



COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Northeast Georgia Presbytery
Presbyterian Church (USA)

MANUAL OF OPERATION



Prefatory Statements

Recognizing the previous Committee on Ministry (hereafter, COM) of Northeast Georgia Presbytery (hereafter Presbytery) accumulated a treasure trove of wisdom, found in the now-archived “Big Black Book,” we commend retaining a copy of the 306-page Committee on Ministry General Policies and Handbook, to be used as a resource.

This revised COM Manual of Operations begins with the following statement of intention: In accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the COM is no longer going to be based on rules and regulations. COM will walk alongside churches and ministers to help them discern what God is calling them to do. The Holy Spirit’s leading is the only thing that matters, even if that leads to very different outcomes in seemingly similar situations, so long as it is consistent with the Book of Order. “Reinventing the wheel” in every situation will take more time and energy, but it will be worthwhile if it requires individuals and churches to engage more deeply in the difficult work of discernment.

The work of the Committee on Ministry necessarily touches on sensitive matters within congregations and concerning the pastors of our Presbytery. Trust and integrity are paramount for the members of COM to properly carry out this task.

Accordingly, in order to be able to “speak the truth in love,” (Eph. 4) all business that comes before COM is considered highly confidential and may not be shared outside COM unless expressly permitted.

Items for which Presbytery has previously granted authority to the COM to perform without additional authority of vote of Presbytery:

- 1. Approval for serving the Lord’s Supper** - COM has power as a commission to act upon requests of agents, units, and programs of Presbytery to celebrate the Lord’s Supper.
- 2. Approval for moving onto the field** – COM has authority to give permission for ministers transferring from other presbyteries to move onto the field prior to a meeting of the Presbytery if the COM’s examination and all other circumstances are in order.
- 3. Granting permission to labor outside Presbytery bounds** – COM has authority to grant ministers permission to labor outside Presbytery upon request; for instance, when a minister is contracted as an interim/transitional pastor by another presbytery. (Note that above #1, 2, & 3 were approved by Presbytery October 25, 2005).
- 4. Authority to assign Moderators of Sessions** – COM has authority to assign Moderators of Sessions to churches when the need arises and report such action to the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery. (Approved May 18, 2010).
- 5. Vacation and Study Leave Benefits for Ministers of Word and Sacrament** – All ordained Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, serving churches, whether part-time or full time, are granted four weeks’ vacation leave and two weeks’ study leave. (Approved by COM September 2005; approved by Presbytery October 25, 2005).
- 6. Administrative Reviews** – COM has authority to conduct Administrative Reviews (G-3.0108) when COM becomes aware of a situation where an irregularity or delinquency has occurred by a lower council (governing body). (Approved October 25, 2005).

7. **Adding Agenda Item to Calls for Special Meetings** – COM has authority to add a “rider” to the notice of any special meeting of Presbytery, permitting the examination (for membership) of any minister and/or candidate who is ready for examination at the time the special meeting is called.
8. **Campus Ministry of Lord’s Supper** – COM has authority to grant permission to the Campus Minister for the Presbyterian Campus Ministry at the University of Georgia to observe the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper at every worship service (usually Tuesday evening) of the Presbyterian Campus Ministry. (Approved by COM November 10, 2011; Reported to Presbytery February 25, 2012).
9. **Installation Commissions** – COM has authority, between meetings of Presbytery, to approve COM’s examination of previously ordained PCUSA pastors who are candidates for calls, to create the commissions to install those pastors, and to present those pastors to the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery. (Approved May 15, 2012).
10. **Extend Terms of Service of Commissioned Ruling Elders** – Presbytery authorized COM to extend the term of service of a Commissioned Ruling Elder. (Approved May 18, 2021).
11. **Terms of Call to Include 50% of Pastor’s Self-Employment Tax** – Presbytery adopted a policy that Terms of Call for all pastors in Presbytery shall include 50% of the pastor’s self-employment tax (SECA) unless the pastor has opted out of Social Security. (Approved October 26, 2021).

COM and Congregations

COM recognizes its primary role in Presbytery’s responsibility to “be open at all times to communication regarding the life and ministry of their congregations” (G-3.0307). Moreover, COM embraces its unique role in Presbytery’s overall responsibility to maintain a continuing, healthy relationship with the Sessions of its member congregations, particularly considering the shared responsibility and power of all councils to *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard, provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received, and nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ* (as discussed in G-3.02 and G-3.03).

Generally, the role of liaisons from the COM to the churches within the Presbytery is to facilitate communication between a particular church and the wider governing bodies (councils) such as the Presbytery and the General Assembly. The primary purpose of the liaisons is to support the leadership of the churches in their responsibility to lead the mission and fellowship of the congregation, particularly in providing that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard, providing that the Sacraments may be rightly administered, and received and nurturing a covenant community of disciples of Christ (G-3.0101). And in this regard, for instance, COM maintains a list of ministers willing to supply pulpits. See other specific responsibilities of COM liaisons delineated herein.

COM recognizes the unique gifts and strengths in leadership of certain Ruling Elders, particularly those who have served on the COM and have enhanced and deepened their understanding of polity and Reformed theology. COM will consider, on a case-by-case basis, the possibility of an individual Ruling Elder being given permission, with appropriate mentoring and supervision, to moderate a Session for a limited period of time.

