

Descriptions of Pastoral Relationships

in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley

Approved: March 5, 2015

I. Introduction

Definitions

1. Precedence

The latest revision of the *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* and the by-laws and standing rules of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley have precedence over this document.

References to the Book of Order (BOO) are provided as a convenience to the reader.

2. Rule for Enrolling a Temporary Member

A pastor serving a congregation in this presbytery who is (1) a member in good standing with of another Christian Church, (2) was graduated by an Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) accredited seminary, and (3) was previously ordained by a Christian Church in correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (BOO G-5.0201) may be enrolled as a Temporary Member of the Presbytery.

3. Session Moderators

The moderator of the Session of a congregation represents the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and this presbytery. Thus the moderator must be a Teaching Elder (BOO G-2.0501) member of this presbytery, a minister member of a Formula of Agreement Church (BOO G-5.0202) temporarily enrolled, a Ruling Elder Commissioned to serve that congregation, or other Ruling Elder member of a congregation in this presbytery trained and designated by COM.

B. Summary

Table 1 compares the various pastoral positions for purposes of illustration. The following definitions and calling procedures take precedence over this table.

Table 1: Comparison of Pastoral Relationships

	Installed Positions		Temporary Positions			Other	
	Pastor Co-Pastors	Associate Pastor	Covenant Pastor	Transitional Pastor	Student Pastor	Parish Associate	Pulpit Supply
Who	TE, CRE, or Formula of Agreement minister		TE, CRE, or other minister approved by COM		Seminary Student under care of CPM	TE or Formula of Agreement minister	TE, RE, or other minister approved by COM
Duties	Head of staff Preaching, teaching, and pastoral care	Congregation specific duties may include preaching, teaching, and pastoral care	Preaching, teaching, and pastoral care	Congregation specific duties including Transitional ministry	Congregation specific duties may include preaching, teaching, and pastoral care	Congregation specific duties	Preaching
Lord's Supper and Baptism	Yes		Yes		No, except see G-2.0606	Yes	Yes, except for RE
Call Process	Nominated by PNC after a search. Elected by congregation and approved by COM. Installed by the Presbytery.		Called by Session and approved by COM. Not installed.		Called by Session and approved by COM and CPM. Not installed.	Called by Session and Pastor, and approved by COM. Not installed.	Hired by the Session. Not installed.
Term	Indefinite or designated Terms of Call subject to annual approval by congregation and COM		Covenant with Session and approved by COM not to exceed 12 months. Covenant may be received and celebrated by the congregation in a dedication worship service.			Annual covenant with Session and approved by COM	One Sunday at a time, but not more than 7 Sundays in any 13 weeks.
Board of Pensions	Full Medical, Pension, and Death benefits mandated (G-2.0804).		Mandatory for TEs Recommended for CREs and all other ministers			Recommended	No
Moderate Session and install officers?	Yes	Yes, in absence of Pastor or Co-pastors	See I.A.3 above.		No	See I.A.3 above.	
Vote on Session	Yes, because elected by the congregation		No			No	
Vote at Presbytery	Yes		Yes for TE, CRE, and Formula of Agreement minister, or if temporarily enrolled (see I.A.2 above).		No	Yes for TE and Formula of Agreement minister No, for all other ministers.	

II. Installed Positions

A. Pastor / Co-Pastors

1. Definition

A Pastor is a Teaching Elder called to serve a congregation . Co-Pastors are Teaching Elders called to share in serving a congregation.

The Pastor or Co-Pastors moderate session meetings and congregational meetings. Because they are elected by the congregation and installed by the Presbytery they are members of the session for the congregation they serve with voice and vote. Pastors are not members of a congregation and may not vote at congregational meetings.

Pastors or Co-pastors ordinarily are installed (BOO G-2.0504 a) for an indefinite term of service, but may serve for a defined, renewable term. The terms of call may be for part-time or for full-time service.

If the call of one co-pastor is dissolved, the other co-pastor may remain with responsibilities and duties to be determined by the session under the guidance of COM.

2. Procedures

When a pulpit is vacant, the session will consult with the Commission on Ministry who will assist the congregation in forming an Pastor Nominating Committee, searching for candidates, and installing the candidate elected by the congregation.

B. Associate Pastors

1. Definition

An Associate Pastor is a Teaching Elder called to serve particular ministries alongside a Pastor or Co-Pastors.

Because Associate Pastors are elected by the congregation and installed by the Presbytery they are members of the session for the congregation they serve with voice and vote. Pastors are not members of a congregation and may not vote at congregational meetings. When requested by the Pastor or Co-Pastors, an Associate Pastor may moderate a session meeting or congregational meeting, such as during a temporary absence of the pastor.

An Associate Pastor ordinarily is installed for an indefinite term of service, but may serve for a defined, renewable term. The terms of call may be for part-time or for full-time service.

The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor.

An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation.

2. Procedures

When a congregation discerns the need for an additional pastor, the session will consult with the Commission on Ministry who will assist the congregation in forming an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, searching for candidates, and installing the candidate elected by the congregation.

III. Temporary Pastoral Positions

A. Covenant Pastor

1. Definition

In consultation with Committee on Ministry the session of a church where the pulpit is vacant may wish to invite a Teaching Elder, a qualified Ruling Elder, or a minister of another Christian Church to serve the church in a Covenant Pastor capacity. The Covenant Pastor relationship also applies when the Session calls a pastor who is not a member of the PC(USA) or of a Formula of Agreement Church.

The term service may not exceed a period more than 12 months at a time and may be for part-time or for full-time service.

A Covenant Pastor may become a candidate for the pulpit, if the Pastor Nominating Committee has deliberately and seriously considered other candidates.

A Covenant Pastor who is a member of the Presbytery may be appointed moderator of the session, but is not a member of the session, and thus is not entitled a vote at session nor at congregational meetings. If not a member of the PC(USA) or of a Formula of Agreement Church, the COM will appoint another Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder to moderate the Session.

A Covenant Pastor is not installed.

2. Procedures

In consultation with the Commission on Ministry the Session acts as a nominating committee electing a candidate from among those suggested by the COM. In consultation with and the approval of COM the session discerns and approves terms of service.

Covenant Pastor relationships will be reviewed by the COM annually.

B. Transitional Pastor

1. Definition

A Transitional Pastor is a Covenant Pastor who is called to specifically assist a congregation during a time between installed pastors, co-pastors, or associate pastors.

A Transitional Pastor is invited by the session in consultation with Commission on Ministry. The term of service is not to exceed 12 months at a time.

A Transitional Pastor may be appointed moderator of session if a member of the Presbytery. If not a member of the PC(USA) or a Formula of Agreement Church, the COM will appoint another Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder to moderate the Session.

A Transitional Pastor is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

2. Procedures

In consultation with the Commission on Ministry the Session acts as a Transitional Pastor nominating committee electing a candidate from among those suggested by the COM. In consultation with and the approval of COM the session discerns and approves terms of service.

Transitional Pastors provide a report to the COM every three months describing the congregation's readiness to call its next pastor.

The COM reviews Transitional Pastor relationships annually.

C. Student Pastor

1. Definition

A Student Pastor is invited by the session in consultation with the pastor, the COM, and the CPM. The term of service is not to exceed 12 months at a time.

The Student Pastor will work under the direct supervision of the pastor or other Teaching Elder approved by the COM and CPM.

A Student Pastor may not be appointed moderator of session, unless previously ordained as a Ruling Elder in the PC(USA) and appropriately trained and authorized by COM.

2. Procedures

In consultation with and the approval of COM the session discerns and approves terms of service.

Student Pastors will provide periodic reports to the CPM.

Student Pastor relationships will be reviewed by the CPM annually.

IV. Other Pastoral Relationships

A. Parish Associate

1. Definition

A parish associate is a Teaching Elder who serves in a validated ministry other than the local parish, is honorably retired, or is a member-at-large and who desires to maintain a relationship with a particular congregation.

A Teaching Elder desiring such a relationship in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley ordinarily initiates the relationship for purposes of maintaining a sense of call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and with a view to being engaged in useful ministry in a particular congregation. Such ministry may include pastoral tasks in programs of visitation, education, outreach, or other areas appropriate to the congregation's need for such ministry to accomplish its mission. A particular congregation having a temporary pastoral relationship (Covenant Pastor, Temporary Supply) may not have a parish associate relationship.

In the Presbytery of Wabash Valley, the position of parish associate may not be used as a substitute for the pastoral relationship of associate pastor, to provide the position of assistant pastor formerly provided by the Form of Government, nor to avoid an open search process for professional staff. If the position involves compensation for the parish associate, such compensation may not be the pastor's primary source of income.

A former pastor of a particular congregation may not serve as a parish associate in that congregation.

A parish associate may not be called to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor of a church served as parish associate, unless at least six months have elapsed since the end of the parish associate relationship.

2. Procedure

Prior to engaging in conversations to establish the position in a particular congregation, the Teaching Elder who desires such a relationship will hold a preliminary conversation with the COM. If the position is initiated by a pastor or co-pastors considering inviting someone to serve in such capacity, the pastor or co-pastors will have a preliminary conversation with COM. The purpose of this conversation is to establish the motivation of all parties for such position, to clarify what the position is and is not in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley.

The Pastor or Co-Pastors of a particular congregation with the Session will carefully identify the function or functions of the parish associate, the relationship(s) with professional and program staff of the congregation of service, and the "as needed, as available" basis of the congregation and the pastor filling the position. The parish associate will be responsible to the Pastor or Co-Pastors, as head of staff, on an "as needed, as available" basis and with or without remuneration.

The agreement between the session, the parish associate, and the presbytery may terminate when the call of the installed pastor is dissolved. The presbytery may dissolve the relationship with the parish associate upon the recommendation of the COM.

3. Review

Parish associate relationships will be reviewed by the COM annually.

B. Pulpit Supply

1. Definition

When the pastor (installed or temporary) is not available to lead worship for a short period of time or while the pulpit is vacant, the Session may hire a pulpit supply pastor for one or more

Sundays. The Session may additionally contract with the Pulpit Supply preacher to provide pastoral care or teaching services.

Sessions extending a Pulpit Supply relationships beyond seven (7) weeks in any thirteen (13) should contact the Commission on Ministry for establishing a Covenant Pastor relationship.

2. Procedures

Hired directly by the Session for one or more Sunday worship services while the pastor is not available.

The COM strongly recommends Sessions seek Pulpit Supply from the approved Pulpit Supply List. These preachers have completed training to serve as a Teaching Elder or as a Commissioned Ruling Elder meet standards for membership in our presbytery.