

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Ordered Ministries

Adopted by JKP 05/15/2012

Book of Order G-2.0102 Ordered Ministries

The Church's ordered ministries described in the New Testament and maintained by this church are deacons and presbyters (teaching elders and ruling elders). Ordered ministries are gifts to the church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church.

PASTORAL TRANSITIONS - ROLE OF COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

When notice is received of a pastoral transition, such as departure or retirement, the COM shall provide guidance and resources to the congregation and pastor. A COM representative shall be appointed. (see COM-11) COM shall ensure that the mission and ministry of the church continues and appoint a moderator of session, when necessary.

Book of Order G-2.0504 Pastoral Relationships

[Those] 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.

Pastoral relationships in John Knox Presbytery are either "Called by God through a Congregation" or "Called by God through a Session."

When the mission of the church commends it, a pastoral relationship may be Called by God through a Congregation. These relationships are elected by a congregation and installed by the Presbytery. The relationship may be for an indefinite period or a designated term.

When the mission of a church commends it, a pastoral relationship may be Called by God through a Session. These relationships are defined in the Form of Government at G-2.0504b (Temporary Pastoral Relationships). The relationship may be with Teaching or Ruling elders or students, inquirers, or candidates under care of a presbytery and shall be subject to annual review before renewal. Further, these relationships may be either Transitional or Durable.

Transitional Relationships are temporary or supervised positions intended for short term service.

Durable Relationships are pastoral relationships intended for longer service where a congregation is not intending to enter the pastor search process. Not all transitional relationships intend to enter pastoral search.

RELATIONSHIPS "CALLED BY GOD THROUGH THE CONGREGATION"

Pastoral Relationships which are called by God through a congregation are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor.

Pastor

A pastor shall be elected by the vote of the congregation and the relationship between them shall be established by the presbytery. The call extended to a pastor shall be approved by the presbytery and cannot be changed except by consent of the presbytery, at the request of the pastor, or at the request of the church by action of the congregation.

Co-Pastor

Co-pastors are teaching elders who are called and installed with equal responsibility for pastoral ministry. Each shall be considered a pastor and they may share duties within the congregation as agreed upon by the session and approved by the presbytery. When a particular church has two pastors serving as co-pastors and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor of the church. COM shall monitor this transition, providing resources as needed.

Associate Pastor

An associate pastor shall be elected by the vote of the congregation and the relationship between them shall be established by the presbytery. The call extended to an associate pastor shall be approved by the presbytery and cannot be changed except by consent of the presbytery, at the request of the associate pastor, or at the request of the church by action of the congregation. The call to an associate pastor shall specify the particular functions to be fulfilled. An associate pastor shall be directed in his or her work by the pastor in consultation with the session.

The official relationship of an associate pastor to a church is not dependent upon that of a pastor. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be called as the pastor. The CoM shall help a congregation to evaluate the advisability of an associate pastor moving into the role of pastor.

The associate pastor is not ordinarily eligible to be called as pastor to serve as co-pastor of that church, except in churches which currently have a co-pastor model which has been in effect for at least three years and the congregation desires to continue such model. In such churches, an associate pastor may be called as pastor to serve as co-pastor of that church with a three-fourths affirmative vote of presbytery.

Designated Pastor

A designated pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) is a teaching elder approved by the COM to be elected by the vote of the congregation for a term of not less than two years nor more than four years. The relationship shall be established by the presbytery. Such a pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) shall be nominated by the congregation's pastor nominating committee only from among those designated by the committee on ministry of the presbytery. The congregation and the teaching elder both must volunteer to be considered for a designated term relationship. Such a call may be established only with the prior concurrence of the committee on ministry of the presbytery. The terms of the call shall be approved by the presbytery. The teaching elder shall be installed by the presbytery. When the teaching elder is pastor, he or she shall be moderator of the session.

After two years of the designated pastor relationship, upon the concurrence of the COM, the designated pastor and the session, acting in place of the pastor nominating committee for the single purpose of calling the designated pastor as pastor, may call a congregational meeting to elect the designated pastor as pastor. The action of the congregation shall be reported to the

presbytery. If the congregational action is affirmative, the presbytery, after voting to approve the new pastoral relationship, shall install the designated pastor as pastor. If the session and designated pastor decide not to continue the relationship, the session, with the concurrence of the COM, may call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee to conduct a full pastoral search. (See also John Knox Presbytery Designated Pastor Policy: COM-56)

ELECTION OF A PASTOR

Work of the Pastor Nominating Committee

The Session shall confer with the COM as provided in G-2.0803 and John Knox Presbytery Policy “When a Pastoral Vacancy Develops,” COM-11; and when seeking an associate or co-pastor, with the pastor or any continuing co-pastors. Care must be taken to consider the church’s commitment to diversity as expressed in F-1.0403. PNCs shall follow the Presbytery’s EEOO Policy (see COM-12). When a church is considering extending a call to a minister of another denomination, the minister shall follow the procedures required in G-2.0505.

