

COM Guidelines for Commission to Commission Ruling Elders to a congregation

Authority for commissioning has been delegated by our Assembly to Commission On Ministry (COM). Our practice in Wabash Valley is that COM approves commissions and the worship planning. COM meets typically on the first Thursday each month.

1. COM moderator consults with the ruling elder to be commissioned as pastor to the congregation and provides these Guidelines.
2. Candidate for commissioning consults with Presbytery Moderator on an appropriate date, to be approved by COM.
3. Candidate provides suggestions to COM for those to be invited to serve on the Commission. COM Moderator consults with candidate to suggest appointments, as well.
4. Presbytery Moderator or other presbytery leader represents the link of commission between congregation, ruling elder and presbytery and typically moderates the commission. Typically, the candidate for commissioning will invite a ruling elder from the congregation, and teaching or ruling elders to represent three other congregations nearby. Elders (TE or RE) from other presbyteries are listed as corresponding members.
 - G-3.0109b: A commission of presbytery, synod, or General Assembly shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible and sufficient to accomplish their work. A quorum of any commission shall be established by the designating council but in no case shall be less than a majority of its members... A commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings and shall submit that record to the council for incorporation into its records. Actions of a commission shall be regarded as actions of the council that created it... The decisions of an administrative commission shall be reported to the clerk of the designating council, who shall report it to the council at its next stated meeting.
 - Traditionally, our presbytery expects five commissioners including the moderator, with not more than one from any one church.
5. The incoming candidate initiates plans for the commissioning service, but COM consults with the incoming pastor and AC moderator on the order of service in advance, both to assure that key elements of worship are not omitted and to encourage listing presbytery connections of those serving on the commission. Those presbytery roles along side the names of those who serve on the commission helps demonstrate our mutual connections in the worship bulletin.
6. COM urges incoming pastors to have the commissioning in a special service on an afternoon or evening so that other members of the presbytery may attend and celebrate the beginning of this new pastoral relationship. For that reason, Sunday mornings are discouraged.
7. The presbytery office can provide labels if a candidate or congregation wishes to

mail initiations. Ask gladys@ourpresbytery.org. Please provide invitation copy to vicki@ourpresbytery.org when everything's set to the presbytery office to be distributed in the weekly email newsletter *God Calls*.

8. In preparing the worship folder, you may expect a leader of presbytery and moderator of your commission to ask you the "Constitutional Questions" and lead the "Laying on of Hands, Prayer and Pronouncement."
9. We will also ask similar questions of those present from the presbytery after the questions to the congregation, to affirm the support of the presbytery for your commissioning and ministry. It is also appropriate for the moderator to be part of the "Welcome" at the beginning of the service to voice presbytery's welcome.
5. Commission's report following the commissioning, including a worship bulletin, are sent to the Stated Clerk, to be reported to Assembly.

This is a great moment within the life of your congregation and the presbytery we share as together we live into the ministry God has for you among us in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley.