congregational life.***

**In conclusion, many who have had charges of ethical or sexual misconduct filed against them have been found not guilty. However, with the time and cost and emotional drainage involved, it is much better to follow some basic principles of ethical conduct such as those referenced in this document so as to minimize the possibility of this occurring.**

# **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY FOR A LOCAL CHURCH**

## **PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

**NAME OF CHURCH**\_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION**\_\_\_\_\_

**ADOPTED BY THE SESSION**\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

This church is a spiritual community that takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all those who participate in its ministries. All program staff and volunteers who are in leadership roles in these ministries are living out the vows taken in their baptism to care for all those under their oversight and guidance. All play an important role in fostering spiritual development of individuals and families in our church community. The following statements reflect the commitment of our church to provide a safe environment for all who participate in church-sponsored ministries.

In an effort to provide a safe community for staff, volunteers, children, youth, and adults, the church requires all volunteers who work with children under the age of 18 years old, and all staff to respect and abide by this Sexual Misconduct Policy adopted by the Session of this church. In doing so, all volunteers who work with children under the age of 18 years old on a regular basis and all staff will review the Sexual Misconduct Policy and sign the Sexual Misconduct Information Form. In addition, a criminal background check may be completed before staff and volunteers begin their work.

### **DEFINITIONS**

*Sexual misconduct* is defined as including any and all of the following:

1. Child sexual abuse, meaning any contact or interaction between a child (18 years or younger) and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person, or any other conduct directed to children punishable as a sexual offense under state law. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. Any legitimate child sexual abuse allegations punishable under state law will be reported to the legal authorities immediately.
2. Sexual contact between two adults where one adult is not capable of providing informed consent due to mental or emotional disability. In such a situation, the sexual contact is always considered forced whether or not consent is provided.
3. Sexual harassment, meaning unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: a) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of employment or continued status in an institution; b) Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an individual; or c) 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.
4. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

5. Inappropriate sexual conduct, meaning offensive, obscene or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, or unwelcome touching or fondling, that is offensive or injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.
6. Possession on church property, or church sponsored trips, of pornographic or sexually graphic materials or accessing pornographic or sexually graphic web sites on church property, or church sponsored trips, but not including materials possessed or accessed for the purpose of planned, legitimate sex education courses.
7. Sexual malfeasance, meaning sexual conduct within a ministerial or professional relation. Sexual conduct includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Extramarital sexual relations between members of a church staff, though not punishable by law, is an ethical violation and will result in termination of employment.

### **HIRING OF NON-ORDAINED STAFF AND RECRUITING OF VOLUNTEERS**

**Note:** All Teaching Elders in ministerial practice and Commissioned Ruling Elders receive proper training and agree to compliance to presbytery guidelines.

1. As part of the hiring or recruiting process, the Session will state in all position descriptions that this church has a Sexual Misconduct Policy to which all employees and volunteers must comply.
2. Those responsible for employing staff with special responsibilities involving children under the age of 18 years old shall conduct a criminal background check before employment with special regard to allegations of sexual misconduct.
3. All new staff, before employment, and volunteers with special responsibilities involving children under the age of 18 years old, shall receive this Sexual Misconduct Policy and complete the Sexual Misconduct Information Form, which will be kept in that employee's or volunteer's file.
4. The Sexual Misconduct Policy shall be reviewed with all teachers, youth leaders, and volunteers working with children under the age of 18 years old at the start of their responsibilities, and on a periodic basis as necessary. Those with a history of sexual misconduct shall not be allowed to work with children under the age of 18 years old.
5. Training of new elders will include the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

### **SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF**

1. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers working with children under the age of 18 years old (usually the Christian Education Committee), will strive to recruit leader teams rather than just one person whenever possible.
2. It is strongly encouraged that those recruited to work with children under the age of 18 years old be members or participants in the life of this church for at least six months.
3. Those overseeing volunteers will review on a periodic basis as necessary the arrangements for supervision of children under the age of 18 years old to ensure that those arrangements comply with this Policy.
4. Staff and volunteers are required to report immediately any behavior which seems inappropriate or abusive.

## **INITIAL REPORTING OF SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**

- 1. Any suspicious activity must be reported immediately. (If the allegation is against the Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall be contacted immediately. The Presbytery will then commence an investigation according to its stated policy).**
- 2. The appropriate person or persons to whom report should be made are: a) pastoral staff person; b) the person with direct supervisory responsibility; c) clerk of session.**
- 3. The initial person making the report should document the details in writing. If this is not possible, one of the above person to whom the report was made will do so.**
- 4. The person receiving the initial report of suspicious activity will report it immediately to the appropriate entity, which may include pastoral staff person, clerk of Session, Presbytery Stated Clerk, church legal counsel, and law enforcement authorities.**
- 5. If the Session chooses to conduct an investigation, an investigating committee will be appointed. All appropriate persons will be interviewed, taking seriously all allegations, striving to be sensitive and protective of both alleged victim and abuser, and documenting all circumstances to determine whether further action should be taken.**
- 6. The alleged abuser will be required to refrain from all activities involving children under the age of 18 years old until it is determined if further action shall be taken.**
- 7. During an investigative process, care should be taken to handle all matters in as discreet a manner as possible, respecting the privacy of all those involved.**
- 8. After investigating the reported circumstances, if the appropriate person(s) receiving the report determine there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse, then further action shall be taken as described in the section titled "Responding to Allegations of Abuse."**
- 9. If no reasonable cause is determined, persons making this decision have the option to recommend alternative action such as further investigation, review of process utilized, further education, or reconciliation where appropriate.**

## **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

**If there is reasonable cause to suspect sexual abuse, the following steps will be taken:**

- 1. Local law enforcement authorities will be contacted immediately regarding child sexual abuse punishable under state law. A copy of all documentation will be provided them. These authorities shall be afforded complete cooperation by the church's staff and members.**
- 2. The church will be bound in its procedure by the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA). If necessary, the Session will appoint a Special Disciplinary Committee as referred to in the Rules of Discipline.**
- 3. A spokesperson, usually the pastoral staff person or clerk of Session or a member of the Session, will be appointed to provide information to the congregation and communicate with the press and authorities as necessary and appropriate.**
- 4. Guidance may be sought from the Presbytery Stated Clerk and any investigation and decision by the Session will be forwarded to the Stated Clerk for review.**
- 5. The pastoral staff will provide appropriate pastoral care and support to all involved including referring persons where appropriate.**

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT INFORMATION FORM

(Please check one of the following)

\_\_\_\_\_ I certify by the signature below that no civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaint has ever been successfully prosecuted\* or is pending\*\* against me for sexual misconduct; and that I have never resigned or been terminated from an employment or volunteer position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer, instead, the following description of the complaint, termination, or outcome of the situation with explanatory comments:

I fully understand that this information may be used to deny me employment or volunteer status by the church. I further certify that, by signing below, that I have read the Sexual Misconduct Policy and will abide by it completely. I also agree that I will hold the church harmless from any and all claims, liabilities, and causes of action for the legitimate release of information related to sexual misconduct or my actions that may cause a civil or criminal suit.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### \*Successfully Prosecuted

1. In a criminal court, "Successfully Prosecuted" means that there has been a guilty plea, a guilty verdict, a plea bargain, or a plea of no contest to the charges.
2. In a civil court, "Successfully Prosecuted" means that there has been a judgment against the defendant, or a settlement in which the defendant or anyone else on his or her behalf paid consideration of any kind to the plaintiff.
3. In an ecclesiastical case, "Successfully Prosecuted" means that there has been a guilty plea and censure imposed, or finding of guilt with censure imposed, by a local church Session or Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or an equivalent body of another church, or a plea of no contest to the charges.

### \*\*Pending

1. In a criminal court, "pending" means a criminal charge before a grand jury, in the process of being prosecuted, or in which there has not yet been a verdict.
2. In a civil court, "pending" means a case for which a decision or judgment has not yet been reached.
3. In an ecclesiastical case, "pending" means an accusation is being investigated by a special disciplinary committee or charges have been filed but have not yet been decided by a Permanent Judicial Commission; or an accusation or charges are in an equivalent state of process in a church other than the Presbyterian Church (USA).

# **CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

## **PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**

### **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

#### Policy Statement

The Presbytery of Western Kentucky of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is committed to the safety, welfare, and protection of all children and youth participating in the programs and activities of the Presbytery. In an effort to minimize the possibility that any child or youth will be subjected to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, the Presbytery has established policies and procedures as a faithful response to Christ's call to welcome children by providing an environment that is unquestionably safe and caring.

This policy directs that supervision of activities involving children and youth be conducted in a manner that minimizes the risk of abuse or of false allegations of abuse. All those under direct authority of the Presbytery, which includes installed teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders, and active and retired teaching elders in temporary positions involving any kind of pastoral services, as well as volunteers, will agree to abide by its provisions.

Events or activities sponsored by the Presbytery will always be governed by the guidelines of this policy, regardless of location. Events or activities sponsored by another entity will be governed by the policy in place at that entity. If there is no policy in place, the Presbytery will adhere to its own policy. In any case, adult leaders of the Presbytery will give priority to following the guidelines of this policy.

#### Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" shall mean persons from birth through fifth grade; "youth" include all persons from sixth grade through their eighteenth birthday. In group settings, this term shall also include those who have turned eighteen but are still in high school or are recently graduated seniors. The term "adult leader" includes those under direct authority of the Presbytery (installed pastors, commissioned ruling elders, active and retired teaching elders in temporary positions and any teaching elder providing any kind of pastoral services), who participate in presbytery or local church programs, activities or events which involve regular contact with children and/or youth or provide administrative or direct supervision to volunteers in such settings. The term "volunteer" shall mean any active member of a local congregation of this presbytery who, for no monetary compensation, provides education and/or childcare services for or in connection with presbytery programs, activities or events, and has regular contact with children and/or youth.

#### Responsibility and Standard Practices

The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter shall have overall responsibility for the Child Protection Policy. If there is a conflict of interest or the Coordinating Presbyter is not available, the Moderator of the Presbytery Commission on Ministry shall have responsibility for implementation of the policy.

The intention of this Child Protection Policy is to protect. In order to create the safest possible environment for children and youth, the Presbytery shall ensure that the following practices have been observed:



1. All those representing the Presbytery in settings involving children and/or youth shall agree to conduct themselves in accordance with the provisions of this policy. This could include consent for a criminal background screening and other items if not already on file with their local church. In addition, the Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children (see attached) shall be completed by all volunteers not under the authority of the Child Protection Policy of their local congregation before participating in a presbytery sponsored activity. All completed forms shall be available to the Coordinating Presbyter and kept confidential and stored with other confidential Presbytery files and released only on a need-to-know basis so as to maintain the privacy of the individuals involved.
2. The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee shall review the Child Protection Policy and consent forms and applications when conducting reference checks, paying particular attention to the questions concerning criminal offenses, child neglect, physical/social abuse, and misconduct against children. Any volunteer not checked and cleared by the local church's Child Protection Policy shall be checked and cleared before participating in a presbytery sponsored activity. A disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by the Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.
3. The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee will contact any adult leaders or volunteers regarding any perceived problems that would potentially prohibit their working with children or youth.
4. All volunteers shall read and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy when they first become involved with the Presbytery in activities involving children and youth. Subsequent training and follow-up shall be done for adult leaders and volunteers whenever the procedure is changed or at least every 5 years.
5. The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee shall make copies of this Child Protection Policy available to any adult participating in a presbytery sponsored activity or event with children or youth.
6. It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky that any event or activity including children or youth sponsored by the presbytery will involve at least one adult leader who will be responsible to the Presbytery for adherence to this policy for the duration of the activity or event.
7. It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky that a minimum of two unrelated adults will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during activities and programs. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. The Presbytery does not allow minors to be alone with one adult during any Presbytery sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.
8. The Presbytery recognizes that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for child care providers (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for young children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:
  - Must be at least age 14.
  - Must be screened as specified above.
  - Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

9. It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky not to administer prescription or non-prescription medications to the children or youth under our care. Medications should be administered by the parent or legal guardian at home. Exceptions to this policy would include children with potentially life-threatening conditions such as asthma or epilepsy or severe allergic reactions. Parents of children or youth with these conditions should develop a plan of action prior to their attendance.

10. It is the policy of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with the Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

11. It is recommended that children or youth be transported in groups rather than alone. Parental or legal guardian permission shall be secured before driving a single child or youth in any Presbytery sponsored activity. When transporting children or youth to an activity, all drivers must be over the age of twenty-five (25) and possess a valid operator's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per vehicle and utilization of seat belts and other restraints shall follow state and local vehicle laws. A signed parental form shall accompany all children and youth attending activities or events away from presbytery or local church property.

12. Touch is an essential component in nurturing lives. However, physical contact with children and youth must be developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs.

13. At no time shall an adult working with children or youth pursue a dating, flirtatious, or romantic relationship with a child or youth. Where possible, copies of any written or electronic communications (including social media such as Facebook, texting and emails) between an adult working with children or youth and a child or youth shall be made available to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the child or youth and another adult who can serve as a witness to such communication. Any communication between an adult and a child or youth shall be limited to church related matters.

14. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to notify the adult leader if their child or youth has any special needs that would require special attention. The adult leader will work with the family and/or special consultants to provide reasonable and appropriate services that will allow for a positive experience for all those involved. Inclusion of children and youth with special needs or disabilities will be considered in the planning stages of all programs.

15. Parents and/or legal guardians are requested to sign a Release of Claims Form for each of their children participating in Presbytery activities or events. (See attached.)

### Restroom Guidelines

Children five years of age and younger should use a classroom bathroom if one is available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, an adult should escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. They should always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The adult should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The adult should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the adult should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the adult should prop open the bathroom door, and leave the stall door open as they assist the child.

For children from six years of age through fifth grade, at least one adult male should take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female should take girls. The adult should check the bathroom first to make sure that the bathroom is empty, and then allow the children inside. The adult should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom.

For the protection of all, adults should *never* be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents or legal guardians are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to an activity or event.

### Overnight trips

Whenever children or youth are involved in Presbytery-sponsored overnight trips, leaders must ensure that children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing. Specifically, an adult must never be permitted to sleep together in the same room or tent with a single child, unless the adult is the parent or legal guardian of the child.

Children and adults must never be permitted to bathe or change clothes in the same facility at the same time.

Children of the opposite gender must not be permitted to sleep in the same room together, except in situations such as a lock-in or mission trip. In situations such as these, an entire group of children, supervised by at least two unrelated adults, may be sleeping in one big room together. However, parents or legal guardians will be informed in advance of these sleeping arrangements and will be asked to give explicit permission for these events. (See attached Release of Claims form.)

The maximum ratio of adults to youth for an event or activity involving overnight accommodations is one adult for every six youth.

Possession of contraband by children or youth (such as alcohol, illegal drugs; firearms and knives, explosives such as fireworks; and materials of an explicit nature) shall be strictly prohibited. On overnight trips the use of tobacco products by adults will be permitted only at a safe distance from children or youth so as not to transmit second hand smoke and only when not involved with programming activities.

### Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under the Presbytery's care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or legal guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, the parent and/or legal guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the site supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.
4. All offsite activities shall be accompanied by a First Aid Kit provided either by a local church or the presbytery office.

### Reporting Abuse

Anyone who learns of or suspects any physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of a minor shall immediately report the incident to the Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or, if that involves a conflict of interest, to the Presbytery Stated Clerk. If an allegation of abuse is directed against a volunteer or adult leader, that person will be removed from any position involving contact with minors until the allegation is resolved.

The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee will maintain a confidential written record of each such incident and will use appropriate judgment in designating a person or team to carry out an investigation. During the investigation, the Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee will notify parents or guardians of alleged victims and those accused of the allegations. The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee will make proper reports of child abuse to the appropriate government authority, as required by state law and the Book of Order. The Presbytery of Western Kentucky will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigation of allegations of child abuse.

All persons involved in reporting or investigating any alleged incident of abuse should hold information received in strict confidence, subject to such disclosures as are required under the Book of Order or by law.

### Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- **Neglect** – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

### Confidentiality

All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be held in absolute confidence. No person shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event to any person except as necessary to cooperate with any official investigation. Any breach of this confidentiality by an employee of the Presbytery shall be cause for immediate dismissal. The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter, in consultation with the official conducting the investigation may authorize limited additional disclosure if necessary to protect other children from harm in the near future, particularly where the person responsible for the abuse cannot be identified, but in no case shall the identity of the victim or the accused person be disclosed except as required by law.

### Liaison with the community

The Presbytery Coordinating Presbyter or their designee will serve as the Presbytery’s sole access to the media. The Presbytery should emphasize to the public its position on child abuse, its concern for the victim and the extensive steps being taken to address the safety of all children.

**CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**  
**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**  
**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

I am an adult leader, serving under the direct authority of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, Presbyterian Church (USA), and have read this policy and agree to abide by its provisions as it applies to my particular ministry situation and while participating in any programs, events or activities of the Presbytery that involve children or youth.

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(Signature)

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(Date)

I am an active member of a local congregation of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, Presbyterian Church (USA) and have agreed to abide by the policies set in place by my congregation's Child Protection Policy. In addition, I have read this policy and agree to abide by its provisions while participating as a volunteer in any programs, events or activities that involve children or youth.

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(Signature)

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(Date)

## Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work With Children

This application is to be completed by all applicants neither under the direct authority of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky nor subject to the Child Protection Policy of their local church for positions involving the supervising or custody of children or youth in programs, events or activities, sponsored by the Presbytery. It will assist the Presbytery in providing a safe and secure environment for all preschoolers, children and youth.

The term "child" or "children" or "youth" includes all persons under the age of eighteen

(18) years.

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

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License # \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Position applying for (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery Activity or Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of a church of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and subject to its Child Protection

Policy? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Church \_\_\_\_\_

List the names and addresses and phone numbers of three personal references

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

Because The Presbytery cares for our children and desires to protect them, we ask you to please answer the following questions. The Presbytery understands they are personal and will protect your privacy.

Have you ever been known by another name?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ . If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

During your lifetime, have you ever been arrested for molesting or abusing a child, accused of physical assault or a sexual offense of any nature?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ . If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been prosecuted for child abuse or molestation?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ . If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to be photographed for the confidential Presbytery personnel records?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Are you willing to wear proper identification whenever you are supervising children?

Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

### **Applicant Statement**

I hereby certify that I have read and completed the above application. My answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I give permission for the Presbytery of Western Kentucky to conduct a criminal-court background check on me now and at regular intervals. If allowed to work with children I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of Presbyterian Church (USA).

I hereby authorize all persons, schools, organizations and law enforcement agencies to supply the Presbytery of Western Kentucky with any information concerning my character or background in connection with working with children and I hereby release them from liability or damages which may occur as a result of their response to this request.

I authorize the Presbytery of Western Kentucky to supply my service record, in whole or part, to any prospective or future organization or agency with a legal and proper interest in them. I understand that if allowed to serve, that any misrepresentation made by me in this application shall be considered sufficient cause for my dismissal without advance notice. I have been appraised of and support the Presbytery's position regarding the problem of child abuse and neglect.

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

**PERMISSION FORM**  
**Local Church and**  
**Presbytery of Western**  
**Kentucky**

NAME OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ BIRTH DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICAL NEEDS OR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS:

\_\_\_\_\_

MEDICATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that my child shall be participating in the activities and events my local church and the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and certify that I am cognizant of the inherent dangers associated with participation in these activities and events and with the fact that participating in the activity or event may take place outside church or Presbytery boundaries.

I understand and agree that neither my local church or the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, its trustees, representatives, instructors, nor agents may be held liable in any way for any occurrence in connection with my child's participation which may result in injury, harm or other damages to me or my family. As a part of the consideration for being allowed to enroll and participate, I hereby personally assume all risks in connection with my child's participation. I further release my local church and the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, its trustees, instructors, agents and representatives for any injury or damage which may befall my child while my child is enrolled in or participating in the activity or event. I further agree to hold harmless my local church and the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, its trustees, instructors, agents and representatives from any claim by me or my family, estate, heirs or assigns arising out of my child's enrollment and participation in the activity or event. I also authorize my local church and the Presbytery of Western Kentucky to render or obtain such emergency medical care or treatment as may be necessary should any injury, harm or accident occur to my child while participating in the activity or event.

I further state that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign this affirmation and release; that I understand the terms herein are contractual and not a mere recital; and that I signed this document of my own free act and volition. I further state and acknowledge that I have fully informed myself of the contents of this affirmation and release by reading it before I have signed it.

I have executed this affirmation and release on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

This document is valid for a period of no more than twelve months.



**CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY FOR A LOCAL CHURCH  
PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH(U.S.A.)**

**NAME OF CHURCH** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY SESSION** \_\_\_\_\_ **(date)**

**PREFACE**

Children are members of the Body of Christ and participants in God's beloved community. We recognize God's call to and love for the youngest among us when we baptize infants and children, yet church habits can sideline and patronize children, neglecting to treat them as worthy of the love and grace of God. These policies and procedures are being implemented as a faithful response to Christ's call to welcome children. In every area of the Church's life, we are called to include, nurture, and celebrate all children as they grow in their faith.

The call of the Church is to care for and protect the least and the vulnerable; children are among the most vulnerable members of society and yet often overlooked within the Church. Abuse- physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, or spiritual- can occur in any church. Incidents of violence or inappropriate behavior devastate individuals and destroy church communities. Improper, deceitful, defensive, or passive responses to suspicions and accusations compound the problem in the name of preserving the institution. The Session implements this Child Protection Policy because harm to children cannot be permitted among the people of God.

Through this policy we seek to keep children and youth safe at all church activities; to prevent abuse or misconduct through education, watchfulness, and elimination of opportunities for inappropriate behavior, and provide procedures for thorough response to suspicion, accusation, or report of inappropriate behavior. Beyond simply preventing crimes, this Policy also seeks to shape an environment that is unquestionably safe and caring. In this church, every child should know that he or she is welcome, respected, and beloved.

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

It is our mission to establish policies and procedures which promote a secure and transparent ministry climate and protect the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety of the children and youth who participate in the church's programs.

**We will adhere to and continue to develop strategies with the goals of**

- 1. Promoting a positive and welcoming environment where children are respected, cared for, and treated with compassion and consideration for their particular needs as children and as individuals.**
- 2. Educating staff, volunteers, parents, and all members to care for children appropriately and to aid in the prevention of physical and emotional abuse of children and youth.**
- 3. Enacting preventative measures against physical or emotional abuse of children and youth within the church's programs.**
- 4. Encourage leaders, volunteers, families, and participants to report improper behavior.**
- 5. Establish a protocol for immediate and thorough response to reports of improper behavior.**

**The implementation of these policies should go far toward assuming the physical and emotional safety of all children and youth participating in the church's programs.**

### **DEFINITIONS**

**"Adult" shall mean persons aged eighteen years and older.**

**"Child" or "Children" shall mean persons from birth through fifth grade;**

**"Church" shall mean the local congregation where these policies are being implemented.**

**"Church premises" shall mean the property, buildings, and improvements located at this particular church.**

**"Compensated Church Staff" shall mean any persons employed by the Church in exchange for monetary compensation whose responsibilities involve any contact with children and youth of the church.**

**"Pastor" shall collectively refer to any teaching elder or commissioned ruling elder installed or under contract with the church and will oversee implementation of the Policy. At times when the church is without a Pastor, the Session shall designate either the moderator of Session at that time or one of its members to be responsible for implementation of the Policy.**

**"Policy" shall mean this Child Protection Program Manual and all subsequent amendments, revisions, and supplements.**

**"Program" shall refer to any ministry, activity, or event under the auspices of the church that primarily or substantially involves children or youth, whether on or off the premises.**

**"Session" shall refer to the local church governing body that has approved and is responsible to implement these policies in the local church setting.**

**“Volunteers” shall mean any persons who, for no compensation, provide education and/or childcare services for or in connection with church programs, activities, or events and have regular contact with children or youth.**

**“Youth” shall mean persons from sixth grade through their eighteenth birthday; in group settings, this term shall include those who have turned eighteen but are still in high school or are recently graduated seniors.**

**This policy shall be understood to include, in applicable situations, the protection of adults who, due to significant intellectual or developmental disabilities, are vulnerable to abuse.**

### **1. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OVERSIGHT**

**The Pastor or moderator of Session or, if the Session so chooses, Session designees consisting of active church members approved by the Session on an annual basis, shall be responsible for most routine functions related to this Policy, including:**

- coordinating implementation of the Policy;**
- ensuring that child protection training is provided at initial hiring/involvement with follow up review on at least an annual basis;**
- inspecting the local premises annually for safety concerns;**
- reviewing incident reports;**
- responding to reports or accusations of questionable or inappropriate behavior toward children or youth that occur on church premises or at any church program or activities;**
- modifying, amending, revising, or supplementing this Policy, with Session approval, when necessary.**

### **2. SPECIAL NEEDS**

**Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to notify the Pastor/staff if their child or youth has any special needs that would require special attention. The Staff will work with the family, leaders, and/or special consultants to provide reasonable and appropriate services that will allow for a positive experience for all involved. Inclusion of children and youth with special needs or disabilities will be considered in the planning stages of all programs.**

### **3. SCREENING AND EVALUATION OF COMPENSATED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

**Any potential staff member or volunteer shall complete the “Application for Staff and Workers Who Will Work With Children.” References and others with knowledge of the applicant shall be contacted with a written record of the contact kept with the application. All records relating to the applicant shall be kept confidential and have access only by the Pastor.**

**All compensated church staff shall be reviewed at least annually with the evaluation procedure including information gained from the supervisor, parents or legal guardians, and others as appropriate.**

**Volunteers shall be screened as follows:**

- i. Volunteers shall not be permitted to participate in programs with children or youth until, for a minimum period of six (6) months, they have been either:**
  - a. Active members of the congregations, and/or**
  - b. Substantially involved in the worship and ministry of the congregation.**
  - c. This requirement may be waived on an individual basis for programs where several adults will be present at all times; the non-member should have a clear connection to the community and provide additional character references.**
- ii. A first time volunteer shall complete the "Application for Staff and Volunteer Workers Who Will Work With Children." Any records related to a volunteer's application shall be kept confidential and will be seen only by the one currently designated for implementation of the Policy.**

**A. Criminal Background Checks**

**All compensated church staff and volunteers, shall be subject to criminal background checks. The pastor or Session designee(s) will be the only person permitted to review the reports. Reports and accompanying documentation will be kept in a locked file cabinet and not in any case shared with members of the congregation. Adults convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of a minor shall not be employed or serve as volunteers in church programs for children and/or youth. The pastor or Session designee(s) shall retain discretion to bar any applicant with a history of inappropriate behavior with minors from involvement with programs involving children and/or youth.**

**B. Confirmation of Familiarity with Policy**

**Annually compensated church staff and volunteers shall reaffirm in writing their commitment to abide by this policy.**

**4. TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

**A. Compensated Church Staff, Volunteers, Persons in Leadership Positions**

**All compensated church staff must be provided with initial training related to this Policy within thirty (30) days after their first day of compensated service to the church. First-time volunteers must receive this training before volunteer service begins. All persons currently employed as compensated church staff, or serving as volunteers, at the time of the implementation of this Policy, shall be screened and provided with initial training within ninety (90) days of Session's action to adopt the Policy. All volunteers and persons in leadership positions (Deacons, Trustees, Session members) must receive annual training or review related to this Policy. The purpose of the training or review is to educate or remind persons regarding awareness and best practices of child protection and a welcoming church environment, and familiarize persons with this Policy. The training will be under the direction of the Pastor or Session designee(s).**

**B. New Members**

As part of new member orientation, perspective and new members will be informed about this Policy by the person(s) leading the classes and/or his/her/ their designee. Prospective and new members shall be advised as to where they can receive a copy of this Policy and shall receive an overview of the Policy and its purposes.

**C. Educating the Congregation**

An informational article, prepared by the Pastor or Session designee(s), will be distributed to the congregation at least once a year. The article shall include the basic provisions of the Policy and an explanation of where a copy of the Policy can be obtained.

Families and the congregation as a whole are essential partners in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for children. Parents and legal guardians of children and youth in the church are strongly encouraged to educate themselves and their children in issues of safety and to report any concerns they or their children might have. The Session shall ensure that families have opportunities to ask questions and express concerns.

**5. CHILD SECURITY PROCEDURES**

**A. Registration**

All parents or legal guardians must complete an annual "Release of Claims Form" for each child or youth to attend church sponsored programs and activities. Any substantial changes in information provided shall necessitate the completion of new forms. The children and youth of nonmember parents or guardians must complete the Form after attending three (3) church programs or activities in the applicable year. Attendance shall be taken at each activity or program for children and/or youth.

A roster of all approved teachers, assistants, substitutes, and volunteers will be maintained quarterly and kept on file in the church office.

**B. Two Adult Policy**

Every effort shall be made for all groups of children or youth to be accompanied by at least two (2) adult leaders at all times. When this is impractical adults are responsible to practice good judgment and under no condition will an individual adult be permitted to meet with an individual child or youth behind closed doors.

**C. Adult/Child Ratios:**

Additionally, the following ratios will be observed in classrooms of children from birth through age six (6):

Age	Adult/Child Ratio
Nursery (0 to 24 months)	1 adult per 4 children
Toddler (24 months to 6 years)	1 adult per 5 children
7 years or older	1 adult per 6 children

Any special programs for children housed at the church will observe a two adult per room policy.

**D. Open Door Policy**

The parents or legal guardians of children and youth participating in church sponsored programs and activities, pastors and staff, shall have the right to visit and observe the program/activities at any time, unannounced. For the protection of all involved, on those occasions that necessitate an adult engaging in a one-on-one meeting with a child or youth the meeting room door shall be left partially open for the duration of the meeting.

**E. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**

No child or youth shall be left unsupervised in the church buildings or on church grounds. Supervision for Sunday Church School and other programs or activities for children and/or youth will begin at least five (5) minutes before the stated starting time for the class, program, or activity. Any exceptions must be cleared directly with the teacher/leader of the specific class, program, or activity. Parents or legal guardians shall be responsible for the supervision of their child(ren) and/or youth at all other times. Release authorization may be given for a child or youth whose parents or legal guardians desire that they be released independently or to another family member.

For non-Sunday School programs, events, and activities, parents or legal guardians of children and youth shall arrange in advance for their child or youth to be transported to and from church-sponsored programs and activities. If the child or youth is not picked up within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled conclusion of the program, event, or activity, the program leader or responsible adult shall contact the child or youth's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) so that they can make immediate arrangements to have the child or youth picked up.

In those cases where the program leader or responsible adult provides such transportation, every effort will be made for one (1) additional adult to assist.

**F. Bathroom Procedure**

Church staff and volunteers who change diapers should do so in an appropriate and hygienic manner. Information on proper diapering will be kept on hand and shall be posted at changing tables.

During church activities, trips to the bathroom shall ordinarily be done as a group. If it is necessary to take a small child needing assistance to the bathroom alone, the bathroom door shall be left open.

**G. Driving**

When transporting children or youth to an activity, all drivers must be over the age of twenty-five (25) and have a copy of a valid operator's license and current automobile insurance on file at the church office. The license plate number of the vehicle and the cellular telephone numbers of the driver and all other adults in the vehicle shall be left at the church office before departing.

The number of persons per car and utilization of seat belts and other restraints shall follow state and local vehicle laws.

#### **H. Youth Overnight and/or Off-Site Activities**

Adult leaders planning overnight activities shall file a proposed itinerary with the church office no later than three weeks prior to the scheduled activity. When possible, parents or guardians of the prospective youth participants will be notified of the activities at least two (2) weeks prior. A youth shall not be permitted to attend any overnight or off-site activity outside of the county unless his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) sign and return the "Release of Claims" Form.

Every effort will be made for at least two (2) adult leaders to be present for any off-site activity. At least one Adult leader shall be no less than twenty-one (21) years old.

The following documents shall be included: (i) a copy of the church's insurance coverage; and (ii) duplicate copy of the "Release of Claims" form for each youth attending the activity.

There shall be no overnight activities for children younger than third grade unless it is a specific parent/child activity.

All overnight activities must have at least two adult leaders supervising the activities, at least one of whom is no less than twenty-five (25) years old. If the group is coeducational, one (1) adult male and one (1) adult female must accompany and supervise the group.

In the case of a Presbytery or Ecumenical event involving youth from other congregations, the requirement for one (1) adult male and one (1) adult female from this congregation may be granted exemption, provided that the number of adult leaders of both genders and adult/child ratio for the entire group comply with the policy at all times. Under no circumstances shall the requirement for at least two (2) adult leaders to supervise overnight activities be waived. Separate sleeping areas for male and female participants must be provided. At least one (1) of the adult leaders shall carry with him/her the following: (i) a copy of the church's insurance coverage; and (ii) duplicate copies of the "Release of Claims" Form for each youth attending the activity.

#### **I. Proper Display of Affection**

Touch is an essential component in nurturing lives. However, physical contact with children and youth must be developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs.

#### **J. Inappropriate Relationships and Communications with Children and Youth**

At no time shall any adult working with children or youth pursue a dating, flirtatious, or romantic relationship with a child or youth. Where possible, copies of any written or electronic communications between an adult working with children or youth and a child or youth shall be made available to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the child or youth and another adult who will witness to the communication. Any communication between an adult and a child or youth shall be limited to church related matters.

#### **K. Contraband**

All adults working with children or youth in a church-sponsored program shall refrain, during the entire course of the activity or event, from possessing or using contraband; and

from permitting a child or youth to possess, purchase, or use contraband. Contraband includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco; firearms and knives, other deadly weapons, and explosives such as fireworks; and materials of an explicit nature. On overnight events the use of tobacco by adults will be permitted only at a safe distance from children or youth so as not to transmit second hand smoke and only when not involved with programming activities.

#### **L. Gifts**

Compensated Church Staff, volunteers, teachers, and adult leaders, shall not give gifts to individual children or youth without knowledge of the parent(s) and/or supervisor or responsible adult.

#### **M. Discipline**

Any interaction regarding discipline needs to carefully consider a child or youth's dignity and well-being. Gentleness, respect, and understanding must guide all actions and words. Discipline will be carried out through instruction, appropriate corrections, and positive reinforcement. Reinforce good and appropriate behavior with praise and thanks whenever possible.

In extreme cases when the child or youth becomes a threat to self or others, remove the child or youth from the room. Do not leave the child or youth unattended.

The Pastors or Session designee(s) shall be contacted for any situation that cannot be handled in accordance with the above guidelines.

#### **N. Incident/Accident Reports**

An Accident/Incident Report must be completed by the activity leader/person observing any incidents, injuries, or substantial disciplinary problems/incidents involving any child or youth, immediately following the accident, injury, or incident. The report should be filed with the church office which will notify the parents or guardians of the child or youth. The church office shall keep the original of the Accident/Incident Report and provide a copy to the parents or legal guardians.

#### **O. Emergency First Aid**

A sufficient number of fully equipped emergency first aid kits will be available at the church for use on the premises and to be checked out by the adult supervisor for activities for children and youth offsite. All offsite activities shall be accompanied by an emergency first aid kit and they are to be returned at the conclusion of the offsite activity.

#### **P. Photography Policy**

It is considered appropriate for photographs of children and youth to be posted within the church buildings. If any photograph is to be published publicly, including on the church website or on social media sites, prior written approval shall be required. No full names of minors will be used.



## **6. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS AGAINST A MINOR**

### **A. What to report?**

Any questionable or inappropriate behavior toward children or youth, either on the church premises or at any church activity or event, **MUST** be reported to a Pastor or Session designee. Questionable or inappropriate behavior toward a child or youth shall include, but is not limited to, any behavior that gives the observer reason to believe a child or youth is the victim of abuse, bullying, rape, neglect, incest, or molestation (hereinafter "Crime Against A Minor"). For purposes of this Policy, the term 'reason to believe' shall mean information that, if presented to individuals of similar background and training, would cause those individuals to believe that a child or youth was a victim of a Crime Against a Minor.

### **B. Who Should Report**

Any person who suspects that a child or youth is a victim of a Crime Against a Minor or other violations of this Policy, **SHALL IMMEDIATELY** report these suspected violations to a Pastor or Session designee.

### **C. How to Report**

Any suspected Crime Against a Minor or other violation should be reported to a Pastor or Session designee. If the Pastor is the accused person, then the Clerk of Session shall be informed of the report. Within two (2) days of the initial report of the suspected Crime Against a Minor, the initial reporter, or Pastor or Clerk of Session, in consultation with the initial reporter, must file a written incident report. This report is to be kept in a secure place by the Pastor or Session designee.

### **D. Response**

The safety and well-being of the child shall remain the first priority during any response process. The Pastors or Session designee(s), and other church members responding to or having information about the situation shall maintain strict confidence in order to protect the child and safeguard the rights of the accused.

Upon receipt of a written accusation, the following Action Plan be followed:

- a. Determine appropriate follow-up actions, among them making immediate decisions about removal of the accused from direct contact with children and youth;
- b. If a Pastor is the accused person, the Presbytery has jurisdiction for disciplinary cases as outlined in the most recent edition of the Book of Order. In such a case a written statement shall be made to Presbytery following the procedure spelled out in the Book of Order.
- c. If compensated church staff, approved volunteer, or active church member is the accused person, response shall be made according to local law enforcement and guidelines spelled out in the most recent edition of the Book of Order.

- d. If any other adult is the accused person, response shall be made according to local law enforcement.**
- e. The documentation of all actions and abuse incident reports in writing shall be stored within a locked file, maintaining confidentiality of all involved. The locked file will be accessed only by the Pastor or Session designee and the Clerk of Session, unless otherwise directed by the Session.**

**Pastors, staff, Session members, and other members shall be honest and forthcoming with information to law enforcement, Child Protective Services, and/or Presbytery. Under no circumstances shall the response within the church delay or prevent thorough reporting of a crime to law enforcement and/or Child Protective Services.**

#### **7. IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENTS**

**This policy and the forms appended may be modified or amended to meet particular church needs upon majority vote of the Session of this church.**

## **C. COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS (LAY PASTORS)**

**A distinctive mark of the Presbyterian Church is its emphasis on the importance of laity, both in the governing bodies of the church and in ministry. And in recent years ruling elders properly trained have been included in pastoral ministry, especially in serving local churches that can no longer afford a full-time installed pastor and in other specialized areas of the church such as in campus or prison ministry. Completion of a training program overseen by the presbytery and seminary faculty is a requirement for consideration as a commissioned ruling elder (lay pastor). When a ministry setting is determined, always by the request of a local church session, a formal examination will be conducted by the presbytery regarding theological understanding and appropriate qualities adequate to the setting, and if the examination is found to be satisfactory, a covenant is established with specific responsibilities and compensation. This covenant can be authorized for a maximum of three years, with renewal being possible, but shall be reviewed by the presbytery through its Commission on Ministry on an annual basis. The responsibilities of the commissioned ruling elder (lay pastor) are limited by what is included in the covenant and when the covenant is concluded, the commission and all responsibilities involved are also terminated, though it can be reestablished at the same or a different setting at a later date. All Commissioned Ruling Elders (Lay Pastors) are required during the duration of their covenant to have a mentor agreed upon by themselves and the presbytery, to provide guidance and support for their ministry setting.**

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-2.1001) Functions**

**“When the presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy or mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. The ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery. Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by law. The commission shall also specify the terms of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery shall review the commission at least annually.”**

## **(G-2.1002) Training, Examination, Commissioning**

**“A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by the presbytery. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions specified in G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.”**

## **(G-2.1003) Commissioning Service**

**“When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a ruling elder to serve a congregation providing the services described above, it shall commission the ruling elder to pastoral service as designated by the presbytery, employing the questions contained in W-4.04.”**

**(G-2.1004) Supervision**

**“The ruling elder commissioned under the terms of G-2.1001 shall work under the supervision of the presbytery. The presbytery may at any time withdraw the commission for reasons it deems good and sufficient. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as mentor and supervisor.”**

**(RULING ELDERS)- BOOK OF ORDER**

**W-2.0303**

**“When appropriately prepared and commissioned by the presbytery, ruling elders may proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in a particular congregation.”**

**G-3.0301b**

**“...provided that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received...authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord’s Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs of the administration of the Sacrament.”**

## Position Description for Western KY Presbytery CRE Director

### Requirements:

- 1- Credentials
  - A. Active Member of Western Kentucky Presbytery
  - B. Teaching Elder, Ruling Elder, or Certified Christian Educator.
- 2- Shall Serve as Liaison between the Commission on Ministry of Western KY Presbytery and Commissioned Ruling Elders, their Mentors, their Churches, and, as needed, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.
- 3- Work within the framework provided in the Book of Order, by the COM and the Administrative Manual of Western Kentucky Presbytery.
- 4- Shall be responsible for providing educational programs and workshops that will enhance the CRE's knowledge and spiritual development. The workshops and programming offered, which is a critical element of the CRE Program, will focus on but not be limited to : Book of Order (Presbyterian Polity, Government, Presbyterian Worship), as well as the Book of Confessions. Focus will also be on the relationship between the CRE and the local church and Presbytery.
- 5- Shall Communicate Continuing Education Opportunities
  - A. To COM
  - B. To CREs
  - C. To Churches
  - D. To the Presbytery
- 6- Monitor and/or arrange:
  - A. Covenants for CREs.
  - B. Mentor responsibilities to CRE development.
  - C. Schedule time for CREs to report to COM for Covenant renewal process.
  - D. Work with COM to schedule examinations of new CREs.
  - E. Coordinate with Candidates, Churches, and COM to Schedule Ordinations.
- 7- Attend, or provide written reports to monthly meetings of COM
  - A. Coordinator will serve as Ex-Officio member with voice and no vote.

- B. If not in attendance, report should be emailed to COM members no less than one week before regularly scheduled meetings so that any questions may be asked and answered by meeting time.
- C. Report should include
  - 1. Information on upcoming Covenant Renewals.
  - 2. Information on upcoming Examinations.
  - 3. Information on upcoming Installations.
  - 4. Information on upcoming Educational Opportunities.
  - 5. Recaps of educational events held since last report.

11- Attend Presbytery Meetings

- A. Provide CRE Program updates (as needed).
- B. Provide information for persons interested in the program.
- C. Participate in CRE commissioning services.



## COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER COVENANT

**Between:** (Name of CRE and name of church)

**For:** Pastoral Services

**Date:** Beginning date through (one, two, or three years). This relationship may be terminated by either party with a 30 day notice.

**Supervision:** \_\_\_\_\_, will serve as mentor as approved by the Commission on Ministry.

**Expectations:** (some examples follow:)

Plan and conduct Sunday morning worship.

Plan and conduct other special worship services or activities as requested by the Session.

Administer the Sacraments of Communion and Baptism.

Conduct funerals and weddings.

Resource committees as requested.

Attend stated meetings of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky as able with voice and vote.

Report pastoral activities at each stated Session meeting.

Moderate the Session and congregational meetings.

**Compensation:** ??? per month

(from this stipulation can be made regarding how much will be income, housing allowance, educational expenses, and mileage).

**Vacation:** Annual vacation of ??? weeks. (at least two)

The Commissioned Ruling Elder will honor the relationship established with their mentor, attend any mandated training sessions, and complete 12 hours of documented continuing education during each calendar year.

**Signatures with dates:**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commission on Ministry

## **GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS OF COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS**

- 1. The mentor should be an ordained minister member of the presbytery, approved by the Commission on Ministry, other than the pastor of the CRE's church of membership.**
- 2. The CRE may be given the opportunity to request a particular mentor, but the ultimate decision for assignment will reside with the Commission on Ministry.**
- 3. The mentor should be a positive role model for the CRE, striving to be approachable and non-judgmental; listening before giving advice; and presenting constructive criticism in a positive way.**
- 4. Contact information (phone number, email add, etc.) should be exchanged so the mentor and CRE will be accessible for meetings and phone conversations.**
- 5. The CRE should develop annually a list of personal and professional goals and contact the mentor at least quarterly to update him/her on progress. This can be done electronically or in person. At least two meetings must occur in person.**
- 6. The mentor can also initiate contact with the CRE, especially if the CRE has not contacted the mentor in three months. However, lack of interest on the part of the CRE in making contact should be reported to the CRE director.**
- 7. The mentor should encourage the CRE to be regularly involved in the Guthrie group continuing education meetings, being aware of and familiar with the study material and topics discussed. If a CRE is instead pursuing theological education, the mentor should be aware of course work and issues that arise.**
- 8. The mentor will alert the CRE Program Director of any particular needs indicated by the CRE.**
- 9. An annual written report from the mentor to the CRE Program Director should be completed (see attached).**

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR MENTORS OF COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS

Dates covered by report \_\_\_\_\_

Setting in which the CRE is engaged \_\_\_\_\_

Basic responsibilities of CRE in this setting \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type and frequency of contact during reporting period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals of the CRE and General Issues and Concerns Discussed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Observations and Any Recommendations for the Future \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Mentor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE- COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS**

- 1. What is your current role and responsibilities in your church (ministry)?**
  
- 2. What is different about the church (ministry) compared with one year ago?**
  
- 3. What are your goals for the church (ministry) in the upcoming year?**
  
- 4. Where do you see the church (ministry) headed in relation to ministry, finances, and membership over the next five years?**
  
- 5. What do you see as your future with the congregation (ministry)?**
  
- 6. How can the presbytery be of assistance to you and the congregation (ministry)?**

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**SIGNED**

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**DATE**

July 29, 2016

## Commission on Ministry- Presbytery of Western Kentucky Change in Commissioned Ruling Elder Program

### Introduction

*The Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, on July 5, 2016 approved a proposal to restructure the Commissioned Ruling Elder Program of this presbytery. The Commission finds this to be a necessary step at this time in order to rejuvenate and redefine this program, to provide greater educational opportunities for CRES, to maintain closer communications with CREs and the churches they lead, and to assure that PCUSA polity is followed at all times.*

*This commission recognizes the contribution that Commissioned Ruling Elders make in our Presbytery by not only filling Pulpits in our churches but also by their providing a spiritual presence that is of critical importance to congregations that may otherwise be unable to provide services for their members.*

*Since CREs generally do not have the advantage of a four year Seminary degree, it is our intention to provide them with a well structured, viable, continuing educational program, that will not only help them to feel more confident and proficient, but also give them the tools necessary to enhance their ministry and spiritual leadership qualities. It is also our intention to provide current information and education on any and all changes to the Presbyterian Book of order.*

**PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**  
**GUIDELINES FOR**  
**Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) and DIPLOMA SCHOOL**

**1- Direction and Oversight**

- A. Oversight of the Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) program and its continuing education requirements shall fall under the Commission on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky.
- B. Day-to-day administration of the Diploma School Program shall be undertaken by the Diploma School Coordinator who will report directly to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). The Diploma School Coordinator shall be hired and compensated in accordance with Presbytery Personnel Policies. The job description is available from the Presbytery Office.

**2- Commissioning**

- A. In order to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder for any church in the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, a Ruling Elder shall complete TWO years of prescribed study through the Diploma School program offered by the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and coordinated with the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Though it is ordinarily a two year program consisting of 12 classes, a participant may take more than two years to complete the program as long as the 12 prescribed classes have been completed.
- B. In order for a diploma school graduate to serve as a Pastor in the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, they must receive "a call" from a particular church. The church, along with the Candidate (Graduate), must prepare a covenant agreement and petition the COM to approve the covenant and the installation of the Candidate. The terms of the covenant are negotiated between the Candidate and the church. This process is similar to the approval process used by COM in approving Teaching Elders. In addition, COM shall appoint a Teaching Elder mentor to each Candidate once they are Commissioned.
- C. If the Candidate is approved by COM, they will be installed in the commissioning church. At least one member from the COM must be present. The candidate will answer questions pursuant to the installation service provided in the Presbyterian Book of Order. In addition, at the conclusion of the Installation Service, the Candidate will sign an oath provided by the Commission on Ministry. This oath will stipulate that on behalf of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, that they, the candidate, will

follow, direct, subscribe, and adhere to the doctrines, tenets, and polity procedures, as directed and mandated by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. They will also adhere to any applicable rules and regulations as prescribed or set forth by the Presbytery of Western Kentucky. Any failure to hold to this bond may result in immediate release by the Commission on Ministry with no Session approval required. (See attached form.)

- D. It shall be the duty of the Church, CRE and their Mentor to report and provide to the COM new Covenants for renewal at least 2 months before the expiration date of their current Covenant. This will provide time for approval in order to avoid gaps in coverage.

### **3- Continuing Education For CREs**

- A. COM shall establish a Continuing Education Protocol for CREs requiring at least 12 hours of study annually that is approved by the COM.
- B. COM shall sponsor at least four 3-hour educational sessions per year. These sessions shall be taught by persons approved by the COM who may be Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, or other experts in a field deemed appropriate and applicable. While sessions will be especially targeted for CREs, they may also be open to the entire Presbytery. The COM shall accept input on subject matter from the Diploma School Coordinator, and shall endeavor to offer sessions to complement the Diploma School classes for the year. However, COM shall ultimately be responsible for the subject matter to be offered as well as the presenters/facilitators.
  - a. These classes should ideally also offer specific time for open discussion on subjects of current concern to the CREs in attendance in an attempt to allow them the benefit of their fellow CRE's experiences along with the expertise of the presenter/facilitator.
  - b. At the conclusion of these classes, COM shall award to CREs and Candidates a Certificate of Completion which specifies continuing education hours allocated for that class.
- C. Presbytery Teach-ins, when approved by COM, shall also be allowed as credit hours applicable to the annual study hours required of CREs. Again, Certificates of Completion will be awarded to CREs and Candidates with the credit hour value apportioned by the COM.
- D. CREs may attend Saturday Sessions of Diploma School in order to receive 4 hours of CE credit. The Diploma School Coordinator shall award Certificates of Completion which specify continuing education hours allocated for those sessions.
- E. CREs may, with approval from their Mentors and COM, use other educational opportunities to contribute to CE Hours. They must provide

their mentor specific information on the event, expected benefits, and time to be involved to receive approval. The mentor and COM must approve the event before it occurs. At the conclusion of the event CREs must provide a brief synopsis along with actual time to their mentors. The mentor shall then approve how many hours credit may be claimed, and will award a Certificate of Completion.

- F. The COM shall make every effort in scheduling and location of educational opportunities to serve the greatest number of CREs as possible. Whenever possible, COM shall undertake the task of preserving these classes electronically so that they may be checked out from the Presbytery Office in order to serve those who may not be able to be present. CREs obtaining credit by watching the recordings shall submit a brief synopsis to their mentor, who will then award a Certificate of Completion specifying credit hours allocated for those sessions.

#### **4- Mentors - CRE Mentors shall:**

- A. Serve a valuable role in the direction and education of CREs.
- B. Fulfill all duties as described under the Guidelines for Mentors of Commissioned Ruling Elders. This is on file at the Presbytery Office, and will be supplied to mentors and CRE graduates upon assignment.
- C. Work with CREs to explore Continuing Education prospects, help to make sure annual CE hours are met, and monitor dates for Covenant renewal.
- D. Keep complete records of CE hours for each participant along with copies of all certificates received for CE.
- E. Advise CREs of Continuing Education Progress throughout the year.
- F. Provide to COM yearly, by their November Meeting, a written status report on their assigned CRE along with an accounting of the CREs Continuing Education.

*This proposal was approved by the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky on July 5, 2016. It shall be implemented beginning January 1, 2017, and CE hrs shall accrue from January 1 to December 31 of each year.*



Presbytery of Western Kentucky, P.O. Box 624, Hopkinsville, KY 42241

## **CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE**

**For Approved/Accredited CRE Continuing Education Activity**

### **Activity Identification**

Activity Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **CRE Certification**

By signing below, I certify that I attended the activity described above and am entitled to claim a total of \_\_\_\_\_ hours of continuing education credit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name (Print)**

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

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

### **Approval**

This certificate of attendance has been approved and shall be applied to the continuing education requirements for the year of 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CRE Director (Print)**

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

Presbytery of Western Kentucky, P.O. Box 624, Hopkinsville, KY 42241

**APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME  
FOR COMPLETION OF MANDATORY  
CRE CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**Applicant Information**

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

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

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

**Description of the reason(s) for this request (additional information may be attached):**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

**Approval/Disapproval**

This application for extension of time for completion of mandatory CRE continuing education has been \_\_\_\_\_. If approved, an extension of \_\_\_\_\_ days will be granted in order to complete the continuing education.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CRE Director (Print)**

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

Presbytery of Western Kentucky

# Commissioned Ruling Elder Oath of Installation

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby declare this to be my oath with the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and the Presbyterian Church, USA; That I will faithfully follow all tenets, doctrines, and polity of the same as long as I serve any church within this Presbytery's jurisdiction.

I also declare that I answer "Yes" to the Constitutional questions outlined in Section W-4.4003 of the 2015-2017 Book of Order. In addition, I will accept and support any and all official changes to the Book of Order, or to any polity which governs my Position.

I understand that any failure on my part to live up to this oath is grounds for immediate dismissal from the position of Commissioned Ruling Elder by the Commission on Ministry of The Presbytery of Western Kentucky.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioned Ruling Elder

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

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk of Session,  
Commissioning Church

## *Addendum to Commissioned Ruling Elder Covenant*

The Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky adopted in 2016 new Guidelines for CREs in this Presbytery. This signed addendum to covenant will stipulate that both the Commissioned Ruling Elder and the Church in which they serve have made themselves familiar with these guidelines and agree to be governed by them. When accompanied by a signed Oath of Installation and copy of CRE's current Covenant, and returned to the Commission on Ministry, the covenant shall be deemed complete.

Commissioned Ruling

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

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

Clerk of

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

## **D. CALL PROCESS**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **CALL PROCESS**

The process of calling an installed pastor is often accompanied by anxiety on the part of the congregation. Concerns are raised regarding the length of the process and extending a call to the most appropriate person for the position. The purpose of the call process is to minimize anxiety by providing an understandable and effective means to complete this task. Following the announcement of the current pastor's departure, the Session, in addition to recognizing the pastor's service, will make plans for temporary pastoral leadership, usually in the form of contracting for an interim (or transitional) pastor. The role of the interim is often very valuable in assisting the congregation in working through any unresolved issues or feelings of grief or anger related to recent or past history, the resolution of any areas of conflict or division within the congregation, and a time of reflection through a 'mission study' as the congregation affirms its history and unique identity, and considers its current ministry and mission in light of its context. Having completed this process will allow the congregation to then seek a person who is most appropriate in providing the necessary leadership for the future. This is accomplished through the election of a "Pastoral Nominating Committee" that is reflective of the diversity and interests of the congregation. The first task of the PNC is to complete a "Ministry Information Form-MIF" to be approved by the Session and the Commission on Ministry. This is then forwarded to the "Church Leadership Connection-CLC" from which "Personal Information Forms-PIF" will be reviewed and a selection made regarding which candidates are most appropriate for the congregation (informal contacts can also result in possible candidates though these should provide a PIF as well). From selected candidates, one will be prayerfully chosen to be the next installed pastor. Terms of call will be negotiated with approval by the Commission on Ministry with presentation then made by the PNC to the congregation for an official vote. The candidate is not expected to appear in person.

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-2.0801) Pastoral Vacancy**

**“When a congregation has a vacancy in a pastoral position, or after the presbytery approves the effective date of the dissolution of an existing pastoral relationship, the congregation shall, with the guidance and permission of the presbytery, proceed to fill the vacancy in the following manner.**

## **(G-2.0802) Election of a Pastor Nominating Committee**

**The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee that shall be representative of the whole congregation. The committee’s duty shall be to nominate a pastor for election by the congregation.**

## **(G-2.0803) Call Process**

**According to the process of the presbytery and prior to making its report to the congregation, the pastor nominating committee shall receive and consider the presbytery’s counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call. When the way is clear for the committee to report to the congregation, the committee shall notify the session, which shall call a congregational meeting.**

## **(G-2.0804) Terms of Call**

**“The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirements of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister’s terms of call and shall propose for congregational action such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery’s minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.**

#### **(G-2.0805) Installation Service**

**When the congregation, the presbytery, and the minister of the Word and Sacrament (or candidate) have all concurred in a call to a permanent of designated pastoral position, the presbytery shall complete the call process by organizing and conducting a service of installation. Installation is an act of the presbytery establishing the pastoral relationship. A service of installation occurs in the context of worship. The order for that service in the Directory for Worship (W-4.04) shall be followed.”**

#### **(W-4.0402) Setting for the Service**

**“The ordination and/or installation of a minister of the Word and Sacrament shall take place at a time that enables substantial participation of the presbytery.”**



## **CALL PROCESS PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**

### **1. TERMINATION**

- a. Current teaching elder or session initiates termination of the pastoral relationship with specific date indicated.
- b. Session calls congregational meeting (if installed) to formally approve the decision. If the teaching elder is serving in a temporary position, the contact is between the teaching elder and simply needs session approval for termination.
- c. For an installed pastor a congregational meeting is held, usually on a Sunday following worship service, with adequate announcement given to the congregation through customary means of communication. The teaching elder usually moderates the congregational meeting but, if that seems awkward, a member of the Session or visiting teaching elder can be approved to moderate the meeting.
- d. Some form of appreciation is given to the teaching elder prior to his/her last day of service at the church.
- e. The clerk of Session, following the congregational meeting or session approval to dissolve the pastoral relationship, informs the Commission on Ministry of the action which concurs and also files the necessary paperwork with the Board of Pensions, if needed.
- f. Commission on Ministry designates someone to serve as moderator of the Session (usually a member of COM or presbytery staff).

### **2. TRANSITION PROCESS**

- a. The Session, with input from the congregation and Commission on Ministry, makes an initial decision regarding whether or not it is in the best interests of the church (including the financial means) to pursue new installed pastoral leadership. If not, a decision can be made to seek temporal or part-time pastoral leadership (such as stated supply) or a commissioned ruling elder.
- b. If pursuing full-time pastoral leadership is in the best interests of the church, most likely an interim will need to be selected to serve during the transition period (the longer the concluded pastorate, the more beneficial such a relationship can be).

- c. If the decision is made to pursue an interim pastor, a Ministry Information Form needs to be submitted for that purpose. It can be done by the session or a PNC approved by the congregation especially for that purpose. A 'Congregational Self-Assessment ' can be a helpful tool in discovering the type of interim leadership needed though this can also be utilized in formulating an MIF for an installed pastor. The same Ministry Information Form is used for both the interim and installed pastor position, but are often different in content in that different qualities and needs are sought for the two positions. The selection of an interim pastor proceeds any consideration of an installed pastor.
- d. After the Commission on Ministry has approved the MIF, it is then circulated through appropriate channels. Certain Pastor Information Forms (PIF) for those seeking interim positions which are considered a match will be forwarded to the PNC (or session search committee) for their consideration as well as self-referrals and even personal contacts by interested people. Once an interim has been selected, the teaching elder will need approval by the Commission on Ministry.
- e. It is important to note that main function of an interim pastor is to assist the congregation in dealing with any underlying issues related to congregational health in transition and engage in a mission study as it reflects upon its history, identity, and goals for the future. The results of the mission study become incorporated into the MIF for the installed pastor.
- f. The interim pastor is a contract between the Session and the teaching elder selected (it does not need a congregational vote of approval) and there is no installation service required.
- g. The Session has the responsibility of seeking interim leadership and can be done through selection of a sub-committee of three or four people, who do not necessarily need to be Session members (though it is good for at least one to be a Session member) or through the Pastor Nominating Committee as described above.
- h. The Session, as part of the interim contract, determines the length of time for interim service (usually six months with three month renewals), with the understanding that a 30-day notice is sufficient for conclusion of interim services when an installed pastor is approved.