Understanding the complex societal and global issues in our twenty-first century context, COM finds itself in a unique position to be able to listen to larger issues facing Presbytery's congregations, to pray, discuss, and discern together in a wider and more diverse community possible responses to those issues and communicate the distilled wisdom of the wider church. For instance, in times of global pandemic or regional and local disaster, COM would be an appropriate place for congregations to find available resources from the "wider" church community and denomination.

COM is the natural place to have discussions involving sensitive issues regarding the life cycle/life span of a congregation. In considering merger, sharing ministry resources with another congregation, and dissolving a congregation, Sessions are encouraged to approach COM in order that siblings in the Presbytery, the wider church, may share wisdom, insight, alternative and best practices. Among the many possibilities for Sessions to consider in conversations with COM, especially related to the possible end-stage of the journey, may involve referring to other units (parts) of the Presbytery. Also COM may recommend the sharing of informational resources of the wider church including, but certainly not limited to, the Presbyterian Foundation, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and the Board of Pensions.

COM is also the natural place to begin discussions of the sensitive and most important matter of denominational identity. Only Presbytery has the authority to organize, dismiss or dissolve a congregation; and "all property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) ...and of its congregations, is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world" and "is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)" (G-3.0301, G-3.0303, G-4.0201ff).

Since there are significant restrictions on how and under what circumstances a presbytery may dismiss a congregation to another Reformed body, COM is the appropriate unit (part) within the Presbytery to inform and facilitate understanding of the complex interpretation of the governing Constitutional history, law, process, and procedures established by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as applied to various cases by its Permanent Judicial Commission. It is important to reiterate that because each situation is different and particular, COM and Presbytery will address these issues in a case-by-case manner.

COM and Ministers

Pursuant to G-3.0306, Presbytery determines its minister members and validates ministries in which they are to be engaged. Presbytery determines its criteria for validating ministries within its bounds and relies on COM to begin the examination of each minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in Presbytery.

COM recognizes its role and the importance of Presbytery's responsibility for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of Presbytery (G-2.05ff). There are three categories of minister members: validated ministry, members at large, and Honorably Retired (HR).

Criteria for Validated Ministry

As set forth in G-2.0403a, a validated ministry shall:

1. demonstrate conformity to the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, the *Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order*;
2. serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others;
3. give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;
4. to be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the Presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served; and
5. include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the Presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA).

Specialized Pastoral Ministries

When ministers are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church, in a specialized ministry of caring and compassion, such as missionary work, teaching, administration, advocacy, pastoral counseling, or chaplaincy in a hospital, hospice, prison, school, retirement living facility, or military, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. When practicable, they shall participate in a congregation, in Presbytery, and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to boards and agencies of those councils.

COM recognizes its important role in Presbytery's responsibility to care for and support these ministers and to review annually the work of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation. COM further assumes responsibility to review and validate, when appropriate, a specialized ministry upon request and to endorse the application of a minister seeking to be certified in a specialized ministry.

Member at Large

As set forth in G-2.0503b, a member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria for validated ministry as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation. A member-at-large is entitled to assume all rights and responsibilities of a member of Presbytery. COM recognizes its role in Presbytery's responsibility to care for, to support, and to review annually the status of members-at-large.

Honorably Retired

Pursuant to G-2.0504c, upon request COM may recommend a member of Presbytery be designated as honorably retired. Working with other committees and units of Presbytery, COM will participate in the care of, and Presbytery's supportive relationship with, Honorably Retired members. COM defers to Honorably Retired members regarding any active engagement in ministry or in the work of Presbytery; and if a minister chooses to engage in a validated ministry, such ministry will need approval. Honorably Retired members are encouraged to transfer their membership to the presbytery in which they live.

Pastoral Relationship between Congregations and Ministers

Installed Relationships – are established and dissolved only by action of Presbytery following approved process which is described below. The minister will be referred to as an **Installed Pastor**.

Temporary Pastoral Relationships – are established by a Covenant Agreement between a Session and minister. A written agreement between the Session and minister must be approved by COM. *See G-2.0504b*. The minister will be referred to as a **Covenant Pastor**. COM will conduct an annual review of all temporary pastoral relationships.

At the request of a congregation, the Presbytery may install a designated pastor, per G-2.0805.

A designated pastorate is for a designated period, usually two, three or four years.

Ordinarily a designated pastor is chosen by a congregation's Designated Pastor Nominating Committee (DPNC) from candidates designated by COM. After the designated period, the Session and minister may request COM to consider converting the Temporary Relationship to an Installed Relationship and recommending such a change to Presbytery for its approval, upon three-quarters vote of Presbytery members present and voting.

Temporary relationships also include more specialized ministries such as an evangelist to a new worshiping community, interim/transitional pastor, and parish associate.

Commissioned Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service

COM will work closely with Committee on Preparation for Ministry whenever a Ruling Elder undertakes the necessary course of education and training to prepare for the responsibilities of a Ruling Elder commissioned to a particular pastoral service. COM is the appropriate committee to offer a Ruling Elder candidate to the Session of a particular congregation for consideration. (G-2.10ff) A Ruling Elder commissioned by Presbytery to a particular pastoral service will be referred to as a **Commissioned Pastor**. COM will conduct an annual review of the pastoral relationship.