Book of Order 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.

Book of Order 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.

LARGER PARISH

When two or more churches established by presbytery as a larger parish unite in calling a pastor, the call must specify the support promised by each church. With the approval of presbytery, such a call may be issued by a larger parish council providing for the approval of the churches given in properly called meetings of their congregations, for payment of a total salary from a common parish treasury along with an explanation of the financial agreement between the churches of the parish, and for the annual review of the pastor’s salary by the parish council with provision for a vote thereon by each congregation. When such a call has been issued by a parish council, and approved by the presbytery, each participating church shall be obligated to continue its financial support of the parish for the duration of the pastorate, unless excused by the other participating churches with the approval of the presbytery. The call shall specify that the minister is called to be pastor (associate pastor) of the churches constituting the parish.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

When a congregation is convened for the election of a pastor (associate pastor), the moderator of the session appointed by presbytery or that moderator’s designee, or some other teaching elder appointed by the presbytery shall preside.

Vote by Ballot

Following prayer for the guidance of God, the moderator shall call for the report of the nominating committee. The moderator shall declare the name submitted by the nominating committee to be in nomination. The vote shall be upon the question whether the congregation, under the will of God, shall call the person nominated to be its pastor (associate pastor), and it shall be taken by ballot. In every case a majority of the voters present and voting shall be required to elect.

Dissent

On the election of a pastor (associate pastor), if it appears that a substantial minority of the voters are averse to the nominee who has received a majority of the votes, and that they cannot be persuaded to concur in the call, the moderator shall recommend to the majority that they not prosecute the call. If the congregation is nearly unanimous, or if the majority insist upon their right to call a pastor (associate pastor), the moderator shall forward the call to the presbytery, certifying the number of those who do not concur in the call and any other facts of importance. The moderator shall also inform the person being called of the nature and circumstances of the decision. The action of the congregation, if favorable, shall be presented to the presbytery for its concurrence.

Presentation of the Call to the Presbytery

Persons may be elected by the vote of the congregation to sign the call, and may present the call before the presbytery.

Book of Order G-2.0804 Terms of Call

The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement 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 (G-1.0501) 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.

The presbytery shall ensure that the call meets the requirements of federal and state tax laws and fully discloses the compensation of the minister. If the minister is obligated to fulfill military commitments during a period of pastoral service, an agreement should be added to the terms of call for that obligation and potential mobilization. If the call is for less than full time, the precise terms of the call should be indicated.

Book of Order G-2.0805 Installation Service

When the congregation, the presbytery, and the teaching elder (or candidate) have all concurred in a call to a permanent or 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 of worship in the Directory for Worship (W-4.4000) shall be followed. See John Knox Presbytery Policy Guidelines for Ordination and Installation, COM-41a-b.

Book of Order G-2.09 DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

Book of Order G-2.0901 Congregational Meeting

An installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. Whether the teaching elder, the congregation, or the presbytery initiates proceedings for dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to consent, or decline to consent, to dissolution.

Book of Order G-2.0902 Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor Requests

A pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor may request the presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. The minister must also state her or his intention to the session. The session shall call a congregational meeting to act upon the request and to make recommendations to the presbytery. If the congregation does not concur, the presbytery shall hear from the congregation, through its elected commissioners, the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the pastoral relationship. If the congregation fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the request may be granted and the pastoral relationship dissolved.

Book of Order G-2.0903 Congregation Requests

If any congregation desires the pastoral relationship to be dissolved, a procedure similar to G-2.0902, above, shall be followed. When a congregation requests the session to call a congregational meeting to dissolve its relationship with its pastor, the session shall call the meeting and request the presbytery to appoint a moderator for the meeting. If the pastor does not concur with the request to dissolve the relationship, the presbytery shall hear from him or her the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the relationship. If the pastor fails to appear, or if the reasons for maintaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the relationship may be dissolved.

Book of Order 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, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church's mission under the Word imperatively demands it.