- i. If the time of the interim is concluded without a new installed pastor being approved, a second interim is also a possibility or, if a decision on new pastoral leadership appears to be imminent, the worship committee could then procure worship leadership as needed.

### **3. PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (PNC)**

- a. After the arrival of the interim pastor and following the completion of a mission study to be presented to the congregation and approved by the Commission on Ministry, the session instructs the church nominating committee to present to the congregation a slate of people to serve on the PNC for an installed pastor, representative of gender, age, theological perspective, and interest in the church.
- b. The Session specifies to the nominating committee the number of people to be selected, usually between 4 and 8, including a youth.
- c. The Session calls a congregational meeting to approve the PNC slate, realizing that nominations from the floor are to be invited and are usually simply added to the membership of the PNC. The Commission on Ministry will select someone to assist the PNC in its work.
- d. The PNC meets officially, selects one of their members to be moderator and obtains input from the congregation, such as a 'Congregational Self-Assessment' as the first step in seeking installed pastoral leadership, if not already completed. It is important to note that, though one hundred percent participation is the stated goal for congregational involvement, the norm tends to be around one-third of the congregation responding to the invitation to complete the form.
- e. Tabulating and utilizing the results from the Congregational Assessment Form, the PNC, with additional input from the Session, completes the Ministry Information Form (MIF) and the MIF is forwarded to the Commission on Ministry for review and approval. Once approved, the moderator of the PNC obtains an ID and password from the moderator of the Committee on Ministry to access the 'church leadership connection' website.
- f. Once the PNC decides upon those whom they would like to consider, and the feeling is mutual, a plan is determined whereby evaluations will occur, including written responses and interviewing through conference calls and SKYPE, possible visits to observe preaching and worship leadership and/or an onsite visit including preaching and

- worship leadership at a neutral site, and the essential check of references, which can be assisted by the presbytery staff.
- g. When an individual has finally been selected, that person will appear before the Commission on Ministry for their examination and approval and details will be worked out regarding the terms of call for an installed pastor with a congregational meeting to approve.
  - h. If appropriate, the pastor-elect will appear for examination before presbytery and concurrence of presbytery in relation to the call.
  - i. If all goes well, a date to begin work on the field and for installation and possibility for ordination will be determined, to complete the process.
  - j. An ordination/installation commission will be approved by the Presbytery (with input from the pastor-elect and the church with the only stipulation that representative ruling elders from two congregations be included), which will serve until the service of ordination/installation has been completed.
  - k. Though the work of the PNC is usually concluded at this point, it is customary for the PNC to continue on an informal basis as a source of support and encouragement to the new pastor during the first year of their ministry.

#### **4. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD**

- a. The worship committee (or similar committee approved by the Session) has the main responsibility for providing worship leadership each Sunday following the last date the previous installed pastor serves.
- b. Worship leadership on a Sunday-to-Sunday basis can be very flexible, with the main concern being to have someone qualified to serve Communion when that is scheduled by the Session (or what is customary for the church). A minister of another denomination can serve Communion but it is essential to ascertain that their understanding of Communion is very similar to our own. That is why it is always preferable to have someone from our own denomination.
- c. Worship leadership on a Sunday-to-Sunday basis usually concludes when the interim pastor begins official service but the time involved can be a number of months in duration.

- d. Activities of the church, other than worship, need to be coordinated so that all will run smoothly during the time between the departure of the current pastor and the arrival of the interim. Specific session members or other interested church members need to be designated well in advance with accountability to the session for planning.**
- e. Pastoral responsibilities such as hospital visitation, visiting of members in care facilities, and the conducting of funerals need to be assigned so that these are not neglected. A local minister can be contracted for this purpose, the board of deacons (or the session if there is no board of deacons) can assume this responsibility, or someone within the church with skill and experience in this area can volunteer or be contracted to provide this service. It is important to be intentional about this since such needs can arise soon after the departure of the current pastor.**
- f. One way to accomplish this is through a transition plan that outlines how the leadership team (either the session or a group of people designated by the session) will manage the period of time from the announcement of the departure of the current pastor to the arrival of next pastoral leadership. In addition, a search plan is formulated that specifies the critical requirement for a pastor who is a good fit for a church and the parameters of the search process. This also can be overseen by the session or designated to an appropriate group of people.**

**Note: If two or more churches are connected in a yoked ministry the sessions will need to determine together the division of responsibility and financial commitment in the pastoral search process.**

## **INTERIM PASTORS**

- 1. THE INTERIM SEARCH COMMITTEE MAY BE FORMED BEFORE THE CURRENT PASTOR LEAVES BUT THE INTERIM MIF SHALL NOT BE APPROVED BY THE SESSION OR THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY UNTIL AFTER THE CURRENT PASTOR LEAVES.**
- 2. TO BE CONSIDERED AS AN INTERIM A TEACHING ELDER SHALL AT LEAST HAVE COMPLETED THE FIRST WEEK OF INTERIM TRAINING. THOSE FROM FORMULA OF AGREEMENT CHURCHES ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE SOMETHING SIMILAR.**
- 3. THE INTERIM CONTRACT AS APPROVED BY COMMISSION ON MINISTRY SHALL BE FOR A PERIOD OF TWELVE MONTHS WITH THIRTY DAY NOTICE GIVEN BY THE INTERIM, SESSION, OR PRESBYTERY. THE CONTRACT CAN BE RENEWED BY ALL THREE PARTIES.**
- 4. "EACH TEACHING ELDER SHALL ORDINARILY BE A MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERY WHERE HIS OR HER WORK IS SITUATED OR THE PRESBYTERY WHERE HE OR SHE RESIDES" (BOOK OF ORDER, G. 30306).**
- 5. A MISSION STUDY TO BE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE AN MIF FOR AN INSTALLED PASTOR CAN BE APPROVED. THE INTERIM PASTOR PRESENTS THIS TO THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY.**
- 6. THE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR AN INSTALLED PASTOR SHALL NOT BE ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO THE APPROVAL OF THE MISSION STUDY BY THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY.**
- 7. THE COMMISSION IN MINISTRY INSTEAD OF THE INTERIM PASTOR SHALL OVERSEE THE WORK OF THE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE. THE INTERIM PASTOR SHALL PRIMARILY FOCUS ON HIS OR HER ROLE OF UTILIZING THE MISSION STUDY TO ENABLE EXPLORATION OF CONGREGATIONAL CORE VALUES WITH THE GOAL OF ENGAGING IN SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION.**
- 8. THE INTERIM PASTOR WILL MEET WITH THE COORDINATING PRESBYTER AT LEAST QUARTERLY FOR SUPPORT AND CONSULTATION.**
- 9. AN INTERIM PASTOR IS A TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP AND SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR THE INSTALLED PASTOR POSITION AT THAT CHURCH.**
- 10. INTERIM PASTORS SHALL NOT HAVE CONTACT WITH THE CHURCH FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THEIR INTERIM FOR AT LEAST TWELVE MONTHS.**

## **EXPLORING CORE VALUES**

- a. This applies to churches in transition, usually with an interim in place, or churches that are stuck and seeking some guidance.**
- b. The principle: Every church is like an iceberg, with a visible part showing above the surface while certain core values, that govern the functioning of the church, lie underneath.**
- c. A Mission Study, the first step in the process, provides an overview of the visible part of the church, reflecting on its history, current status, and goals for the future, and, most importantly, the expressing of concerns.**
- d. Following completion of a Mission Study, the interim pastor or installed pastor then identifies key members of the congregation, representative of the church with its history and culture, and invites them to an exploration meeting, led either by interim or a consultant familiar with the church.**
- e. In addition to Scripture reading and worship, the Mission Study is explored for the purpose of isolating concerns related to dissatisfactions, satisfactions, potentials, and dreams of the people in the congregation. The group is also asked to define such concepts as "Who is Jesus to you?" and "What is Church to you?"**
- f. Once some of these visible parts of the iceberg (above the water line) are identified, the interim pastor or consultant provides leading questions in an effort to get to the core values underneath. Some examples are, "What caused these concerns to surface?", "What might hinder the church from accomplishing these future goals?"**
- g. Responding to these questions leads to an acknowledgement of such core values as "We are happy the way things are," "We must survive," "We don't want to offend the important financial givers," which identify some basic fears (Psalm 139:23) that are choking the church's life.**
- h. Key members are invited to commit to continue the process. Balance of fear and safety is needed with the ultimate goal being inviting the congregation to replace fears with more healthy core values.**



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)  
CHURCH LEADERSHIP CONNECTION  
100 WITHERSPOON STREET  
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202-1396  
Toll Free 1-888-728-7228 ext. 8550  
Fax # (502) 569-5870  
[www.pcusa.org/clc](http://www.pcusa.org/clc)**

### MINISTRY INFORMATION FORM

Ministry ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Ministry Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Web site \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Congregation or Organization Size(Select one)**

- ☐ Under 100 members  
☐ 101 - 250 members  
☐ 251 - 400 members  
☐ 401 - 650 members  
☐ 651 - 1000 members  
☐ 1001 - 1500 members  
☐ More than 1500 members  
☐ N/A

**Average Worship Attendance** \_\_\_\_\_





**Church School Attendance** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church School Curriculum** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check if certified as eligible for participation in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program

**Ethnic Composition Of Congregation (in whole %):**

*Enter the percentage of each racial ethnic component of your congregation.*

\_\_\_\_\_ American Indian or Alaska Native

\_\_\_\_\_ Asian

\_\_\_\_\_ Black or African American (African Native, Caribbean)

\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic Latino/Latina, Spanish

\_\_\_\_\_ Middle Eastern

\_\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_\_ White

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_ Synod \_\_\_\_\_

**Community Type (select one)**

\_\_\_\_\_ College

\_\_\_\_\_ Rural

\_\_\_\_\_ Suburban

\_\_\_\_\_ Small City

\_\_\_\_\_ Town

\_\_\_\_\_ Urban

\_\_\_\_\_ Village

\_\_\_\_\_ Recreation

\_\_\_\_\_ Retirement

\_\_\_\_\_ N/A

**Clerk of Session Contact Information:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_



**\*Select below the position to be filled and the minimal number of years of experience required (e.g. no experience, first ordained call, up to 2 years, 2-5 years, 5-10 years, or above 10 years)**

<b><u>Years of Experience</u></b>	<b><u>Position Type</u></b>	<b><u>Years of Experience</u></b>	<b><u>Position Type</u></b>
	Solo Pastor		General Assembly Staff
	Head of Staff (Multi-staff Pastor, who supervised two teaching elders and other staff)		Church Business Administrator
	Head of Staff (supervised one teaching elder and other staff)		Executive Director
	Associate Pastor (Christian Education)		Director of Music (non-ordained)
	Associate Pastor (Youth)		Minister of Music (ordained)
	Associate Pastor (Other)		Mission Co-worker (International)
	Pastor (Church Planter, New Worshipping Community)		Christian Educator (Certified)
	Pastor (Transformation/Redevelopment)		Christian Educator (non-certified)
	Pastor Interim		Administrator
	Pastor ( for a designated term)		Funds Developer
	Pastor (Other Temporary i.e., Supply, Student)		Finance Manager
	Pastor, yoked/parish		Media Specialist
	Co-pastor		Communicator
	Executive Pastor		Coordinator
	Evangelist or Mission Pastor		Youth Director (non-ordained)
	Bi-vocational/Tentmaker		Other
	Chaplain		
	Pastoral Counselor		
	College/Seminary Faculty		
	Seminary Staff		
	Campus Ministry		
	General Presbyter/Executive Presbyter		
	Presbytery Leader		
	Stated Clerk (Presbytery)		
	Synod Executive		
	Mid-Council Program Staff		



You may also specify the position title (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Employment Status**

\_\_\_\_\_ Full Time                      \_\_\_\_\_ Part Time                      \_\_\_\_\_ Open to Either  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Bi-vocational (able to provide employment through outside partnership)

**Is this a yoked congregation?** \_\_\_\_\_ No                      \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

(If yes, please complete the Yoked Congregation Detail Form.)

**Clergy Couple** (Are you open to a clergy couple?) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Certification/Training** (check below the desired certification or training needed for the position):

Interim/Transitional Ministry Training	_____	Interim Executive Presbyter Training	_____
Certified Christian Educator	_____	Certified Business Administrator	_____
Certified Conflict Mediator	_____	Clinical Pastoral Education Training	_____
Other	_____		

**Language Requirements**

_____ English	_____ Spanish	_____ Korean	_____ French
_____ Arabic	_____ Armenian	_____ Creole	_____ Portuguese
_____ Japanese	_____ Russian	_____ Swahili	_____ Burmese
_____ Cambodian	_____ Indonesian	_____ Laotian	_____ Thai
_____ Vietnamese	_____ Taiwanese	_____ Cantonese	_____ Mandarin Chinese
_____ Twi	_____ Sign Language	_____ Other	

**Statement of Faith Required** \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Mission Statement**

What is your congregation's or organization's Mission Statement?



## NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

*(For each narrative question, please limit your responses to no more than 1500 characters including spaces and punctuation.)*

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

### OPTIONAL LINKS

Provide below any links to online information that may help call seekers understand your congregation or organization. (e.g. *organization or community websites, online newsletters, demographic information*) Please note the CLC system does not warehouse links. (Limit characters to 500)



## \*LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

(Select 10 leadership competencies from the list below that are required for the position.)

THEOLOGICAL/SPIRITUAL INTERPRETER			
	<p><b>Compassionate</b> – having the ability to suffer with others; being motivated by others pain and is called into action as advocate; is motivated by caring for others while concurrently keeping the organizational goals clearly in focus.</p>		<p><b>Hopeful</b> – maintains stability in the moment and hope for the future; provides direction, guidance, and faith when describing basic needs; and helps followers to see a way through chaos and complexity.</p>
	<p><b>Preaching and Worship Leadership:</b> Is a consistently effective preacher and worship leader; is able to inspire from the pulpit; communicates a clear and consistent message through sermons that are carefully prepared and artfully delivered; projects the identity and character of the congregation through worship leadership presence.</p>		<p><b>Spiritual Maturity:</b> Shows strong personal depth and spiritual grounding; demonstrates integrity by walking the talk and by responding with faithfulness of purpose; is seen by others as trustworthy and authentic; nurtures a rich spiritual life; seeks the wisdom and guidance of appropriate mentors; is able to articulate a clear and consistent theology.</p>
	<p><b>Lifelong Learner</b> – individuals who use every experience in life as a potential tool for growth; one who pursues continuing education; and those who build on strengths and seek assistance to improve weaknesses.</p>		<p><b>Teacher</b> – creates learning environments where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups; designs lesson plans that teach concepts, facts, and theology; effectively uses multiple learning tools to reach a wide variety of learners; revises instructional strategies based upon ministry/organization context.</p>
COMMUNICATION			
	<p><b>Communicator</b> - Advances the abilities of individuals and the organizations through active listening supported with meaningful oral and written presentation of information.</p>		<p><b>Bilingual</b> – having the ability to use two languages, especially with equal or nearly equal fluency; able to use multiple languages in communication.</p>
	<p><b>Public Communicator</b> - Demonstrates a comfortable ease when speaking in a variety of settings (both small and large groups); is effective at addressing a variety of topics; can get messages across with the desired effect.</p>		<p><b>Media Communicator:</b> Has experience developing materials for a variety of written or multimedia forms of communications (print, Internet-based, social media, etc.)</p>
	<p><b>Technologically Savvy</b> - the ability to navigate successfully the world of technology using software, blogging, multi-media, and websites as tools for ministry.</p>		



## ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

<b>Advisor</b> – an individual others turn to for counsel and guidance; provides coaching; expertise for congregations or other organizations.	<b>Change Agent</b> – having the ability to lead the change process successfully; anchoring the change in the congregation's/organization's vision and mission.
<b>Contextualization</b> – the ability to assess accurately the context, environment, history, relationships and uniqueness of a congregation or organization.	<b>Culturally Proficient</b> – having solid understanding of the norms, values and common behaviors of various peoples, including direct experience working in multiple cultural and cross-cultural settings.
<b>Externally Aware</b> - identifies and keeps informed of the polity of the church and/or the organization; maintains current with laws, regulations, policies, procedures, trends, and developments both internally and in the larger society.	<b>Entrepreneurial</b> - leaders that are creative in using resources; identifies opportunities to develop; is willing to take risks, initiates actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.
<b>Risk Taker</b> – persons with the ability to take appropriate risk to accomplish needed goals; one who thinks outside the box and who is not afraid of challenging the status-quo.	<b>Task Manager</b> - Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization; holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities; can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget; and monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.
<b>Willingness to Engage Conflict:</b> Steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities; reads situations quickly; good at focused listening; can identify common ground and elicit cooperation from others in crafting mutual solutions.	<b>Decision Making:</b> Makes effective decisions, balancing analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment; is aware of the long term implications of choices made; is generally regarded as offering solutions and suggestions that are correct and effective.
<b>Organizational Agility:</b> Is astute about how congregations and/or organizations work; knows how to get things done through formal and informal channels; understands the importance of supporting good policy, practice, and procedure; appreciates the power in the culture of a congregation; is politically savvy.	<b>Strategy and Vision:</b> Sees ahead clearly, keeping focused on the larger picture; can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately; is future oriented; casts a compelling and inspired vision for a preferred future; sees possibility; crafts breakthrough strategies.
<b>Financial Manager</b> – deliver results by maximizing organizational effectiveness and sustainability through the best use of available financial resources; allocates and manages finances transparently; implements strategies to achieve operational efficiencies and value for money; puts in place rigorous and comprehensive financial accountability systems.	<b>Funds Developer</b> – maintains the ability to solicit donations used to fund the budget of the organization; effectively expresses the needs for funds to potential donors; responsible for adding new potential donors to the organization's contact list; prepares statement of planned activities and enlists support for mission initiatives.
<b>Collaboration:</b> Has a natural orientation toward getting people to work together; shares wins and successes; fosters open dialogue; lets people finish and be responsible for their work; creates strong feelings of belonging among group members; is a good judge of talent and can accurately assess the	



strengths and limitations of others.		
<b>INTERPERSONAL ENGAGEMENT</b>		
<b>Interpersonal Engagement</b> - Displays a consistent ability to build solid relationships of trust and respect inside and outside of the organization; engage people, organizations, and partners in developing goals, executing plans, and delivering results; use negotiation skills and adaptability to encourage recognition of joint concerns, collaboration, and to influence the success of outcomes.		<b>Bridge Builder</b> – possessing a certain responsibility for the unity of the congregation and or organization; works to connect people of different cultures, worldviews, and theological positions.
<b>Motivator</b> - Creates and sustains an organizational culture which permits others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well; and influences others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions to mission accomplishment.		<b>Personal Resilience:</b> Learns from adversity and failure; picks up on the need to change personal, interpersonal, and leadership behaviors; deals well with ambiguity; copes effectively with change; can decide and act without having the total picture; comfortably handles risk and uncertainty; seeks feedback; expresses personal regret when appropriate
<b>Initiative:</b> Demonstrates ambition is highly motivated; is action oriented and full of energy for things seen as challenging; seizes opportunity; pushes self and others to achieve desired results.		<b>Flexibility</b> - Adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, unexpected obstacles, or ambiguity; remains open to new ideas and approaches; and works concurrently on related and conflicting priorities without losing focus or attention.
<b>Self Differentiation:</b> Demonstrates strong and appropriate personal boundaries in relationships; has a healthy appreciation of self, without being egotistical; is emotionally mature; can maintain a less- anxious presence in the midst of turmoil; is not overly dependent upon outside affirmation; works to build a strong personal support system.		

**\*COMPENSATION AND HOUSING:** *A range is needed for matching purposes. The maximum salary is not published anywhere.* Effective salary is cash salary plus housing allowance or manse value and other compensation considered “effective salary” by the Board of Pensions of the PC (U.S.A.)

See Effective Salary Definition at [Board of Pensions](#).

Minimum *Effective* Salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum *Effective* Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Housing Type \_\_\_\_\_ Manse  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Housing Allowance  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Open To Either (Manse or Housing Allowance)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not Applicable (*For Non-pastoral Positions Only*)



### **\*EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore, no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than stated in this Constitution. (F-1.0403)

Each Pastor Nominating committee and Search committee is expected to undertake its search for a Teaching Elder in a manner consistent with the good news that in the church *"....as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

Has the Pastor Nominating Committee and Search Committee affirmed its intention to follow the Form of Government in this regard?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

### **REFERENCES (Limit 3)**

Below, please list three persons who know your congregation. You might list your Presbytery leadership, a neighboring pastor, or other persons whom you believe can give a clear and accurate reference for your congregation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

Relation \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

Relation \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_





Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_  
Relation \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Pastor Nominating Committee/Search Committee Chairperson/Mid-council Search Committee Chairperson:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address for PNC Communications (required): \_\_\_\_\_

**ENDORSEMENTS**

Pastor Nominating Committee/

Search Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

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

*Signature*

Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

## **CONGREGATIONAL SELF ASSESSMENT**

### **I. TASKS OF THE CHURCH**

Listed below are a number of tasks that this church is likely to perform. Please respond to each by indicating whether you are generally satisfied with your congregation's current performance of the task, or whether you feel the congregation needs to give it more emphasis, or whether the task currently receives too much attention.

	<b>Needs More Emphasis</b>	<b>Generally Satisfied</b>	<b>Receives Too Much Emphasis</b>
1. Providing worship that deepens Member's experience of God and the Christian tradition.	( )	( )	( )
2. Providing worship that expresses the Gospel in contemporary language and forms.	( )	( )	( )
3. Providing Christian Education for children and youth.	( )	( )	( )
4. Providing Christian Education programs for adults.	( )	( )	( )
5. Helping members deepen their personal and spiritual relationship with God.	( )	( )	( )
6. Sharing the good news of the Gospel with the unchurched.	( )	( )	( )
7. Engaging in acts of charity and service for persons in need.	( )	( )	( )
8. Encouraging members to act on the Relationship of the Christian faith to social, political, and economic issues.	( )	( )	( )
9. Providing a caring ministry for the sick, shut-ins, those in crisis, and the bereaved.	( )	( )	( )

- |   |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 10. Providing pastoral counseling to help members deal with personal problems.                                | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 11. Providing fellowship opportunities for members.   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 12. Helping members understand their use of money, time, and talents as expressions of Christian stewardship. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 13. Supporting the world missions of the church through study and giving.                                     | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 14. Helping members discover their Own gifts for ministry and service.  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

Please read over the preceding list of 14 church tasks, and answer the following two questions by writing in the number of the appropriate task.

- Overall, which one task does your congregation do best? \_\_\_\_\_
- For the sake of your own personal involvement in your congregation, which one task would you most like to see strengthened? \_\_\_\_\_

## II. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

On a contingency between 1 and 5, indicate what more closely expresses your views and what you believe are the views of this church as a whole.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. The Bible is a valuable book because it was written by wise and good people, but it is not really God's Word. | <b>My View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5<br><b>This Church's View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5 | The Bible is the actual Word of God and should be understood literally.  |
| 2. Sin and salvation don't really have much meaning for me.  | <b>My View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5<br><b>This Church's View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5 | All people are sinful but are saved by faith in Christ as they repent of their sins and seek to live in a way that honors God. |
| 3. The church should work for justice and support groups that are working to end inequality and oppression.      | <b>My View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5<br><b>This Church's View</b><br>1 2 3 4 5 | Frankly, the concept of social justice doesn't have much meaning and should not be a priority for the church.                  |

### III. CONGREGATIONAL IDENTITY

Listed below are several alternatives touching upon important dimensions of a church's identity. Using the five point scale between each of the alternatives, please circle the number that best describes where your congregation falls, "1" meaning most like the characteristic on the left, "5" meaning most like the characteristic on the right, and "3" meaning an equal mix of both.

- |  |                   |  |
|--|-------------------|--|
| 1. Our church is more influenced by history and tradition.   | 1   2   3   4   5 | Our church is more influenced by contemporary trends and ideas.  |
| 2. Members are similar in values and lifestyle to the people who live close to the church.                             | 1   2   3   4   5 | Members are very different in values and lifestyle from people who live close to the church.   |
| 3. Our church is very involved with the local community.   | 1   2   3   4   5 | Our church is not at all involved with the local community.  |
| 4. Our church is primarily oriented to serving our members.  | 1   2   3   4   5 | Our church is primarily oriented to serving the world beyond our membership.   |
| 5. Our congregation feels like one large family.   | 1   2   3   4   5 | Our congregation feels like a loosely knit association of individuals and groups.  |
| 6. Our church is known as very influential in the community.   | 1   2   3   4   5 | Our strengths notwithstanding, our church is not one of the "status" churches in the area.   |
| 7. The church's approach to social issues is basically educational, leaving any action to individual conscience.       | 1   2   3   4   5 | The church's approach to social issues is decidedly "activist." We have a proven history of taking a stand on social issues as a congregation. |
| 8. The congregation's approach to individual salvation emphasizes education, nurture, and gradual growth in the faith. | 1   2   3   4   5 | The congregation's approach to individual salvation stresses conversion and a born-again experience.   |
| 9. Our congregation gives strong expression to our denominational identity and heritage.                               | 1   2   3   4   5 | It would be difficult for a visitor to know to which denomination our congregation belongs.  |

**IV. OVERALL CONGREGATIONAL OUTLOOK**  
**(respond to the following with 1 being low to 5 being high)**

**1. Are you satisfied (happy with) your membership in this church?**

**1                      2                      3                      4                      5**

**Comments:**

**2. What do you perceive is the energy level and excitement in the church?**

**1                      2                      3                      4                      5**

**Comments:**

**3. How comfortable are you with the timing and/or reason of the pastoral departure?**

**1                      2                      3                      4                      5**

**Comments:**

**4. How much do you expect the next pastor to do almost exactly what the current pastor is doing?**

**1                      2                      3                      4                      5**

**Comments:**

**5. Are you available to increase your involvement in the church in assisting the congregation during this transition time?**

**1                      2                      3                      4                      5**

**Comments:**

## V. TASKS OF THE PASTOR

In your judgment, how high or how low a priority would like each of the following tasks to be for the pastor of this church. (It is worth remembering that every task can be highest priority, and that in reality only three or four can be).

	Very High Priority	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority
1. Providing administrative leadership for the congregation's ministry.	( )	( )	( )	( )
2. Actively and visibly supporting the church's stewardship program.	( )	( )	( )	( )
3. Directly involving laity in the planning and leadership of church programs and events.	( )	( )	( )	( )
4. Planning and leading a program of new member recruitment.	( )	( )	( )	( )
5. Participating in local community activities, issues, and problems.	( )	( )	( )	( )
6. Holding social justice issues before members.	( )	( )	( )	( )
7. Planning and leading worship sensitive to needs of the congregation.	( )	( )	( )	( )
8. Attending to the spiritual development of members.	( )	( )	( )	( )
9. Visiting the sick, shut-in, bereaved.	( )	( )	( )	( )
10. Visiting members at their home.	( )	( )	( )	( )
11. Pastoral counseling of members having personal, family, and/or work related problems.	( )	( )	( )	( )
12. Developing and supporting religious education programs for children/youth.	( )	( )	( )	( )
13. Developing and leading adult education programs.	( )	( )	( )	( )

14. Supporting the world mission of the church. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

15. Participation in denominational activities beyond the local church at regional and national levels. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

## VI. PRIMARY SKILLS CHOICES

Select 8 skills from the list below you believe are required for the next pastor.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative leadership           | <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumental Music              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Ministry                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement in Mission Beyond   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget Preparation                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Church                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Renovation/Property        | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading Music Ministry          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Development          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership of staff/Volunteers  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir Directing                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Tax Matters               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication (Written/Oral)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Management of Building Usage    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Ministries                | <input type="checkbox"/> Management of Equipment         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Service/Leadership        | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management/Mediation       | <input type="checkbox"/> New Church Development          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congregational Communication        | <input type="checkbox"/> Office Management               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congregational Fellowship           | <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adult Ministry            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congregational Home Visitation      | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Administration   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congregational Renewal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Leadership and   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Worship/Sacraments        | <input type="checkbox"/> Development                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Presbytery Involvement          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Proficiency/Cross Cultural | <input type="checkbox"/> Parliamentary Procedure         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Building                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Preaching                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defining Program Needs              | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving/Decision Making |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development of New Educational      | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Management              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experiences                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Ministry Specialization   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ecumenical/Interfaith Activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship/Publishing          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of Program/Staff         | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Membership Ministry       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Development           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Management                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing/Human Resources        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Ministry                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship/Commitment          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management                | <input type="checkbox"/> Programming/Strategic Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Governing Body Ministry             | <input type="checkbox"/> Training Volunteers             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Process                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional/Interim Ministry   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital/Emergency Visitation       | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Ministry                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology              | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult/Youth Ministry      |

## VIII. YOUR PARTICIPATION AND IDENTITY

1. How long have you been a member of this church?

- ☐ not a member      ☐ 2-4 years      ☐ 10-19 years  
☐ one year or less      ☐ 5-9 years      ☐ 20 or more years

2. On average, about how many times have you attended church services during the past year?

- ☐ none      ☐ about once a month  
☐ about once or twice a year      ☐ about two or three times a month  
☐ once or twice every three months      ☐ four times a month or more

Any particular reason for your level of attendance?

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---

3. In how many church organizations, committees, and groups do you hold membership(not counting your congregational membership itself?)

- ☐ none      ☐ one      ☐ two      ☐ three      ☐ four or more

Are you wanting to become more involved in the church? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Gender?      ☐ Male      ☐ Female

5. Age?

- ☐ Under 20      ☐ 26-34      ☐ 45-54      ☐ 65-74  
☐ 21-25      ☐ 35-44      ☐ 55-64      ☐ 75 and over

## IX. FREE-FORM RESPONSE AND FEEDBACK

Please use the following lines to provide any comments in addition to this survey that will further assist in the transition process.

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NAME (OPTIONAL) \_\_\_\_\_



**WHAT DRAWS YOU TO \_\_\_\_\_ PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
(CONSIDERING THAT THERE ARE MANY OTHER PLACES WHERE YOU  
CAN WORSHIP)? WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT THIS CHURCH?**

**IDENTIFY TWO EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH FOR WHICH  
YOU FEEL ESPECIALLY PROUD OR GRATIFIED.**

**IDENTIFY ONE EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH YOU WOULD  
LIKE TO HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY OR ELMINATE.**

**WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC REALISTIC GOALS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE  
ACCOMPLISHED FOR THE CHURCH IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS, 1 YEAR?**

**WHAT WOULD HINDER ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THESE GOALS?**

### Pastoral Call

(for Pastor, Co-Pastor, Associate Pastor)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)  
to undertake the office of \_\_\_\_\_

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

That you may be free to devote full-time (part-time) to the ministry of Word and Sacrament among us, we promise  
and obligate ourselves to pay you in regular monthly payments the following effective salary and following  
vouchered expenses (fill in those which are agreed to):

#### Effective salary

Cash Salary	\$ _____
Fair rental value of manse	\$ _____
Housing Allowance	\$ _____
Utilities Allowance	\$ _____
Deferred Compensation	\$ _____
Other allowances	\$ _____
<b>Total</b>	\$ _____

#### Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)

Automobile expense (____ per mile)	\$ _____
Business/professional expenses	\$ _____
SECA Supplement (up to 50%)	\$ _____
Continuing Education	\$ _____
Other allowances	\$ _____
Moving Costs (up to)	\$ _____

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

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

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

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

In the seventh year of service, the congregation will provide for a three-month Clergy Renewal Leave, continuing  
the salary and benefits for that period, and providing for pulpit supply in the pastor's absence.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended this call for ministerial services, I do certify that the  
call has been made in all respect according to the presbytery policy and the Form of Government, and that the  
persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

Vote of the congregation at the meeting was \_\_\_\_\_ in favor of the candidate and \_\_\_\_\_ opposed.

(signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
moderator of the meeting

## **A GUIDE FOR CHURCHES CONDUCTING A CONGREGATIONAL MISSION STUDY DURING AN INTERIM (TRANSITION) TIME**

The interim period can be a challenging time for congregations, but with solid dedicated leadership from the Session, those challenges can produce growth. Church members are inclined toward uncertainty, concern and frustration during the interim period. When Session members nurture the congregation by leading them through the interim period, those potentially negative experiences can be transformed into hope, vision, and possibility. The completion of a Mission Study is a vital part of this process. While the Commission on Ministry requires you to go through this process, the process is for your congregation. For as the presbytery of Western Kentucky is comprised of a wide variety of sizes and types of congregations, this guide is to be a map for the process of affirming and celebrating who you, as a congregation have been and discovering who you long to become. You are encouraged to tailor the mission study guide as it fits your unique congregational life.

### **I. OVERVIEW**

A Mission Study is a process that a congregation goes through to seek discernment about how God would have that church to be and act in the future. It is led by a committee of Session, often called the Mission Study Team (MST) or Mission Study Committee. The process results in a Mission Study Report (MSR) written by the Mission Study Team that is presented to the Session for approval and to the Commission on Ministry for review. This is different from Long Range Planning or Strategic Planning in that, unlike most corporations, the church is a volunteer organization. The corporate model in which leadership sets direction and tells staff to follow does not work well in a church. It is essential to involve as much of the congregation as possible in the process of self-examination and decision-making. One reason is that as Reformed Christians we believe both in the priesthood of believers and the corporate body of the church- that together we are richer and wiser than separately. Another reason is to develop a sense of ownership within the congregation of the new directions for the ministry of the church in the coming years.

A well-founded Mission Study includes fact-finding about the congregation and the community in which it ministers. It provides an opportunity for members of the congregation to prayerfully study what Scripture says about the church, learn new information about its community and needs, learn who they have been and who they are as a congregation, and celebrate their gifts as a church.

A Mission Study is very much a process executed and owned by the congregation. However, especially in congregations where a pastor has recently left and have the services of an interim pastor, that person should be drawn in as an important resource. All trained interim pastors should be familiar with the Mission Study process.

Once a congregation knows itself, knows where it wants to go, and has made a serious effort to understand where God wants it to go, it is ready to ask itself what kind of pastor is needed to make the Vision a reality and start the search for that pastor.

and objectives proposed, a brief history of the congregation, a description of the process used in the Mission Study, and the Vision statement with its Goals and Objectives as concluded by the Mission Study Team. This document must be approved by the Session and sent to the Commission on Ministry for review and comment.

**7. Report presented to the Congregation.**

Once the Session has approved and COM has reviewed the Mission Study Report, it should be presented to the congregation. This can be done in Sunday morning worship or a special congregational meeting. Copies of the report should be made available to the congregation. If the congregation is in the process of finding a new minister, the report will be an essential document for the Pastor Nominating Committee as it completes the Ministry Information Form.

**8. Session implements recommendations of the Report**

It is the responsibility of the Session to see that the Vision Statement is used in the ministry of the church and that the Goals and Objectives are implemented. This means that the Session will need to delegate specific goals or objectives to certain committees or groups in the congregation. It also means that the Session will need to hold these groups and committees accountable for doing this work.

**III. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REVIEW**

The purpose of the review is to ensure that the Mission Study has been conducted with full participation by the congregation, provides a fair representation of the congregation, presents a thoughtful vision, and is suitable as the basis for the Ministry Information Form. The following sections should be included in the Mission Study Report:

- 1. A financial review, usually provided by the Session;**
- 2. A summary of the demographic study'**
- 3. The Visions, Goals, and Objectives statements;**
- 4. Evidence of congregational involvement as part of the process;**
- 5. Some evidence of the process involved that has resulted in the final copy.**

After their review, the Commission on Ministry may or may not return comments and may or may not suggest revisions. In this connection it is important to keep in mind that the Mission Study Report is extremely important for the writing of the Mission Information Form since it represents the face of the congregation to perspective pastoral candidates and may determine the immediate future of the congregation. With that in mind, the Mission Study Report should reflect the unique qualities of the congregation involved.

**IV. VISION STATEMENTS**

A central part of a Mission Study is creating a vision statement as a starting place. Vision statements describe the clear and inspirational long term change you want to make as a result of your work. The difference you want to make is up for you but you need to be clear about what you are committed to and where you are going. It is from the Vision Statement(s) that the Session implements the report.

## **II. SUGGESTED PROCESS**

The eight steps for a Congregational Mission Study process are:

### **1. Appoint a Committee of Session to Design and lead Mission Study**

The Session begins by assigning a committee or team to lead the congregation through the Mission Study. The Mission Study Committee or Team has the responsibility for designing each step of the Mission Study and then implementing it. The Session will need to give the Mission Study Team a budget. The Mission Study Team should report frequently to Session and communicate frequently with the liaison from the Commission on Ministry for advice and guidance.

### **2. Conduct a Demographic Study**

Part of the process of understanding what God has for us to do in a certain time and place is getting to know the needs of the community in which we minister. As part of the assessment of the community, a demographic study is to be conducted in order to understand who our neighbors are now, and who they probably will be in the coming years. Resources such as 'Mission Insite' are very valuable in this area.

### **3. Conduct a Community Study**

Another way of learning about the community is to interview community leaders about what they perceive as the needs of the community. This is often an eye-opening experience for the congregation and the congregation can be included by assigning various members who are comfortable in speaking with community leaders, the specific responsibility of contacting a certain number of them.

### **4. Administer a Congregational Survey**

A survey of the congregation, about who they are and what they desire in the church, is an effective tool in getting a helpful amount of information from them. Though we often think we already know what everyone in the congregation thinks, we rarely ask them and are often surprised by the results when we do. A 'Congregational Self-Assessment' included in the manual is one example of a survey but it is possible for the Mission Study Team to design its own congregational survey.

### **5. Establish Congregational Gatherings**

This is an opportunity to invite members of the congregation to gather in small groups for the purpose of doing the work of the Mission Study. This involves sharing and discussing information received from the Demographic Study and the Community Study. Also, processing the responses from such instruments as the 'Congregational Self-Assessment' gives valuable input into the final result. This can be structured as a single session or multiple sessions depending on the interest expressed. Gatherings should involve no more than ten members so as to give opportunity for all those involved to express their viewpoint. These gatherings also serve to invite participants to suggest and discuss areas of concern not included in the Assessment.

### **6. Written Report done by the Committee. Approved by Session and reviewed by the Commission on Ministry.**

The Mission Study Team will take all information gathered from the Congregational Gatherings and make it into a report. This will include but not be limited to, a synopsis of the demographic, community, and congregational assessments, a report from the Session on the financial health of the church and the financial feasibility of the goals

## **E. TEMPORARY RELATIONSHIPS**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **TEMPORARY RELATIONSHIPS**

A temporary pastoral relationship is any that does not involve installation (with the one exception of a designated pastor). Congregations are especially in need of temporary pastoral relationships when not able to financially support a full time installed pastor. Though the denominational office has designated all of these as temporary positions, the presbytery has found it helpful to identify the unique function that each entails. The most common is "Stated Supply" which is applied to an ordained pastoral relationship which is less than full time as the church is not seeking full time pastoral services. This relationship, which is true of all temporary pastoral relationship, involves a contract between the Session and the pastor, approved by the Commission on Ministry. Though it is limited to one year and must be reviewed on an annual basis, it can be renewed indefinitely with the approval of all three parties. Another one is that of "interim pastor" (also called 'transitional pastor') which assists the congregation in transition after an installed pastor has left. This also involves a contract between the Session and the pastor for a limited time period (no longer than twelve months but with possibility of renewal) and is terminated when a new installed pastor is confirmed (though it can be terminated at any time with a thirty day notice).