Pursuant to G-2.1001, a Commissioned Pastor's term of service may not exceed three years but is renewable. *As noted above (Item 10. Presbytery has previously granted authority)*, Presbytery has authorized COM to extend the term of service of a Commissioned Pastor (Approved May 18, 2021).

COM annually publishes guidelines for minimum terms of call and annually reports to Presbytery all terms of call of ministers engaged in a validated ministry to a congregation. *See above Item 11. Presbytery adopted a policy that Terms of Call for all pastors in Presbytery shall include 50% of the pastor's self-employment tax (SECA) unless the pastor has opted out of Social Security. (Approved October 26, 2021).*

Job Description: Committee on Ministry (COM)

Overview: The Committee on Ministry (COM) provides pastoral care and counseling to the Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders of the presbytery; facilitates the relations between/among congregations, sessions, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and presbytery; settles difficulties on behalf of the presbytery when possible and expedient; and coordinates the work of the presbytery in this area.

The Committee on Ministry submits an annual report to Coordinating Team, highlighting its accomplished, ongoing, and planned work.

Terms of Service: The Committee is composed of up to eighteen (18) persons, with parity between **Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament**, elected in classes of six persons for **three-year terms and renewable for one term**.

Meetings: COM generally meets each month, typically on the second Thursday at 11:00 a.m. For 2022, nine meetings are planned to be held virtually, and three in-person. Regular attendance is essential.

Requirements: Members of COM are expected to have a high level of understanding of how congregations work, an ability to advise in difficult situations, creative openness to the work of the Spirit, an ability to keep confidences, and a commitment to the work of COM. Members will be assigned as a liaison to multiple congregations, and may be appointed to a task force or ad hoc group. Members are expected to carry on the work outside of the meeting structure depending on assignments.

Committee members should be familiar with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), specifically the *Book of Order*. Members should also be familiar with the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry Operations Manual (in process of revision); Presbytery's [Manual of Operations](#); other COM resources available on the presbytery's website: <http://www.negapby.org/committee-on-ministry>; as well as the [denomination's COM Advisory Handbook](#).

Responsibilities of the Chair: The Chair is responsible for oversight and functioning of COM, as defined in the overview above; and for facilitating meetings, including developing agendas, gathering documents and other information, communicating these to the committee members in a timely and effective manner; and ensuring minutes of meetings are taken and provided to the Presbytery Office. Other duties include reporting (written) to the presbytery via the Stated Meeting handbooks; developing, in consultation with the committee, an annual budget request with rationale; and attending Stated Meetings of Presbytery when the committee has business or announcements. The chair may also serve as the committee's representative to the Coordinating Team, which requires attendance at four meetings per year and fulfilling the responsibilities of the Team (see separate job description).

COM Liaison Job Description

Overview:

As representatives of the Committee on Ministry (COM), the liaisons are to act as facilitators and counselors to build and promote positive relationships between the Presbytery, its minister members, and its member Congregations. They are to help remedy and settle any difficulties of the Presbytery as they may arise.

Responsibilities:

1. Make contact at least two times per year with assigned congregations, Pastor, and session members.
2. Together with the Clerk of Session plan the agenda for the visit, clearly identify the purpose and goals for the visit.
3. After visit prepare report summarizing the meeting. Share the report with COM and session visited.
4. Be available for any follow up and or any special meetings deemed necessary by the session of your designated congregations or COM.
5. On behalf of the COM conduct pastoral exit interviews and provide summarized feedback to COM with copies to the session.
6. Perform any additional duties that may be required by COM with respect to your designated congregations.

Note: The role of the liaison is to maintain an open line of communication between congregations and Presbytery to foster healthy relationships in order to shepherd congregations when difficulties arise.

Board of Pensions

COM recognizes the fact that health insurance, disability, and pension benefits are essential to a minister's and their family's well-being. Providing Board of Pension benefits to ministers and other qualified employees and their families is an act of Christian care and compassion.

COM works through and with the employees and agents of Board of Pensions and its consultants to facilitate addressing the needs of members of Presbytery.

COM stands ready to work with ministers and Sessions of congregations in the circumstances and situations which may be present in the churches of the Presbytery.

Orderly Exchange pursuant to Formula of Agreement

The [Formula of Agreement](#) applies only to persons who are ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA, Reformed Church in America (RCA), United Church of Christ (UCC), and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The orderly exchange is intended for a designated period (G-2.0506). Should an ordained minister of one denomination intend to serve in an installed position in Presbytery, the process for transfer of ministerial status should be pursued (G-2.0505). Should a disciplinary process be necessary, the ordained minister remains under the jurisdiction of the sending body/council, but the inviting council/body may be asked to participate.

Receiving Ministers from Other Christian Churches

Receiving ministers from other Christian churches is governed by the *Book of Order*, G-2.0506. COM recognizes its role in Presbytery's responsibility for determining whether the minister's previous ordination to ministry should be recognized and whether the minister's proposed work within the jurisdiction of Presbytery is proper.