Relationships "Called by God through Session"

When the mission of the church commends it, the Presbytery may approve pastoral relationships which are established between the session and a teaching or ruling elder; Inquirer or Candidate under Care of a presbytery; or ministers of other denominations. The Form of Government describes temporary pastoral relationships at G-2.0504b. and provides that "titles and terms of service for temporary relationship shall be determined by the presbytery." In John Knox Presbytery, these relationships are durable and transitional. Book of Order (G-2.0504b). These pastoral relationships are characterized by the absence of a formal call and installation, although a service of recognition may be appropriate. COM will provide resources for this affirmation. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specific period of time not to exceed twelve months, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery.

Book of Order G-2.05 b. 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 her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place. However, it is appropriate for a service of recognition to take place (see COM Manual)

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a 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 teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

Temporary Pastoral relationships in John Knox Presbytery may be with either Teaching or Ruling elders and shall be subject to annual review before renewal. These relationships may be Transitional or Durable.

Transitional Relationships are temporary, interim, or supervised (these could be students or uncommissioned ruling elders) positions. Such contracts are intended for short term service of up to no more than twelve months.

Durable Relationships are intended for longer service and used where a congregation does not intend to enter the pastor search process. Ruling Elders in Durable Relationships shall be commissioned by the Presbytery to this service.

Agreements and covenants for both kinds of Temporary Pastoral Relationships must be approved by the COM, shall be negotiated in light of Presbytery's minimum standards, shall always seek to reflect justice and fairness in light of the mission and ministry of the congregation and the needs of the pastor, and shall be reviewed annually. Annual reviews shall consider such matters as compensation, faithfulness and effectiveness of ministry, and compatibility of pastor and congregation.

Book of Order G-2.05 c. Exceptions

A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a teaching elder currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a teaching elder 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 presbytery present and voting.

In John Knox Presbytery, Teaching Elders serving in temporary pastoral relationships may be considered to be the next called and installed pastor of a congregation. Such request will be considered only on a case by case basis. The Presbytery, through its COM, will evaluate the suitability of such a change, considering whether such a call best serves the mission and ministry of the church.

Interim Pastoral Relationships

Interim Pastors are called by the session with particular responsibilities for assisting a congregation in making the transition toward the next installed pastoral relationship. Ordinarily, Interim Pastors will not be considered to remain as the pastor of a congregation they are serving.

Students/Candidates/Inquirers

When the mission of a congregation commends it, seminary students, inquirers, or candidates under care of a presbytery may be employed for church leadership. Such relationships shall be established between the individual, the session, and the Presbytery. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the COM shall consult in the process and oversight of supervised practice of ministry positions.

Parish Associate

When the mission of a congregation commends it, the position of parish associate may be established as a temporary pastoral relationship. A parish associate is a teaching elder who is already a continuing member of presbytery. The parish associate is invited into a relationship with a congregation by the pastor. The relationship is established between the parish associate, the session, and the presbytery, through the COM. The parish associate shall be responsible to the pastor, on an "as needed, as available" basis and with or without remuneration. No formal call shall be involved. Any change in relationship must be approved by the presbytery. The COM shall review the designation annually. The agreement between the session, the parish associate, and the presbytery shall terminate when the call to the pastor is dissolved.

Commissioned Ruling Elders

When the mission of a congregation commends it, ruling elders may be commissioned to pastoral roles. Such commissions may be durable or temporary, they may be made for a period of up to twelve months and shall be reviewed annually. The relationship is established between the ruling elder, the session, and the presbytery, through the COM.

After the Presbytery's committee responsible for the preparation of Ruling Elders for Commission has certified their readiness, the Committee on Ministry shall examine such CRE candidates with respect to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. Commissioned Ruling Elders shall be enrolled as members of Presbytery during their term of service. Such enrollment shall be counted toward establishing numerical parity between teaching and ruling elders.

Military Employment, Sabbaticals and Medical or Administrative Leaves of Absence

When a pastor in a congregation expects to be absent for more than 6 consecutive weeks, the Committee on Ministry shall be informed in order to assist the session and congregation in the provision of pastoral leadership. (See COM-22, Sabbatical Guidelines; COM-21, Sick Leave and Family Leave Policy)

Book of Order G-2.0905 Officiate by Invitation Only

After the dissolution of any 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 includes those who have served in installed, durable and transitional temporary positions. (See John Knox Presbytery Separation Ethics Policy, COM-58)

Certified Christian Educators

When Certified Christian Educators are in relationship with ministries of the presbytery, the procedures of the Form of Government shall be followed.

Other Certified Lay Employees

When the mission of a congregation commends the employment of other Certified Lay Employees, the Presbytery shall rely on the standards of the Form of Government.