Other temporary relationships are 'temporary supply' which is for a specific time in cases where the current pastor is not available, 'organizing pastor' which is for the purpose of new church development, and is normally employed by the presbytery through the Commission on Ministry, and 'parish associate,' which involves a specific relationship with a local church for a teaching elder who is retired but still wants to serve. One temporary relationship that causes some confusion is 'designated pastor.' It is the same as an installed pastor with the only difference that it is for a limited period of time, usually two to four years, as agreed upon by the Session, congregation, and Commission on Ministry. It is a helpful relationship for a church that desires pastoral services but is not in need of an interim pastor nor ready to call a permanent installed pastor. This is one relationship that can be renewed at the conclusion of the contract and, if the relationship has been beneficial, can become the permanent installed pastor of the church. The designated pastor relationship involves congregational and presbytery approval followed by an installation service.

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-2.0504b) Temporary Pastoral Relationships**

**“Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform his or her duties, the session, with the approval of the presbytery, may obtain the services of a minister of the Word and Sacraments, candidate, or ruling elder in temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call is issued and no formal installation shall take place.**

**Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.”**

## **(G-2.0504c) Exceptions**

**“A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a minister of the Word and Sacraments currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Presbyteries that permit this eligibility shall establish such relationships only by a three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present and voting.”**



**(G-2.0503)**

**“When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the board and agencies of those councils.**

**The presbytery shall review annually the work of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.”**

**5. Temporary Pastoral Relationships - The presbytery recognizes the following temporary pastoral relationships which are established by the session of the local church or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery through its Commission on Ministry and are to be reviewed and can be renewed on an annual basis:**

- a. **Stated Supply-** a teaching elder or commissioned ruling elder appointed by the presbytery with approval of the session to perform the functions of a pastor in a church which is not seeking an installed pastor.
- b. **Interim Pastor-** a teaching elder invited by the session of a church without an installed pastor to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and fulfill pastoral duties while the church is seeking a pastor.
- c. **Interim Associate Pastor-** a teaching elder invited by the session to serve in this position while the church is seeking a new associate pastor or is seeking a pastor to serve as co-pastor.
- d. **Temporary Supply-** a teaching elder, a candidate, a commissioned ruling elder, or a ruling elder secured by the session for a limited period of time to conduct services where there is no pastor or the pastor is unable to perform pastoral duties.
- e. **Organizing Pastor-** a teaching elder or commissioned ruling elder appointed by the presbytery to serve as pastor to a group of people who are in the process of organizing a new Presbyterian church.
- f. **Parish Associate-** a teaching elder approved by the presbytery to serve in some validated ministry other than the local church, or is a member-at-large, or is retired, but who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches in keeping with ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- g. **Designated Pastor-** though an installed position, a teaching elder approved by the Commission on Ministry, with the establishment of the relationship by the presbytery, to be elected for a term of not less than two years nor more than four years by vote of the congregation with the option that, on the basis of an open search process conducted by the Commission on Ministry, the designated pastor may be called and installed as permanent pastor.

Any temporary pastoral relationship, with the approval of the presbytery, may include serving as moderator of the session. Ordained teaching elders of other Christian churches may be employed by the session of a particular church in a temporary pastoral relationship provided that such teaching elders present to the presbytery credentials of good standing in the ecclesiastical body to which they belong, and provided that presbytery, through its Commission on Ministry, gives its approval to the temporary pastoral relationship.

**AGREEMENT FOR STATED SUPPLY PASTOR  
PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH(U.S.A.)**

Beginning \_\_\_\_\_

**Parties of the Agreement:**

Name of Pastor, address

Name of church, address

The minister being in good standing with \_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery with all credentials in order, we the Session do enter into this agreement.

**Dates, Renewal, and Termination:**

The agreement is renewable every twelve months with concurrence of the Session and Pastor. This agreement may be terminated at any time by the Session and/or Pastor with a 30 day written notice without any continuation of compensation. Where less than 30 day notice is given by the Session, one additional month compensation will be due.

**Responsibilities of the Pastor:**

1. Plan and conduct Sunday worship
2. Moderate congregational meetings
3. Moderate Session
4. Visit shut-ins and members in hospital
5. Administer the Sacraments of Communion and Baptism
6. Perform wedding services as scheduled
7. Attend other church events as able
8. Attend meetings of Presbytery of Western Kentucky as able with voice and vote\*\*\*

**Responsibilities of the Sessions:**

1. Keep the Pastor informed of ongoing needs of the congregation
2. Assist the Pastor when needed
3. Provide any necessary office equipment and/or materials as needed

**Employer Financial Responsibilities:**

1. Pastor shall receive 4 weeks paid vacation per year
  2. Financial terms of the agreement are as follows (annual basis):
    - a. Salary..... \$
    - b. Housing..... \$
    - c. Social Security..... \$
    - d. Auto Allowance..... \$
- TOTAL \$

Signatures:

_____ Pastor	_____ Date	_____ Clerk of Session Name of Church	_____ Date
_____ Moderator, Commission on Ministry Presbytery of Western Kentucky		_____ Date	

## **ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE- TEMPORARY RELATIONSHIPS**

- 1. What is your current role and responsibilities in your church (ministry)?**
  
- 2. What is different about the church (ministry) compared with one year ago?**
  
- 3. What are your goals for the church (ministry) in the upcoming year?**
  
- 4. Where do you see the church (ministry) headed in relation to ministry, finances, and membership over the next five years?**
  
- 5. What do you see as your future with the congregation (ministry)?**
  
- 6. How can the presbytery be of assistance to you and the congregation (ministry)?**

---

**SIGNED**

---

**DATE**

**GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) SERVING IN A CHURCH IN THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY.**

- 1. Evidence of completion of basic theological studies, preferably a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited Theological institution.**
- 2. Current documentation provided indicating being in good standing of denomination of affiliation.**
- 3. Willingness to attend “Sexual Misconduct Seminar” or other training in ethics given by the presbytery or provide documentation indicating successful completion of something comparable from another source.**
- 4. Meet with a representative from presbytery (Commission on Ministry) annually, usually the moderator of the Session, to discuss status of ministry at the local church and any concerns regarding congregational life. Response to annual questionnaire will be reported to the Commission on Ministry. \***
- 5. The contract with the local church to be renewed on an annual basis by the Session of the church and the presbytery (Commission on Ministry).**
- 6. Respect for the policies and practices of Presbyterian Church (USA) with any questions directed to the clerk of session and/or the designated representative of the Presbytery (Commission on Ministry). \*\***

**\*\*Some policies and practices of the Presbyterian Church (USA).**

- a. “No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith.”**
- b. The Session (consisting of ruling elders who are active members of the church) is the governing body of the congregation. Any changes or modifications for worship or other areas of church life need to be approved by the Session at an official meeting.**
- c. Women have equal status with men in governance with equal representation on the Session and Board of Deacons and any other entities of the church being expected.**
- d. Children of believers, including infants, are included in the covenant of baptism. If such is requested but there are personal reservations with this practice, notification should be made to the moderator or clerk of session to obtain someone from the presbytery to make appropriate arrangements.**
- e. The water used for baptism shall be applied to the person by pouring, sprinkling, or immersion. All three modes of baptism are acceptable and the wishes of the person being baptized and the availability of the mode need to be taken into consideration.**
- f. “Baptism is received only once. The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to the moment when it is administered, for Baptism signifies the beginning of life in Christ, not its completion.”**
- g. Baptism, whether infant or adult, administered by other communities of faith, is accepted as a valid baptism.**
- h. Children of believers are invited to share in the Lord’s Supper, in most cases under supervision of a parent or guardian. Opportunities for education regarding the meaning of the Lord’s Supper are appropriate.**
- i. Baptisms and occasions for the observance of the Lord’s Supper are to be approved by the Session, including taking elements of the Lord’s Supper to shut-ins, and any weddings or funerals performed involving church members reported to the Session.**

**\*ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 1. What is your current role and responsibilities in the church?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. What is different about the congregation compared with one year ago?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. What are your goals for the church in the upcoming year?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Where do you see the church headed in relation to ministry, finances, and membership over the next five years?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. What do you see as your future with the congregation?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6. How can the presbytery be of assistance to you and the congregation?**

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**SIGNED**

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**DATE**

## PULPIT SUPPLY GUIDELINES FOR CHURCHES IN THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY

Presbyterian Church teaching elders and ruling elders are ordained to preach among other responsibilities. Also temporary supply and stated supply preachers can preach. Each of these categories must be granted permission.

Teaching elders are called by a particular church with permission of Presbytery. Ruling elders are invited by a church session with permission of the teaching elder. Other persons may also be granted permission to preach in a particular church in this same manner.

When there is no teaching elder in a particular church, the session with guidance from the Commission on Ministry must provide for preaching. Whether from illness, vacation, or sabattical, when the teaching elder is absent the session and COM are responsible to provide pulpit supply. The Presbytery's role is to provide both opportunities and limits.

The opportunities may come through a list maintained in the Presbytery of persons offering to lead Sunday worship and preach. The limits are that such persons' service needs to be clearly temporary and that the list is subject to COM supervision.

The tenets of suitability for the list are about Reformed training and personal trustworthiness. By recommendation of the Diploma School Supervisor all persons graduating from the school may volunteer for the list. Other persons may volunteer for the list, but must be vetted by the COM.

If the teaching elder's absence is permanent and an Interim Pastor is not to be called, churches may seek a temporary supply or stated supply preacher. These persons are contracted by the particular church session with COM permission.



## **F. MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

**Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (or ‘teaching elders’) are those who have been ordained and installed as serving or having served in a validated ministry of the church. The most common validated ministry, and universally approved, is that of installed pastor or installed associate pastor of a local congregation. This relationship is approved by the Commission on Ministry followed by approval by both the congregation and the presbytery. The relationship does not have a limit in time (unless it is that of designated pastor) but is subject to annual review by the Commission on Ministry. The ministry of an interim or transitional pastor is also an ordained position though it only requires approval by the Session and Commission on Ministry. Other avenues of ministry within the local church such as Director of Christian Education, Music Director, or Youth Director, can also be filled by persons who have been ordained. However, these normally do not need the approval of the congregation or the presbytery as they are considered part of the church staff.**

**Validated Ministry can also occur outside the local church and has become more prevalent in recent years. Missionaries whose ministry has been approved by the presbytery or General Assembly often involve ordained ministers. Also, military and hospital chaplains, whose ministry involves the administering of the sacraments, are also approved as a validated ministry. Campus Ministry can also benefit by the leadership of an ordained minister. In addition, pastoral Counseling has become a specialty in the church. What is important is that all of these ministries which occur outside the local church be examined individually and affirmed by the Commission on Ministry that they meet the requirements for validated ministry as specified in this manual. All of these are to be reviewed by the Commission on Ministry on an annual basis.**

**Ministers of the Word and Sacrament can also be classified as ‘member-at-large’ when they are not currently serving a particular validated ministry and, as a member in good standing in the presbytery, can serve as pulpit supply or in a temporary relationship with a congregation as seems appropriate. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are honorably retired continue to be members in good standing in the presbytery and can also be available for ongoing ministerial service. Though each ordained minister must determine the extent of their involvement post-retirement, ordination is recognized as a life-long calling.**

# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-2.0503) Categories of Membership**

**“A minister of the Word and Sacrament is a member of a presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry validated by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or honorably retired.**

### **a. Engaged in Validated Ministry**

**A validated ministry shall:**

- (1) Demonstrate conformity with the mission of God’s people in the word 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 (U.S.A.)**

**The presbytery shall review annually the work of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.**

### **b. Member-at-large**

**A member-at-large is a minister of the Word and Sacrament 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 the criteria in G-2.0503a. A minister of the Word and Sacrament 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 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.**

**c. Honorably Retired**

**Upon request of a member of the presbytery, the presbytery may designate the member honorably retired because of age or physical or mental disability.”**

**G-2.0504 Pastoral Relationships**

**“When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called as pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of a congregation, they are to be responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commends the gospel to all persons and that communicates its joy and justice. They are responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for celebrating Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and for praying with and for the congregation. With the ruling elders, they are to encourage people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision-making life of the congregation, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole. With the deacons they are to share in the ministries of compassion, witness, and service. In addition to these pastoral duties, they are responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in councils higher than the session and in ecumenical relationships.”**

## **G-2.09 Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships**

### **(G-2.0901) Congregational Meeting**

**“An installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. Whether the minister of the Word and Sacrament, the congregation, or the presbytery initiate proceedings for dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, decline to consent, to dissolution.”**

### **(G-2.0904) Presbytery Action**

**“The presbytery may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister of the Word and Sacrament, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.”**

### **(G-2.0905) Officiate by Invitation Only**

**“After the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the former pastors or associate pastors shall not provide their pastoral services to members of their former congregations without the invitation of the moderator of session.”**

### **(G-2.1103) Christian Educators**

**“The presbytery shall establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators and shall provide access to the area of presbytery that oversees ministry.”**

## WESTERN KENTUCKY PRESBYTERY MINIMUM SALARY

Approved on November 5, 2013

**To go in effect on January 1, 2014**

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2013</u>
Cash Salary (includes housing allowance)	\$37,500.00	\$40,000.00
Travel Allowance	2,000.00	3,000.00
Continuing Education	500.00	1,000.00
Pension (Board of Pensions)	Full Pension	Full Pension
Vacation Time	4 weeks	4 weeks
Study Leave Time	2 weeks	2 weeks
Family Medical Leave Time	none	6 weeks

**NOTE: The above information is based on a full-time teaching elder position. Also, regarding the Family Medical Leave Time, the teaching elder is to receive regular pay during this time. The Family Medical Leave Time is in addition to the regular four weeks of vacation time and the two weeks of study leave time.**

Other items such as FICA, professional expenses, retirement savings, can be included at the discretion of the church and the pastor

Moving expenses normally up to \$5,000

## FAMILY LEAVE

Installed pastors are eligible for family leave which includes maternity leave, adoption leave or paternity leave. Terms include up to 60 days at full salary and housing allowance or 90 days at 60% salary and housing allowance. Travel allowance is discontinued during the leave to help provide for pulpit supply and vacation time can be used to supplement the leave at the teaching elder's discretion. In addition, family emergency leave occurs when a sudden emergency arises with the teaching elder's immediate family which requires his/her presence, rendering the teaching elder unable to perform the functions of ministry. The same terms will apply with longer term family emergency needs being negotiated with the session. In the case of the death of a family member, a period of up to seven days should be granted to be with other family members with consideration given for additional time where significant travel is involved.

## IX. SEVERANCE POLICY AND TERMINATION FROM INSTALLED OR COMMISSIONED WORK

### SEVERANCE POLICY

1. Severance will be paid only until the end of the severance contract or other employment in the Presbyterian Church (USA) or other ministry has started, whichever comes first. In cases where the compensation from the new employment is less than that of the former employment, the difference between the two amounts will continue to be paid by the former employer until the severance contract expires.
2. If a severance contract involves a local congregation, the Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder, in agreeing to the severance contract, also agrees not to engage in pastoral ministry within a radius of 25 miles of the church. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Commission on Ministry with agreement by churches within the radius.
3. Former pastors and associate pastors may officiate at services for members of a particular church, or at services within its property, only upon invitation from the Moderator of the session or, in case of the inability to contact the Moderator, from the Clerk of Session.
4. When a congregation of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky, at an official meeting of the membership in conclusion to a time of discernment, votes to leave the Presbyterian Church (USA), if the installed Teaching Elder chooses to remain a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA), severance will be required as part of the final agreement.

### TERMINATION FROM INSTALLED OR COMMISSIONED WORK

Installed pastors (Teaching Elders) upon retirement, will not be permitted to return to a pastoral relationship with the church from which they retired without the Commission on Ministry's specific approval after written request by the session of the church. The former pastor will not be considered for any service similar to his/her former position. Commissioned Ruling Elders who retire or terminate from a local church after having served the same church in a covenant relationship for at least five consecutive years, will not be permitted to return to that church in a covenant relationship for a period of at least three years. The Commission on Ministry may consider an alternative to this policy by written appeal supported by at least a three-fourths vote of the session.

## XI. VALIDATED MINISTRY/CAMPUS MINISTRY

- a. A ministry in the Presbytery of Western Kentucky that occurs outside the local congregation, may be recognized as validated when it furthers the mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA), includes responsible participation in the deliberations, worship and work of the Presbytery and the life of a local congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC (USA) and is accountable to the Commission on Ministry by submitting to the requirements it determines necessary. The Presbytery, through the Commission on Ministry, shall review annually the work of all Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders engaged in such validated ministries.
- b. Campus ministry, in Western Kentucky Presbytery, is considered an extension of the local church with anyone serving in the capacity of a Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder being considered only on the basis of a call or covenant issued by a local Presbyterian (USA) church. Administration of the sacraments must be approved in advance by the session of the sponsoring church. The Commission on Ministry may consider other denominational affiliations on a case by case basis.



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**In cases where severance is determined to be appropriate, the guiding rule shall be at least one month severance for every year of service, or part thereof, with a maximum of six months, though each entity can approve additional severance as is suitable to its circumstances.**

## **ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE- INSTALLED PASTORS**

- 1. What is your current role and responsibilities in the church?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. What is different about the congregation compared with one year ago?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. What are your goals for the church in the upcoming year?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Where do you see the church headed in relation to ministry, finances, and membership over the next five years?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. What do you see as your future with the congregation?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6. How can the presbytery be of assistance to you and the congregation?**

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**SIGNED**

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**DATE**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR VALIDATED MINISTRY**  
**Presbytery of Western Kentucky**

Every active minister member of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky must be engaged in a ministry validated by the Presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the Presbytery, or honorably retired. (G-2.0503). However, the Presbytery determines the ministers of word and sacrament who are its members and validates the ministries in which they are to be engaged. (G-3.0306).

As a part of the duties delegated to it by the Presbytery, the Commission on Ministry (hereinafter "COM") considers and makes final decisions on whether to validate or not validate ministries that provide service beyond the jurisdiction of the PC(USA). The *Book of Order* requires Presbyteries to establish written criteria for validating these ministries. (G-3.0306) The herein Policies and Procedures for Validated Ministry contain the Presbytery of Western Kentucky's criteria for an approved validated ministry, and provides an explanation of the process for those seeking this validation.

**I. Criteria for Validating Ministries Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Church**

The standards of the *Book of Order* (G-2.0503a) shall serve as a broad criterion for the validation of ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church. In considering a request for validation of such a ministry, the COM shall determine whether these standards have been met. An individual requesting validation shall demonstrate the validity of that individual's proposed ministry by meeting the following requirements:

A. *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.*

- i. This criterion shall be satisfied by describing the ways in which the ministry proposed for validation is consistent with and/or embodies the mission and values of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky as outlined in the Presbytery's Manual for Administrative Operations. In addition, the ministry so described shall be assessed by the Commission on Ministry as to its consistency with Scripture and the Constitution of the PC(USA).

B. *Service and/or aid to others, or enable the ministry of others.*

- i. This criterion shall be satisfied by describing the nature of the ministry for which validation is sought (or by submission of a job description in which the responsibilities of the ministry are detailed), with the submitted description making clear the specific aspects of the ministry through which others are served and/or encouraged to serve others.

C. *Theologically informed fidelity to God's Word.*

- i. This criterion shall be satisfied by indicating the specific ways in which theological education supports and nurtures the work of the ministry and/or the types of anticipated opportunities for articulating the Christian faith presented by the ministry. It is understood that not all articulation of the faith is verbal; Christian faith may be articulated in acts of compassion and self-sacrifice as well as through verbal proclamation.

- D. *Be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the Presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served.*

This criterion shall be satisfied in both of the following ways:

- i. Submission of a brief written statement or documentation indicating:
  - a. The persons, entities, or agencies to whom the minister is accountable for the character and conduct of the ministry and/or;
  - b. The independent supervisory structure with oversight and direction responsibilities related to ministry, and/or;
  - c. The ethical standards of any professional organizations or associations of which the minister is a member in connection with the exercise of this ministry.
- ii. Regular review by the COM through:
  - a. Annual written reports on the minister's place of residence and performance of the ministry, submitted to the COM; and
  - b. At least one in-person interview with COM or its designees every three years, unless an exception is granted by COM.