Standards of Ethical Conduct and Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Policy

COM expects all persons within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, whether members of its congregations or minister members of Presbytery, and especially those called to ordered ministry (whether Deacon, Ruling Elder, or Minister of the Word and Sacrament) to follow the [Standards of Ethical Conduct](#) (Approved by the 210th General Assembly PCUSA, 1998).

CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

The Committee on Ministry shepherds a congregation through the complex process of saying goodbye to one Pastor, securing temporary Pastoral leadership, and preparing to welcome a new Pastor. The following guidelines outline the process for Installed Pastor, Covenant Pastor, or Commissioned Pastor. (The term Pastor is inclusive of all of these particular Pastoral Relationships unless otherwise indicated.)

The Departure of a Pastor ... (G-2.09)

Pastors may leave a pastoral relationship for a variety of reasons - to accept another call, in order to retire, because of an impasse, or for personal or family reasons. Regardless of the reason for departure, a healthy departure is necessary for a healthy transition.

1. Pastor notifies COM typically via the liaison or the General Presbyter. COM proceeds to recommend to Presbytery to dissolve the call.
2. If Pastor is installed, there will be a congregational meeting to consent to the dissolution.
3. In the event of a negotiated dissolution of the Pastoral relationship, a Dissolution and Separation Agreement may be entered into between Pastor, Session, and COM.

Guidelines for Dissolution and Separation Agreement (Appendix A)

4. Exit interviews are always held with the departing Pastor and the Session by the COM Liaison often accompanied by the General Presbyter.

Guidelines for Pastors Leaving (Appendix B)

Exit Interviews (Appendix C)

5. A service recognizing the conclusion of Service is customarily held on the Pastor's last Sunday. (W-4.0503)

The Book of Common Worship (2018 version) contains in section "Ministry in the Church: Conclusion of Service", a service of Recognition of a Pastor's Retirement (pg. 531) and Liturgy for the Dissolution of a Pastoral Call (pg.)

6. General Presbyter customarily fills the pulpit as soon after the Pastor's last Sunday as possible.

Immediately after the Pastor's Departure ... (G-2.08)

The Committee on Ministry appoints a Moderator for the Session (G-1.0504). The names for immediate pulpit supply are available on the Presbytery website.

1. Session receives training from COM Liaison and General Presbyter.
2. COM recommends that Presbytery approve the dissolution of the pastoral call. (G-2.0801)

Interim Selection

1. Following training by the General Presbyter, the session appoints an Interim Search Committee which begins the search for an Interim Pastor. (The Session may function as the Interim Pastor Search Committee)

Conversation with Session-appointed Interim Pastor Search Committee (Appendix D)

2. The Interim Pastor Contract is negotiated.

Interim/Transitional Covenant Pastor Covenant and Contract (Appendix E)

3. The Interim/Transitional Pastor Candidate meets with the Examinations Action Team.

Examinations (Appendix F)

4. Upon successful examination, the Examinations Action Team recommends to COM that the contract be approved, permission to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery (if required) be granted, and that COM recommend to Presbytery that the candidate be examined and received into membership of Northeast Georgia Presbytery (if not already a member).
5. It is expected that an Interim/Transitional Pastor will become a member of Northeast Georgia Presbytery if not already a member. They are to be examined on the floor of Presbytery and received as a member of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

Presentation of Candidate to the Presbytery (Appendix G)

Interim Period

1. A congregational mission study is led by the Session and the Interim/Transitional Pastor. The Mission Study is reviewed and approved by the Committee on Ministry which then gives permission to form a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

Congregational Mission Studies (Appendix H)

2. The church's nominating committee presents a PNC to be elected by the congregation (G-2.0802).
3. Relying on the Mission Study, the PNC prepares a Ministry Information Form (MIF).
 - a. Upon approval by the Session, the MIF is presented to the COM for approval.
 - b. The MIF is entered in the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) system and attested by the Clerk of Session and COM.
4. The PNC receives Personal Information Forms (PIF) through the CLC and self-referral, and conducts interviews via telephone or video conferencing, narrowing down the candidates to a select few to invite to interview face to face. (This process is confidential. The PNC informs the congregation periodically of its progress without sharing details or identifying information.)
5. It is appropriate on the final Sunday of the Interim's service to recognize their departure.

The Book of Common Worship (2018 version) contains liturgies in the section "Ministry in the Church: Conclusion of Service."

Calling/Hiring a Pastor

1. Once a final candidate is secured, the PNC (or the Session if Covenant Pastor) negotiates the terms of call with the candidate keeping the following in mind (G-2.0804):

Presbytery Minimum Salary Standards (Appendix I)

Presbytery Sabbatical Leave Policy (Appendix L)

Installed Pastor Call Form (Appendix J) OR

Covenant Pastor Contract (Appendix K)

2. After the terms of call are finalized, the COM liaison notifies the Chair of the Examinations Action Team that the candidate is ready to be examined.

Examinations (Appendix F)

3. Upon successful completion of Examination, Examinations Action Team recommends to Committee on Ministry the following:
 - a. Recommendation to Presbytery that Terms of Call be approved OR
Recommendation to COM that Contract be approved (if Covenant Pastor)
 - b. Transfer of Membership to Northeast Georgia Presbytery if applicable OR

Permission to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery if start date is prior to Presbytery Meeting (if applicable)

A candidate who is seeking ordination must be presented for examination to the Presbytery before moving onto the field or beginning work.

If Installed Pastor:

4. Upon COM approval of the candidate and terms of call, a congregational meeting is called to elect the Pastor.
5. Upon election by the Congregation, the Candidate is presented to the Presbytery through the COM.

Presentation of Candidate to Presbytery (Appendix G)

6. The Pastor is installed by the Presbytery in a special service at the church or place of service.

If Covenant Pastor (including Interim/Transitional):

4. Upon COM approval, the Pastor begins work according to the contract.

If Commissioned Pastor: (G-2.1002)

4. Upon COM approval, the Commissioned Pastor is presented to the Presbytery for a one-to-three-year term.

Presentation of Candidate to Presbytery (Appendix G)

5. A service of recognition is conducted in the church where the Commissioned Pastor is to serve. (W-4.04)

The Book of Common Worship (2018 version) contains in the section called "Ministry to the Church: Ordination and Installation" a service of Commissioning a Ruling Elder to Pastoral Service on page 494.

Installing of a Pastor (G-2.0805, W-4.04.)

The installation of a Pastor is an act of the Presbytery. The Installation Commission of a sufficient number of Teaching and Ruling Elders is elected by the Presbytery should be reflective of the diversity of the Presbytery. Members of the Installation Commission should be drawn from other congregations in the Presbytery as well as the Pastor's own congregation. If the Pastor chooses, an Elder (Teaching or Ruling) from another Presbytery may be seated with the Commission.

The Book of Common Worship (2018 version) contains in the section called "Ministry in the Church: Ordination and Installation" a service of Ordination and Installation on page 460.

**CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION
APPENDIX LIST**

- A. Guidelines for Dissolution and Separation Agreement
- B. Guidelines for Pastors Leaving
- C. Exit Interviews
- D. Conversation with Session-appointed Interim Pastor Search Committee
- E. Interim/Transitional Pastor Covenant and Contract
- F. Examinations
- G. Presentation of Candidate to Presbytery
- H. Congregational Mission Studies
- I. Presbytery Minimum Salary Standards
- J. Installed Pastor Call Form
- K. Covenant Pastor Contract
- L. Presbytery Sabbatical Leave Policy
- M. Presbytery Family and Medical Leave Policy
- N. Ministers from other Denominations
- O. Procedure: Annual Salary Standards Review
- P. Guidelines for Covenant Pastor Contract Forms

APPENDIX A
Guidelines for Dissolution and Separation

1. Dissolution/separation agreements are subject to provisions of the *Book of Order*.
2. Committee on Ministry Chair and the Liaison are available to resource and facilitate the negotiation of a dissolution/separation agreement, between the Session and the Pastor.
3. A dissolution/separation agreement shall be documented in writing and must be approved by the congregation and COM before it can take effect.
4. Below is a template Agreement:

Terms of Dissolution Agreement

We, the members of the _____ Presbyterian Church Session with the concurrence of Rev. _____ request Northeast Georgia Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship between _____ Presbyterian Church and Rev. _____ on the following terms:

Terms:

1. Continuation of effective salary (exclusive of mileage and professional expense reimbursement) for _____ months, including continuation of Board of Pension Dues and use of the manse (if applicable) inclusive of previously agreed upon utilities allowance.
2. The date of the congregational meeting to approve this dissolution agreement prior to any payment as indicated above.
3. The last date on which Rev. _____ will be expected to perform ministerial duties will be no later than the date set forth in #2 above.
4. Date of Committee on Ministry approval of this agreement _____.

We, the undersigned, having negotiated this agreement in good faith, will be faithful in fulfilling it.

We agree that both parties will refrain from disparaging the other in any way.

Pastor's Signature

Designated Session Representative

Committee on Ministry Representative

APPENDIX B

Guidelines for Ministers Leaving

When a Pastor leaves a place of service, it may be difficult to let go. However, we believe all things work together for good ... Romans 8 and recognize the first vow that any officer takes is that we trust God....

W4.0404a. Also, we recognize all pastors are temporary shepherds whom God has called to serve a congregation or other place of service for a period of time. Therefore, pursuant to our Reformed theology and polity, at departing the Pastor will leave and will not re-enter unless and until the Moderator of the Session initiates an invitation to be part of a particular service.

Pastors Departing Churches and the Churches they Served

When a Pastor plans to retire, they notify COM as soon as possible. Upon notification, the COM liaison and General Presbyter will meet with the Pastor and the Session to discuss the departure and transition.

Looking to the Future After the Pastor has Departed (First Sunday After a Pastor Departs)

In compliance with the *Book of Order, 2.0905*, and in consideration for the "Standards for Ethical Conduct," the following Policy is provided for Pastors and Sessions in Northeast Georgia Presbytery:

POLICY FOR FORMER PASTORS AND THE PARTICULAR CHURCHES THEY SERVED

- **All requests for pastoral care must be addressed to the new pastor.** (If there is no interim pastor, requests should go to the Session and COM Liaison until a new pastor is secured.);
- AND
- **The former pastor is to avoid any contact which could be the nature of pastoral care with members of the congregation or the Session.** (Anyone who contacts the former pastor should be referred to the new pastor or the Clerk of Session in their absence.)
- **A former pastor is not to return to conduct weddings or funerals or administer the sacraments unless specifically requested by the serving pastor and the Session. If requested, the former pastor should only assist the presently serving pastor.**
- **Therefore, pursuant to our Reformed theology and polity, at departing the Pastor will leave and will not re-enter unless and until the Moderator of the Session initiates an invitation to be part of a particular service. If requested, the former pastor only assists the presently serving pastor.**
- **The former pastor is not to attend worship services or participate in routine functions (such as congregational dinners, Bible Studies, etc.) in the life of the church, unless and until invited to do so by the Pastor.**

• Because many pastors and members of congregations are connected through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), it is especially important that former pastors practice caution when on social media. Avoid personal interacting with members of their former church, limiting personal interactions. The former pastor is always to avoid any commentary or reference to the pastor's former church on social media.

APPENDIX C

Exit Interviews

One of the responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry Liaison is to conduct the Exit Interview with the departing Pastor and the Session. Exit Interviews are not limited to Head of Staff Pastors but should also be conducted with departing Associate Pastors, Covenant/Contract Pastors, Commissioned Pastors and Interim Pastors. Sometimes it is appropriate to conduct interviews with Parish Associates, particularly those with long tenures. The purposes of this Exit Interview are three-fold:

1. To offer an opportunity for the Pastor and the Session to reflect over the ministry they have shared together in an affirming, constructive manner;
2. To facilitate the beginning of the expression of any feelings (positive or negative) that need to be expressed between the Pastor and the Session; and
3. To provide helpful information to the Committee on Ministry Liaison relevant to the transition in Pastoral leadership in this particular setting.

Process:

Upon notification of Pastor's plans to depart, the Committee on Ministry Liaison will contact the Pastor to schedule a meeting with the Session. The purpose of this meeting would be:

1. To review the Presbytery's Policy for Ministers Leaving Pastorates (Including Interim, Associate, Covenant/Contract, and Commissioned Pastors); and
2. To plan for the Exit Interview(s).

There are pros and cons of conducting Exit Interviews for Pastors and Sessions together or separately. Conducting the Exit Interview together maximizes the opportunity for mutual reflection. It is also more efficient in terms of the use of time. Conducting the Exit Interviews of the Pastor and Session separately maximizes the ability for frank conversation with both Pastor and Session. If the Interview is done with the Session separately, it should be conducted as soon after the Pastor's conclusion of service as possible.

A primary reason for the Exit Interview is to encourage a positive closure to the relationship, one that maximizes the opportunity for the expression of any feelings that would otherwise be carried forward to the next relationship.

Possible questions for Pastors:

1. Share with us your sense of your greatest accomplishments in this Pastorate.
2. . Share with us your sense of your greatest disappointments in this Pastorate
3. What new learnings about the ministry and service in the Church have you discovered during this call?
4. What new learnings have you discovered about yourself in this Pastorate?
5. What do you perceive to be the strengths of this congregation and its leaders?
6. What do you perceive to be the areas needing most improvement in this congregation?

7. What ways do you feel the Committee on Ministry can be most helpful to you at this time? To this church?
8. Tell us why you feel let to a new call at this time.
9. What is a highlight, not necessarily a pinnacle, of your time in this position?
10. What have you most missed since leaving?
11. Did the church or congregation provide an opportunity to learn about yourself?
12. What can the Northeast Georgia Presbytery do to better help and support its pastors?

APPENDIX D

Conversation with Session-appointed Interim Pastor Search Committee

Committee on Ministry (COM) and the General Presbyter (GP) offer help, resources, assistance, and support to facilitate the process of a Session hiring an interim pastor.

The Interim Pastor

An interim, with the help of the Session, leads the congregation through the interim (in-between) time, a necessary time of transition and possibly transformation... a time for a congregation to re-evaluate, and possibly re-direct, its mission and ministry and its relationship with one another and in and with its surrounding community.

The interim pastor, with the help of the Session, leads the congregation through the necessary process of grieving the “sense of loss” of a previous pastor (or other loss) and through the time of closing one pastorate and beginning a new one. The interim time offers the congregation time to refocus on “who we are” and “who God is calling us to be,” all of which is addressed through the time of transition. Trained and experienced interim pastors assist the congregation to “live into” and to move through this time.

The Session, supported by COM and the GP, is responsible for hiring the interim: this work does **not** include consultation with others, such as members of the congregation. The work of the Session, in this regard, is a personnel matter; and therefore **strict confidentiality** must be observed. Note that there is always a 30 or 60 day termination provision in any interim contract. As required by Northeast Georgia Presbytery, per the Manual of Operations, **all interim contracts must be approved by the COM following an examination of the candidate.** An interim pastor may need permission to labor within the bounds of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

The interim pastor is **not** involved in the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee. The PNC is elected by the congregation after the interim is in place and after a self-study/congregational mission study has been completed. The interim **is** expected to help the Session lead the congregation in a process of self-study/mission study which is then presented to COM for approval. But while the PNC is doing its work associated with the search for the next called and installed pastor, the interim is busy with tasks (the art of transitional ministry) to help prepare the way for the next pastor.

An interim pastor usually expects to be paid substantially the same package as the previous called and installed pastor. There are several reasons for this, including: interim pastors usually have two households (their “home” and the place where they reside while serving the church); and interims have additional training and experience.

The GP and the COM resource and offer support to the Interim Pastor Search Committee. Many times, a Session delegates the search process to a **sub-committee** or to its **personnel committee**; it is also possible that the Session itself may act as the Search Committee. In any event, the chair of the Search Committee is the person who communicates with the interim candidates, the COM liaison and the GP. The COM liaison is available to assist the Search Committee and the Session particularly in relationship with the COM (i.e., a shepherd of the process of securing an interim).

It's important to note that interim candidates are processed through the GP for several reasons:

1. The GP does **quick reference checks** with other executives who will be most familiar with the work of candidates.
2. The GP knows the **availability** of interim candidates (Interims move quickly and easily move to positions within weeks of being available).
3. **Interim candidates communicate directly with the GP** in a presbytery where they are interested in serving. The COM has a member appointed to perform the work of the GP if the GP is unavailable.
4. Remember, as a safeguard, interim contracts have a termination provision which can be exercised by either party (a "no fault" or "walk away" provision).

Process:

The Chair of the Interim Search Committee receives the Personal Information Forms (PIF) of prospective candidates from the GP/COM (after training by the GP/COM) and distributes them to members of the committee. The Chair is always welcome to call the GP/COM with questions about the candidates, especially any questions about whether the candidate is a good "match" or "fit" for the church.

The committee must be mindful of all reference checks. If the Search Committee has other candidates not supplied by the GP, the GP reference check must be completed before the PIF is circulated.

If the committee wants to see other candidates, the chair contacts the GP/COM for more PIFs.

The Committee comes together to pray and discuss the candidates deciding who to contact (preferably more than one candidate) for an initial telephone or video conversation/interview. Similar questions should be asked of all candidates, for comparison purposes; although it is certainly appropriate to ask individual questions arising from a particular candidate's materials. All recorded sermons should be viewed by the search committee as a whole.

All personal references listed on the PIF should be checked (again using similar questions). The Committee then meets, makes further decisions and arranges for one or more face-to-face meetings. The Committee pays all costs (travel and hospitality) associated with the interview

which should include a formal Q and A, a meal, and an opportunity to see the church and community.

The Committee makes further decisions, and the chair communicates with the candidate(s). The terms of the contract are worked out between the interim candidate and the Committee, and the Committee then presents the terms and the candidate to the Session. Please keep in mind that ordinarily the Examinations Committee examines the candidate, and COM must approve any candidate who is being offered the interim position. Because all interim pastors are expected to be members of the Presbytery, any candidates who are not currently members must also be examined by the Presbytery and received into membership.

Contact information:

COM Liaison: _____

Hilary Shuford, General Presbyter, 706-510-8045 (cell); gp@negapby.org

Anita Green, Presbytery Business Administrator, 706-353-2533; anita@negapby.org

Next steps: besides pray

1. Determine a Chair, who receives PIFs from GP and who is the “point” person for communication
2. Create a Position Description with a list of expectations
3. Begin formulating questions for candidates and for their references
4. Prepare a Compensation package
5. Review www.negapby.org resources → committee on ministry → Minimum Salary Standards
AND
resources → committee on ministry → Interim/Transitional Pastor Covenant/Contract (template)

APPENDIX E

INTERIM/TRANSITIONAL PASTOR COVENANT AND CONTRACT

between

(Church) _____

**and Northeast Georgia Presbytery
and**

(Minister) _____

The following contract and covenant between the **Session of _____ Presbyterian Church, Northeast Georgia Presbytery**, and _____ is for the purpose of providing transitional/interim pastoral services to _____ Presbyterian Church. The Session is satisfied with the minister's qualifications and trusts that his or her ministry of the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, and hereby commits our congregation to the following covenant relationship and contract with the Rev. _____.

The Rev. _____ is invited to be the Transitional/Interim Pastor of _____ Presbyterian Church, a full-time, temporary position described in this document.

- A. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) defines temporary pastoral relationships in this way: "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 minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be 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 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 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." (Book of Order, G-2.0504b)
- B. This Contract shall be for a period of twelve months, beginning _____ unless otherwise terminated on 30 days written notice from the Interim Pastor or by 30 days written notice from the Session. At the conclusion of this contract, new terms may be developed for any period up to twelve additional months upon the concurrence of the Interim Pastor, the Session, and the Presbytery or its authorized agent or committee. If the Session does not intend to renew or extend the Interim Pastor relationship beyond the initial 12-month period, the Session will provide written notice of its intent not to renew at least 30 days in advance of the 12-month anniversary.
- C. The Transitional/Interim Pastor:
1. Will be a member of Northeast Georgia Presbytery unless otherwise authorized by the Committee on Ministry.
 2. Will be designated by Northeast Georgia Presbytery as Transitional/Interim Pastor and Moderator of the church's Session (non-voting) and congregation (non-voting).
 3. Will NOT be considered as a candidate for Installed Pastor for the church being served, and will assist the Church in interpreting and understanding the specialized nature of Interim/Transitional Ministry.
 4. Will serve as Head of Staff of the Church with all the authority implied, including the authority to supervise all members of the staff, in consultation with the Session or its appropriate committee(s).
 5. Shall assist, as needed, in the conduct of any mission study and the preparation of documents needed by the presbytery or denomination, if and when requested and approved by the governing bodies of jurisdiction.
 6. Shall not be involved in the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), except to provide general information on the call process for Presbyterian churches and pastors, and to see that the PNC makes