- E. *Responsible participation in the deliberations and work of Presbytery, and worship and service in a local congregation.*

- i. This criterion shall be satisfied by the following:
  - a. Attestation by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery that the minister has been in attendance at Presbytery at least once in the year previous to application for review of validation, has participated actively in the work of the Presbytery, and that the annual report of residence and work has been received by COM for that same year. If the minister seeking validation comes from another presbytery, the Stated Clerk shall request attestation from the stated clerk of the transferring presbytery. If the person seeking validation is a candidate, the stated clerk shall request evidence of certification of readiness for ministry from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the presbytery of care; and
  - b. Written affirmation from the applicant that he or she is a regular participant in the worship and service of a congregation of God's people and is available to lead and worship and discharge other responsibilities of a Minister of Word and Sacrament within the Presbytery.
- ii. If a minister engaged in validated ministry is not able to attend at least one Presbytery meeting a year, the COM may at its discretion provide said minister with alternative options to comply with the requirement for responsible participation in the deliberations and work of Presbytery.

## II. Process for Approval and Review

### A. *Approval of Application for Validation of Ministry*

- i. The minister or candidate seeking validation for a particular ministry shall complete the Application for Validation of a ministry and submit the application to the moderator of COM no later than two (2) weeks before the date of the COM meeting at which the application is to be considered.
- iii. The COM moderator shall place the application on the agenda of the COM, and if deemed appropriate, schedule an interview for the minister with all or part of the COM.
- iv. The COM shall consider the application and in the discharge of its function as an administrative commission may approve the application.
- v. If the COM elects not to approve the proposed ministry, it shall follow the process set for in Section II(B) herein.
- vi. The COM shall report its actions to the minister and to the Presbytery.
- vii. If the ministry is validated, the minister or candidate shall be commissioned by action of the Presbytery. A commissioning liturgy may be celebrated by the Presbytery to mark the beginning of the ministry.
- viii. If the ministry is validated, it shall remain a validated ministry for a period of three years beginning on the date of approval, subject to the Review of Validation provisions in Section II (C) herein.

### B. *Disapproval of Application for Validated Ministry*

- i. If COM elects not to approve an application for a proposed ministry, the COM moderator shall notify the minister in writing of the decision and afford the minister an opportunity to present his/her case to the COM.
- ii. The minister shall have the right to present his/her position in writing or oral form to the COM, which shall then reconsider the application.
- iii. If the COM elects to approve the application, it shall follow the provision of Section II(A)(3-5).
- iv. If the COM elects to not approve the application, it shall notify the minister and the Stated Clerk that the application has been denied.

### C. *Review of Validation*

#### i. Annual Review

The minister engaged in a ministry validated by the Presbytery shall report annually concerning the following:

- a. Current mailing address, telephone number, and (if available) email address;
- b. Character and conduct of the ministry accomplished in the time since validation or previous review;
- c. Any changes in the character and conduct of the ministry anticipated for the coming year.

The annual report shall be submitted to the COM no later than 31 July of each year, and shall be reviewed by the COM and reported to the Presbytery, ordinarily at its stated August meeting. The COM may, and in the case of a decision to rescind validation shall, interview the minister concerning the report and the character and conduct of the ministry and allow the minister an opportunity to respond.

- a. If the COM rescinds validation of the ministry, it shall report its findings and reasons to the Presbytery.

ii. Major Review

At least once every three years after the validation of the ministry, the COM shall conduct an in-person interview with the minister to inquire into the ongoing character and conduct of the minister. This triennial review shall replace the annual review for that year. The content of the interview shall include, but may not be limited to:

- a. Conduct and activity of the ministry;
- b. Goals for the ministry;
- c. Long-range plans for the minister for continuing education or other personal and professional growth;
- d. Ways in which the Presbytery, and COM, can be of greater support to the minister.

On the basis of this interview, the COM shall decide whether to continue the validation of the ministry, under the same terms as the annual review.

This provision does not limit the COM's ability to conduct a Major Review of a validated ministry more frequently than triennially. The COM may conduct a Major Review of a validated ministry at any time in its discretion it deems such Major Review to be necessary.

If being present in person for a Major Review interview poses a significant hardship for the minister, the COM may, at its discretion, choose some other means by which to conduct a conversation (e.g., on-line electronic discussion, telephone interview, etc.)

**APPLICATION FOR VALIDATION OF MINISTRY**  
**Presbytery of Western Kentucky**

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

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

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Presbytery Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Start Date of Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_

**For the Applicant:**

- A. Please describe in a brief essay the ways in which the ministry proposed for validation is consistent with and/or embodies the mission and values of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky as outlined in the Presbytery's Manual for Administrative Operations.
- B. Please describe the character of this ministry in terms of its regular requirements and responsibilities (*if you have a job description for the ministry that may be attached as an answer to this question*).
- C. Please describe in a brief essay indicating the specific ways in which theological education supports and nurtures the work of the ministry and/or the types of anticipated opportunities for articulating the Christian faith presented by the ministry.
- D. Please indicate (or attach in a separate document):
  - a. The persons, entities, or agencies to whom the minister is accountable for the character and conduct of the ministry, whether or not the ministry is compensated; and
  - b. The ethical standards of any professional organizations or associations of which the minister is a member in connection with the exercise of this ministry.
- E. Please indicate the congregation in which you are a regular participant and the nature of your participation in its worship and service.



**For the Stated Clerk:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby attest that the above-named minister is a member in good standing of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky and has been in attendance at Presbytery at least once in the year previous to application for or review of validation (or has been attendance at a Presbytery event approved by COM to satisfy this requirement), and that the annual report of residence and work has been received for that same year.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby certify that I have received confirmation that the above-named minister is a member in good standing of \_\_\_\_\_ (presbytery) against whom no disciplinary charges are standing or pending.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby certify that I have received confirmation that the above-named candidate for ministry has been certified ready to receive a call by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of this or another presbytery.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stated Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **G. CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT**

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT**

The Commission on Ministry is committed as much to the well-being of local congregations as the church professionals under its care. For the worshiping community is central to the life of God's people. This is seen from the very beginning of congregational life as a new church development and continues even to the decision to close the witness of a particular congregation as it completes its life of ministry. As a connectional church we work together to ensure that congregations possess as much health as possible no matter in what stage they currently reside. And this certainly involves listening to needs and concerns and providing realistic options and possible resources to assist in their ongoing ministry.

There are also many different ways in which congregations, especially those that are smaller, can enhance their witness. One is yoking with another congregation in which pastoral services are shared. Though corresponding times for worship and other activities will need to be coordinated, this can provide for a financial savings but, more importantly, opportunities to receive more in the way of pastoral services and an expansion of congregational life.

But there are also times when congregations might need to consider merging. Usually one congregation comes to realize that they can no longer financially support the property and programs needed to survive. And merging with another congregation is a way to strengthen the witness of both congregations together.

And the presbytery also provides a "Gracious Separation Policy" for those congregations that, for whatever reason, desire to become part of another reformed body. This is governed by denominational policies and dependent upon the unanimous vote of the congregation, but is offered as a means of showing the love and grace of God during times of disagreement.

Of course, there also can come a time when the life of a congregation comes to an end. The Commission on Ministry is sensitive to the sense of grief and loss that accompanies this, especially in a congregation that has spanned multiple generations. And because of that the closing of a church is always done so with care and dignity with property being cared for and remaining members given an opportunity to transfer membership to another church of their choosing.

## **NEW WORSHIPING COMMUNITIES**

- 1. The church development and visitation committee identifies a possible new worshiping community based upon demographic possibilities and commitment by those interested.**
- 2. An initial plan is established regarding the basic goals for the new worshiping community including financial needs.**
- 3. Organizational structure such as sponsoring church or task force leadership or committee oversight are identified (which will give direction regarding administering of the sacraments and office functions) including need for organizing pastor or commissioned ruling elder.**
- 4. Commission on Ministry examines possible organizing pastor or commissioned ruling elder and refers to church development and visitation committee to establish contract. Organizing pastor will be a member of the presbytery staff.**
- 5. Formulation of mission statement and new church development covenant, which are to be reviewed annually, are established. NCD guidelines for chartering understood.**
- 6. New worshiping community is officially approved by presbytery.**
- 7. Annual review conducted with goal being ultimate sustainability (able to meet budget and sufficient membership potential) indicating progress toward being constituted as an official congregation. Not all new worshiping communities will become official congregations.**
- 8. The church development and visitation committee monitors progress and, if the way be clear, makes recommendation to presbytery regarding congregational status. This includes possibility of organizing pastor becoming installed pastor.**
- 9. Presbytery approves new worshiping community as official congregation.**

## **MERGER OF TWO CHURCHES PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCY**

- 1. Both churches initially explore their own interest in merger with the sessions informally canvassing the congregation and by motion, giving a green light to go forward.**
- 2. The Presbytery, through its Commission on Ministry, appoints an Administrative Commission, with representatives from both churches, and from the Commission on Ministry, to guide them through the process.**
- 3. The Administrative Commission, with input from the Sessions, determines the best way forward in relation to these concerns.**
  - a. The location of the merged church, whether it will be at one existing location or both churches sold and a new church built;**
  - b. What each church will contribute to the merger, especially if one church relocates to the other church- what that church will bring of its physical property to be incorporated into the new church;**
  - c. The monetary assets of both churches and how they will be incorporated into the merged church;**
  - d. The structure of the Session and other governing bodies of the merged church to assure adequate representation from both churches, including any expansion of leadership bodies and any changes in officers (i.e., clerk of session, treasurer);**
  - e. The name of the merged church that is indicative of the merger that has taken place;**
  - f. Value of the property determined and plans made to advertise and sell the property of the church leaving its facility and making final disposition of any other property;**
  - g. Any issues addressed related to staff (including installed pastoral leadership) and other employees and initial changes that might need to be made in personnel;**
  - h. A date for the merger to occur with appropriate closure for the church that is leaving its current facility (if both do not do so).**

- 4. When the Administrative Commission formalizes these plans, they need to be presented to each congregation for a congregational vote. It is suggested that a secret ballot be utilized and a super majority of both congregations required to approve the merger.**
- 5. The Administrative Commission presents the results, if favorable, to the Commission on Ministry which will in turn, provide its blessing, and present the plan to the Presbytery for its approval.**
- 6. If the Presbytery grants approval, official notice will need to be made to the Office of the General Assembly and any other state or local entities regarding the closure of facility and the identity of the merged churches, with any paper work need to be completed by the Administrative Commission.**
- 7. Dedication services need to be planned for the merged church to celebrate its new beginning along with any closure service the needs to be made for either congregation. Those with a history of involvement in the church and other churches and officials in the presbytery need to be invited.**
- 8. New session members and other officers for the merged church need to receive orientation and ordination/installation to office.**
- 9. The Administrative Commission, having completed all the tasks above, is dismissed by the Commission on Ministry.**
- 10. The new merged church, takes its place in the presbytery, electing commissioners and others to represent them, seeking to fulfill its ministry in accordance with the latest edition of the Book of Order.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH CLOSING PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN KENTUCKY**

- 1. Church Session canvasses the congregation, whether formally or informally, regarding the sentiment related to closing the church.**
- 2. If a super majority or unanimous consensus of the congregation is in favor of proceeding toward closing, the Session needs to approve a formal motion to recommend that course of action to the congregation, including the date of closing, and a separate motion or sharing of consensus if there is a preference regarding disposal of the property (church building and land). The presbytery retains the right to determine the final disposition of the property.**
- 3. The congregation, at an officially called meeting, receives the recommendation from the Session and votes to concur with the motion to close the church.**
- 4. The congregational approval to close then is presented to the Commission on Ministry for their response and concurrence.**
- 5. Once the motion to close the church has been approved by the congregation and Commission on Ministry, the Session, with input from the congregation, will determine the disposal of tangible property such as pianos and hymn books, kitchen utensils, and other items. Especially meaningful items might be given, upon request, to various church members, while other items can be advertised through church internet connections or privately or simply disposed of in some way if they are particularly worn.**
- 6. Whatever the decision regarding the disposal of the property (church building and land), it can be accomplished in proximity with the closing of the church but most often is done by the presbytery following the closing of the church. Any input from the congregation regarding interested parties related to the property is received with gratitude by the presbytery which will make a final determination (especially if more than one option is available).**
- 7. If there are any other assets that the church possesses, such as money in savings accounts, the Session needs to determine how that will be dispersed, whether needed to assist in final closing costs, given for use by the presbytery, or for causes that the church supports.**

8. Remaining members need to indicate any preference as to the transfer of their membership to another Presbyterian church. If no preference is made, nor indicate their desire to be received into membership by a church of another denomination, the presbytery will assign initial membership transfer, usually to the Presbyterian Church closest in distance.
9. All necessary paper work regarding closing of the church needs to be filled out and filed, usually with the Presbytery office. Notification will be forwarded to the General Assembly offices and, if appropriate, the Board of Pensions.
10. Any final financial obligations need to be honored, including utility and insurance bills and all parties notified regarding termination of service. If the property is not disposed of at the time of the closing of the church, any ongoing expenses will be the responsibility of the Presbytery.
11. As the day approaches for closing, the Session, with input from the congregation, needs to determine how best to make closure, usually in the form of a worship service of remembrance and celebration to which the presbytery and others associated with the history of the church are invited to attend.



# **BOOK OF ORDER**

## **(G-4.0201) Property as a Tool for Mission**

**“The property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), of its councils and entities, and of its congregations, is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.”**

## **(G-4.0203) Church Property Held in Trust**

**“All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal titled is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an incorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”**

## **(G-4.0204) Property Used Contrary to the Constitution**

**“Whenever property of, or held for, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ceases to be used by that congregation as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in accordance with this Constitution, such property shall be held, used, applied, transferred, or sold as provided by the presbytery.”**

## **(G-4.0205) Property of a Dissolved or Extinct Congregation**

**“Whenever a congregation is formally dissolved by the presbytery or has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its members, the abandonment of its work, or other cause, such property as it may have shall be held, used, and applied for such uses, purposes, and trusts as the presbytery may direct, limit, appoint, or such property may be sold or disposed of as the presbytery may direct, in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”**

## **(G-4.0206) Selling or Encumbering Congregational Property**

**“A congregation shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or**

condition without the written permission of the presbytery transmitted through the session of the congregation.”

**(G-4.0207) Property of a Congregation in Schism**

“The relationship to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of a congregation can be severed only by constitutional action on the part of the presbytery. If there is a schism within the membership of a congregation and the presbytery is unable to effect a reconciliation or a division into separate congregations within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the presbytery shall determine if one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is identified with the presbytery as the true church within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This determination does not depend upon which faction received the majority vote within the congregation at the time of the schism.”

**Western Kentucky Presbytery**  
**Process for Pastoral Responsibility, Accountability and Gracious Witness to**  
**Congregations at Times of Division, Dismissal or Dissolution**  
**(G-3.0301)**

The 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church took the following action in response to a Commissioner's Resolution:

The 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1. Directs the Stated Clerk to send this resolution to the presbyteries, synods, and sessions, indicating the will of the assembly that presbyteries and synods develop and make available to lower governing bodies and local congregations a process that exercises the responsibility and power "to divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members" (*Book of Order*, G-3.0301a) with consistency, pastoral responsibility, accountability, gracious witness, openness, and transparency.

2. Believing that trying to exercise this responsibility and power through litigation is deadly to the cause of Christ, impacting the local church, other parts of the Body of Christ and ecumenical relationships, and our witness to Christ in the world around us, the General Assembly urges congregations considering leaving the denomination, presbyteries and synods to implement a process using the following principles:

- **Consistency:** The local authority delegated to presbyteries is guided and shaped by our shared faith, service, and witness to Jesus Christ.

- **Pastoral Responsibility:** The requirement in G-3.0301a to consult with the members of a church seeking dismissal highlights the presbytery's pastoral responsibility, which must not be submerged beneath other responsibilities.

- **Accountability:** For a governing body, accountability rightly dictates fiduciary and connectional concerns, raising general issues of property (G-4.02) and specific issues of schism within a congregation (G-4.0207). But, full accountability also requires preeminent concern with "caring for the flock."

- **Gracious Witness:** It is our belief that Scripture and the Holy Spirit require a gracious witness from us rather than a harsh legalism.

- **Openness and Transparency:** Early, open communication and transparency about principles and process of dismissal necessarily serve truth, order, and goodness, and work against seeking civil litigation as a solution.

In response to this action, the Western Kentucky Presbytery has developed the following process for congregations, the Commission on Ministry and the presbytery at those times when congregations consider leaving the denomination. These items are not intended to describe a sequence of events, but to be the overall

process for implementing in this presbytery the principles described above in accordance with G-4.02 and G-3.0301 of the *Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*.

## **A: Biblical and Theological Principles**

### **From Scripture, the Book of Order, and the Book of Confessions**

1. Western Kentucky Presbytery affirms all Christians are called to unity in Christ through the church universal. While any denominational separation is tragic, when Christians of different denominational affiliation are respectful and cooperative, Christ is honored, the gospel is proclaimed, and God's Kingdom is manifested on earth.

*The Church Universal consists of all persons in every nation, together with their children, who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and commit themselves to live in fellowship under his rule. (F-1.0302a)*

*We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers, in the one body of Christ, the Church. (A Brief Statement of Faith, lines 52-56)*

*The Second Helvetic Confession addressed dissensions and strife in the Church, stating: "We know, to be sure, that the apostle said: "God is not a God of confusion but of peace." (1 Cor. 14:33), and, "While there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh?" Yet we cannot deny that God was in the apostolic Church and that it was a true Church, even though there were wrangling and dissensions in it. The apostle Paul reprehended Peter, an apostle (Gal. 2:11 ff.), and Barnabas dissented from Paul. Great contention arose in the Church of Antioch between them that preached the one Christ, as Luke records in The Acts of the Apostles, Ch 15. And there have at all times been great contentions in the Church, and the most excellent teachers of the Church have differed among themselves about important matters without meanwhile the Church ceasing to be the Church to the glory of his name, to illustrate the truth, and in order that those who are in the right might be manifest (1 Cor. 11:19). The Second Helvetic Confession, Section 5:133, Book of Confessions.*

2. All church property belongs to Christ, and should be used to advance God's Kingdom. Working together, local congregations and their respective presbyteries will seek to ensure that all property decisions will further the great ends of church.

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:18b-20)*

*Christ is the Head of the Church, which is his body. Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission to the world, for its building up, and for its service to God. (G-1.0100)*

*The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness, and the exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the world. (F-1.0304)*

*The Session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. (G-3.0201)*

*All property held by or for a particular church, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a particular church or of a more inclusive governing body or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-4.020)*

3. Denominational separation becomes a consideration when there is irreconcilable disagreement on issues essential to faith and life. In such tragic situations, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order allows presbyteries to dismiss congregations peaceably, with property but designates the presbyteries to determine the most faithful disposition of property.

*The notes of the true Kirk, therefore, we believe, confess and avow to be: first, the true preaching of the Word of God...secondly, the right administration of the sacraments of Christ Jesus...and lastly, ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered, as God's Word prescribes, whereby vice is repressed and virtue nourished. (The Scots Confession, XVIII)*

*Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God? ( W.4.4003c Vow of Ordination)*

*Presbytery has the responsibility and power...to divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members. (G-3.0303b)*

4. In seasons of controversy, every effort should be made to promote peace, unity, and purity. Western Kentucky Presbytery affirms that Scripture, theology and polity urge forgiveness and reconciliation in ecclesiastical disputes.

*"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Eph. 4.1-6)*

*Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church? ( W.4.4003g Vow of Ordination)*

*"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (John 17:20-21)*

5. Congregations and the presbytery should strive to honor Christ in the way they relate to each other when having conversations about dismissal, division, or dissolution.

-All parties shall maintain high standards of transparency, truthful speech, and mutual respect.

-Pastors and elders serving congregations requesting dismissal shall act in accordance with their ordination vows and the Book of Order. The presbytery will not seek removal of church officers solely because they are advocating for dismissal.

-Presbytery representatives will be brought into the early stages of the congregation's conversation, and provided opportunities to communicate with the congregation's members.

-Appeals to civil courts should be the very last avenue of resort. Historically Western Kentucky Presbytery has had no cases where the civil courts been involved. This has been one of the reasons for gracious separation.

*Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold...Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:25-27, 29-32)*

*The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? (1Corinthians 6:7)*

*"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship." (F-3.0101), citing The Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.109, in The Book of Confessions.*

Footnote to G-2.0105:

*Very early in the history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, even before the General Assembly was established, the plan of reunion of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia contained the following sentences: "That when any matter is determined by a major vote, every member shall either actively concur with or passively submit to such determination; or if his conscience permit him to do neither, he shall, after sufficient liberty modestly to reason and remonstrate, peaceably withdraw from our communion without attempting to make any schism. Provided always that this shall be understood to extend only to such determination as the body shall judge indispensable in doctrine or Presbyterian government." (Hist. Dig. (P) p. 1310) (Plan of Union of 1758, par. II.)*

6. If a congregation is dismissed, Western Kentucky Presbytery shall be the advocate for members who seek to remain in a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation, negotiating with the departing congregation an equitable provision for those members' pastoral care. Convinced that God's Providence can bring good even out of schism, our ultimate goal is honor the Lord by seeking to bless each other, even in separation.

*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Genesis 50:20)*

*Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be.*

## B. Policy and Procedure

1. Whenever members have questions about actions of the General Assembly, the session will invite commissioners to the previous General Assembly, the Stated Clerk and/or the Executive Presbyter to a session meeting and, where it is deemed helpful by the session, an information sharing meeting of the congregation, to discuss actions and deal with rumors and speculation that may be causing disunity and concern in the life of the congregation. In this way, the presbytery will be given opportunity to exercise its pastoral responsibility for the welfare of congregations and to promote open communication whenever issues of the larger church arise.
2. Whenever there is conversation in the session or congregation about leaving the denomination, the Commission on Ministry, the moderator of presbytery, the Executive Presbyter, and the Stated Clerk will be invited to meet with the session to discuss the distress that is leading to this conversation and to review the provisions of the *Book of Order* and this document with regard to dismissal.
3. Prior to any request regarding dismissal of a congregation from the denomination, a Resolution Team will be appointed by the Commission on Ministry to consult with the session and congregation. This team shall include but not be limited to members of the Commission on Ministry, the moderator, the Executive Presbyter, and the Stated Clerk. They shall engage in a period of no less than three months of consultation including meetings with the session and meetings with the congregation. The purpose of these meetings will be to review the provisions of the *Book of Order* and this document with regard to dismissal and to answer questions from members of the congregation regarding options for dismissal of the congregation, and for the membership of those members who wish to remain in the Presbyterian Church USA. In this way the session will provide the presbytery opportunity to exercise its responsibility as a partner with the session in pastoral care to members of the congregation in what may be a difficult time in its life. At these meetings every good faith effort will be made to effect reconciliation in accordance with the *Book of Order*. The resolution team will report its findings to the Commission on Ministry.
4. If the Resolution Team, in consultation with the session, determines that the congregation wishes to request presbytery for dismissal, the report to Commission on Ministry will include a request for permission to conduct a meeting of the congregation called and conducted by the presbytery so that the congregation can indicate by vote whether to request dismissal. Members of the Resolution team will be invited to be present to offer pastoral care and prayer for the congregation and its members following the vote and to carry out the presbytery's responsibility to ensure that all those persons affected by dismissal have an opportunity to be heard on the subject.
5. The congregational vote to request dismissal shall be by secret ballot. The quorum for such a meeting ordinarily shall be 50% of the members on the active roll. If the congregation votes to request dismissal by a vote of at least 2/3 of the congregation's members present and voting, and its leaders are willing to work in good faith toward a mutually-agreeable resolution, the Resolution Team shall work to facilitate an agreement regarding distribution of property between the group of members who wish to be dismissed and the group of members who wish to remain in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As a Presbytery, we recognize that Chapters 8 and 11 of the Book of Order provide that presbyteries may dismiss congregations from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in possession of their property by transfer to another Reformed denomination. When dismissing a church with its property, a presbytery is required to give proper consideration to the constitutional

provision that all property is held in trust for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The clerk of session and pastor(s) of the departing church will assist the presbytery to make contact with these members who wish to remain in a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). All parties are encouraged to demonstrate charity and forbearance during this process. The presbytery will receive the congregation's request at its next meeting. The presbytery will vote on the request, considering the recommendations of the Resolution Team. The presbytery has responsibility to make its own independent decision in every case.

6. In accordance with mandates from the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the departing church shall not be granted the existing property in its entirety, including physical property and financial assets, free of any monetary payment on their part. The presbytery will determine the value of the property, whether the property will be offered to the departing church, and the necessary compensation required for the future ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Though the presbytery will seek to be reasonable and just in the decision it makes, the decision in this matter is not open to negotiation.

7. If there is a schism in a congregation indicated by a request from members loyal to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to remain in the denomination and in possession of the property, and the Resolution Team determines that a portion of the congregation intends to separate from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its leaders are not willing to work in good faith toward a mutually-agreed upon resolution, it shall recommend the formation of an Administrative Commission empowered to take all appropriate and necessary action in the presbytery's stewardship of the congregation and its property.



## FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR CONGREGATIONS

It is very important for the Session and Pastor to establish a strong system of internal control for handling a Church's financial assets. The responsibility for overall stewardship of each church resides with the Session.

A key aspect of internal financial controls is the segregation of duties among different persons and clear communication between those persons. For Churches with separate individuals acting as treasurer, financial secretary, bookkeeper or other similar positions, the roles for these respective individuals must be clearly defined. While smaller Churches may choose to have fewer individuals in these roles, it is important for Churches of all sizes to separate income functions handled separately from disbursement functions. Put simply, the person who counts and deposits money shouldn't be the person who writes and signs the checks, and individuals being paid by a Church should not sign their own checks.

While every Church is different and will have different needs, below is a list of policies beyond the universal recommendations stated above that Churches are advised to consider implementing as part of their internal financial controls.

### *Collections, Counting, and Deposits*

- Collected offerings should always be handled by two unrelated people;
- Those who handle church funds regularly should be bonded (normally through insurance agent handling church's insurance policies);
- Receipt of funds and disbursement of funds should be handled separately and assigned to different people;
- Church funds should not be taken to anyone's home;
- Church financial reports should be audited annually, and detailed monthly reports should be kept and reviewed;
- Immediately after collection is taken, have at least two alert, able-bodied people take the collection quickly and discreetly to a secure office or safe and lock it up;
- Rotate counting teams, and establish a policy that they count the money in a locked area immediately after worship. Document the offering on a standardized form, signed by each counter. Give copies to the financial secretary and other who need them;
- When possible, direct that two people take the collection to be deposited;
- Train everyone who handles the collection to follow the procedures outlined in the church's security and safety plan;
- Review the church's safety and security plan on a regular basis.

### *Recording Contributions*

- Record all receipts in church records in a timely manner. Keep a record of each individual/family members' contribution. All back up materials including contribution envelopes, letters of donation, etc. must be kept for sufficient time to allow for auditing of

records and correction of records. Reconcile receipts with bank statements at least monthly.

- Prepare statements on a regular basis for contributors, at least annually for IRS purposes.
- Properly identify, separate, and record contributions according to the wishes of the contributor. Funds for special projects of the national church or other agencies should be transmitted to them in a timely manner. Funds for particular local church projects should be properly identified and disbursed only for those projects, unless the donor agrees to change the designation.

#### *Program Income and Receipts*

- Program income, including tuition and registration fees for pre-school nursery, camps, field trips, bake sales, dinners, etc. must be properly recorded, receipted, and deposited.
- Designated bookkeeper/financial secretary should prepare a deposit list that shows the name of the individuals paying the amount collected, program to which the income is attributed, date funds are collected, method of payment, and any other identifying information.
- Deposit all program funds in a timely manner.

#### *Disbursement of Funds*

- Disbursement records should be maintained to identify the date, check number, payee, and amount disbursed.
- Any disbursement should be properly authorized according to procedures designated by the Church:
  - o All disbursements should require initiating signature on a purchase order plus signature verifying goods or services were received. The signature or signatures on the check should be the same as the signature initiating a request or be one of the signatures verifying goods or services were received;
  - o Disbursements over a certain dollar amount (as determined by the Church) need to be individually approved by the Session and so noted in the minutes;
  - o Checks written for amounts over a certain dollar amount (as determined by the Church) require two signatures;
  - o Personnel being paid for services should either be issued payroll checks or miscellaneous income checks with W-2s or 1099s at year end;
  - o Reimbursements for purchases of supplies or goods should include authorization information/signatures and be made only upon appropriate proof of purchase (an itemized receipt).

### *General Best Practices*

- Unsigned and non-issued checks should be safely secured and issued in numerical order, and only made available to those authorized to issue and sign such checks;
- Supporting records should be safely secured and also be available and maintained on file for audit and referral purposes;
- A separate bank account for benevolent funds may be kept, with separate ledger system so as to easily maintain separation from operating fund;
- Separate accounting for major church programs and sponsored activities (pre-schools, camps, building funds, etc.); separate bank accounts for these activities may be kept, but only when the size of the activity so warrants;
- Financial records should be reconciled monthly with appropriate bank account(s);
- Financial accounts, including signatories, are established only upon the authorization of the Session (or other body designated by the Church);
- Pastors should not be signatories on Church financial account(s);
- Maintain a safe deposit box for storage of financial record warranting such protections;
- Limit financial record access to certain designated individuals, with Church members able to review such records in the presence of the designated individual.

## **H. APPENDIX**

# Congregation Records Retention Schedule

Minutes	permanent
Registers	
Annual reports	
Reports	
Bylaws/charters	
Incorporation records	
Annual budgets	
Annual audits	
Annual financial statements	
Subject correspondence	
Manuals/handbooks	
Newspapers/newsletters	
Brochures/promotional materials (1 copy)	
Photographs	
Scrapbooks	
Architectural drawings, plats, plans, blueprints	
Wills, bequests	
Legal/judicial cases	
Loan agreements	satisfaction + 20 years
Property appraisals, records of sale	20 years after sale
Contracts	active + 3 years
Personnel records/employee records	employment + 7 years
FICA / W-2 records	7 years
Accounts payable invoices	3 years
Accounts payable	7 years
Accounts receivable records	3 years
Bank deposit slips	3 years
Bank statements	7 years
Canceled checks	7 years
Cash receipt records	3 years
Data for updating mailing lists	1 year
Mailing lists	active
Periodic financial statements	2 years
Expense reports	7 years
General/routine correspondence	3 years
Invitations	1 year
Petty cash records	7 years
Receipts of purchases	7 years
Meeting notices	1 year
Travel plans/arrangements	1 year
Resource files	active



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# Motion Basics

## STEPS OF THE MOTION

1. *Commissioner* rises and addresses the Moderator.
2. *Moderator* recognizes commissioner and grants the floor.
3. *Commissioner* makes motion. (Commissioner may not debate before the motion is seconded.)
4. *Another commissioner* seconds the motion without recognition from the moderator.
5. *Moderator* states the motion.
6. *Moderator* calls for debate. (Maker of the motion has the privilege of first debate.) All speakers must address the moderator and be recognized by the moderator.
7. *Moderator* states the motion.
8. *Moderator* takes the vote and announces the vote and the results of the vote.
9. *Moderator* states the next order of business.

## SEVEN USEFUL MOTIONS

1. **Amend.** There are *only* three forms of simple amendment.
  - a. to delete or strike out
  - b. to add or insert
  - c. to strike out and insert

The words proposed for deletion or addition *must be consecutive words*. When the amendment does not involve consecutive words or is longer than a paragraph, the motions "to substitute" (a form of amendment) is used. This is a difficult motion and should *never* be used when the simple form of amendment can be used.

2. **Commit or Refer.** To commit or refer back to committee for further study and amendment allows the consultative process to be used in greater depth. When this motion is made, it needs to state clearly what committee; appointment of the committee, if necessary; the task of the committee; and report time.

3. **Postpone to a Particular Time.** This motion takes precedence over the preceding two and has the power to grant additional time to a particular member or committee or do further study or consultation. It should always be used in preference to "table" because it permits debate on the propriety of postponement.

4. **Limits on Debate.** The assembly always has the power, and the moderator the right of suggestion, to limit debate to a particular hour, or extend or shorten speeches according to the necessity of the moment. Limits on the length of speeches are advisable in instances where the issue before the assembly is highly divisive and many members wish to speak.

5. **Previous Question.** The maker of the motion "to move the previous question" (close debate and immediately take the vote) must be recognized by the moderator and the motion must receive a second. *It is never in order when called from the floor.* This motion should never be considered when it is used to prevent legitimate debate.

6. **Lay on the Table.** This motion is seldom necessary. The motion "to postpone" is always preferable because of its lower rank and its debatability. Misuse of this subsidiary motion can be a strategy that seriously abridges the rights of the assembly because of its high rank and its adoption by a majority vote without debate. The moderator is obliged to explain carefully to the assembly the implications of this motion should it be made.

7. **Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim.** Consideration by paragraph or seriatim is an incidental motion that may be suggested by the moderator or any two members of the assembly, allowing for orderly consideration of a complex proposal with several different parts, clarifying for the assembly the controversial aspects of the proposal. Each paragraph of the proposal can be amended without finally adopting the new wording until the final action on the main motion as amended.

(Adapted from *Parliamentary Procedures in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* by Marianne L. Wolfe, P.R.P.)

### CHART #1

RANKING MOTIONS—and their five salient parliamentary points. The order in which the thirteen motions are listed.

#### FIVE PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

	Must be Seconded 1	May be Debated 2	May be Amended 3	Vote 4	May be Reconsidered 5
13. To Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	Yes
12. To Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Maj	No
11. To Take a Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No
10. Question of Privilege	No	No	No	—	No
9. Call for Orders of the Day	No	No	No	—	No
<b>SEVEN SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>					
8. Lay on Table	Yes	No	No	Maj	No
7. Previous Questions	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
6. Modify Debate	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes
5. To Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes
4. To Commit or Recommit	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Maj	Yes
3. To Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes
2. Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Maj	Yes Affirmative Only
1. MAIN MOTION	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj	Yes

Examples of

Incidental Main Motions: Rescind  
Ratify  
Amend B-Laws

\*only re. desirability of referral or details of referral. The merits of the question *cannot* be debated.

(Adapted from *Parliamentary Procedures in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* by Marianne L. Wolfe, P.R.P.)

### CHART #2

NON-RANKING MOTIONS—and their five salient parliamentary points. These motions (incidental motions) have no rank among themselves. Their being in order depends upon their necessity at the time.

	Must be Seconded 1	May be Debated 2	May be Amended 3	Vote 4	May be Reconsidered 5
Appeal	Yes	**	No	Maj	Yes
Suspend Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Point of Order, Call to Order	No	No	No	Mod	No
Objection to Consideration of a Question	No	No	No	2/3	Yes No Vote
Requests	No	No	No	Maj	No
Division of Assembly	No	No	No	—	No
To Read a Paper	Yes	No	No	Maj	Yes
To Withdraw a Motion (to be used only before debate)	No	No	No	Maj	Yes No Vote
To Divide the Question	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No
To Close Nominations or Polls	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	No
To Consider Seriatim	Yes	No	Yes	Maj	No
<b>TO UNCLASSIFIED MOTIONS</b>					
Reconsider	Yes	**	No	# Maj	No
To Take From the Table°	Yes	No	No	Maj	No
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	* Maj	Neg

# same Presbytery meeting

\* with previous notice

° before the end of the next regular Presbytery meeting

\*\* if main motion is debatable

— Neither the chart nor references are inclusive but are to be used as an abridgement of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

## **Appendix Three: Need to Know – Finances and Property**

### **ELEVEN THINGS FROM THE BOOK OF ORDER YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHURCH FINANCES AND PROPERTY**

1. The session has primary responsibility for challenging the congregation to Christian stewardship (G-3.0201c)
2. The session shall assure that all gifts are distributed in accord with their designations. (G-3.0205)
3. All property is held in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (G-4.0203)
4. No church property may be sold, mortgaged or encumbered without a vote of the congregation and concurrence of the presbytery. (G-4.0206a and G-1.0503d)
5. Where permitted under civil law, local congregations shall seek incorporation, (G-4.0101)
6. When a congregation decides to elect a board of trustees, they shall be elected by the corporation and shall report to the session and not usurp the responsibilities for property and finances assigned to the session in G-3.0205. (G-4.0101)
7. Approving and overseeing the budget of a particular church are the responsibilities of the session, although the congregation must vote on the terms of call for all installed pastors. (G-3.0205 and G-1.0503c)
8. The session shall elect a treasurer who will give leadership and work with the session to ensure proper accounting for funds, reporting on financial activities, and securing an annual review of the church's finances by a public accountant. (G-3.0205)
9. When a church is dissolved, its property reverts to presbytery and when a congregation is in schism, the presbytery shall determine which group is the "true church" and what shall be the disposition of the property. (G-4.0205 and G-4.0207)
10. The session shall obtain and keep current property and liability insurance coverage to protect the property, facilities and officers of the church. (G-3.0112)
11. The basic principles related to church finances and property can be found in four sections of the Form of Government: G-3.0112-3, G-3.0205, G-4.01, and G-4.02.



## Appendix Four: Polity Resources for Conflict and Discipline

1. Follow the advice of Matthew 18:15 –17. Don't sweep problems under the rug but go and speak the truth in love one on one with the person in conflict or in error, or if necessary, do so with a small group. If they can work, informal processes are always best.
2. Much of the conflict in local churches emerges from decision making processes. Consider using some communal discernment processes (see Victoria Curtiss, *Guidelines for Communal Discernment*) to reach win-win solutions. David Sawyer's, *Hope in Conflict*, is also a helpful book for cues on how to use conflict for growth and renewal instead of destruction. Charles Wiley's *Ordinary Discipline* is a helpful resource that focuses on how to build a culture of nurture and self-correction into the fabric of congregational life.
3. Use the preface of the *Rules of Discipline* to remind parties in conflict that the goal of disciplinary and conflict resolution processes in the church is always reconciliation and restitution. (D-1.0102)
4. Before conflict gets out of hand, use the provisions of D-1.0103 to have the session set up a conciliation and mediation process for use by the church.
5. See the Committee on Ministry (and the Presbytery Exec and Stated Clerk) as your friend when you are in conflict with the session or groups and individuals in the congregation. The Presbytery is specifically charged to counsel with sessions in times of difficulty and to offer processes of mediation to resolve conflict. (see G-3.0303d)
6. Encourage the presbytery to make use of the Administrative Review process (G-3.0108) to deal with issues in the church before they get out of hand.
7. If conflicts have gotten more serious, consider asking the presbytery to name an Administrative Committee or Commission to address and resolve problems in the congregation. (G-3.0109b)
8. If all else fails or if there is a serious disciplinary issue with one of the elders or a member of the congregation, the session does have the authority to function as a judicial commission (D-3.0101a). Before you take this step, be sure to consult with the Stated Clerk of the presbytery and read carefully the provisions for judicial process in the Rules of Discipline. The session also has the possibility of referring a judicial matter from within the congregation to the presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission. (D-4.0100)
9. If the matter relates to an alleged offence by the pastor or a conflict with a part of the wider church, the session can make an allegation or complaint to the presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission. (D-3.0101d and D-6.0201a)
10. If you, an elder, a deacon, or a Christian educator learn of harm or the risk of harm from physical or sexual abuse of a minor or an adult with limited mental capacity, you have an obligation to immediately report that to civil and ecclesiastical authorities. (G-4.0302)

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