adequate and appropriate reports to the congregation. The Interim Pastor may serve, on a limited basis and only upon the concurrence of the COM, as a resource to the work of the PNC. The Interim Pastor may respond to inquiries from prospective pastors, as long as the interaction is initiated by the prospective pastor.

7. Will develop, in consultation with the Session, the areas of Interim Pastoral ministry that will be the priorities for the work of the Interim Pastor.

D. The Transitional/Interim Pastor's activities shall include (in no particular order of priority):

1. Leading worship and preaching at regular and special services of worship, and presiding over the sacraments.
2. Conducting weddings and funerals as requested, except during vacation, study leave, illness and such other times as mutually agreed by the Interim Pastor and the Session.
3. Pastoral visitation to the ill and shut-ins, and general pastoral care of the congregation (in conjunction with the appropriate organization of the congregation).
4. Planning and moderating meetings of the Session and of the congregation.
5. Working with the church officers and other boards and committees of the congregation, to assist them in carrying out their particular responsibilities. The Interim Pastor will be an ex-officio member of the Congregational Nominating Committee and all boards and committees of the congregation. The Interim Pastor will have access to all minutes, financial information and records of all boards, committees, and organizations of the church.
6. Serving as a resource for the educational and youth programs of the church, participating in classes, and teaching when and where it is appropriate.
7. Working with the Session to ensure appropriate training for newly elected and continuing officers.
8. Participating in the governing body and serving as any pastor might, when called upon to do so, in the governing bodies and entities of the denomination.
9. As Head of Staff, directing and supervising the work of the congregation and the entire staff, and assuming primary responsibility for the administration of the Church.
10. Representing the congregation in its relationships with organizations outside the congregation.
11. Modeling appropriate pastoral leadership and boundaries, including maintaining personal spiritual disciplines (meditation, prayer, study, and the regular observance of Sabbath time).

E. The Goals for this Transitional/Interim Ministry:

1. Recent and Long-term HERITAGE: Help the Church with closure regarding the departure of former pastor(s) and other significant events in the congregation's history.
2. Help the congregation and its leaders discover and articulate their current identity, and discern their current and future MISSION as part of the Body of Christ.
3. Help the Church adjust to any shifts in structure, LEADERSHIP, and power, and review its ways of organizing and developing new and effective leadership.
4. Help the Church affirm or renew its CONNECTIONS to the community, the Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (USA).
5. FUTURE: Help the Church move forward with confidence toward a "new beginning," and to prepare appropriately for the arrival of a new pastor, so that he or she might be welcomed with hope, grace, and enthusiasm.
6. Assist in the development of short-range goals as identified by the Session.
7. Work for a healthy and nurturing congregational environment that promotes personal and congregational growth, assures faithful witness to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and demonstrates God's grace, mercy, and peace to the community and the world.

F. The Transitional/Interim Pastor will be accountable to the Session and to the Presbytery through its Committee on Ministry, and will be available to appropriate representatives of those bodies.

- G. It is agreed that if the congregation, the Session, or the Transitional/Interim Pastor experiences any unsolicited suggestions, interference, or other difficulty with any former pastor (installed or temporary) of the Church, the matter will be dealt with promptly, and will be referred to the Committee on Ministry. The Session encourages the Transitional/Interim Pastor to deny any requests by, or for, any former pastor to conduct any services of worship, including baptisms, weddings, and funerals in any of the facilities of the congregation.
- H. The Interim/Transitional Pastor is a temporary employee, expected to work on a full-time basis, averaging at least 40 hours per week. The Interim/Transitional Pastor's Compensation will be based on the understanding that an interim pastor does similar work to that of the former pastor and has specialized training and experience for transitional work and, therefore, should normally have similar compensation to the former pastor.

TERMS OF CALL: After reviewing the presbytery's current Minimum Salary Standards, compensation will be:

Effective Salary

Cash Salary (*NOT including 403(b) contributions*)

Manse Value or Housing Allowance

Other ^{1, 2, 3}

Manse Equity (*paid directly or through 403(b)*)⁴

Total Effective Salary

Employer's *Matching Contribution* – 403(b)⁵

50% of SECA (Social Security) - *unless pastor has opted out of Social Security*

†
†
†

BENEFITS – OPTION 1: Board of Pensions "Pastor's Participation" Plan (37% of Effective Salary)

BENEFITS – OPTION 2: Board of Pensions "Minister's Choice" Plan

Pension, D&D, Temporary Disability and EAP (*10% of Effective Salary*)

Medical – PPO (*Cost varies by region*)

Medical – EPO (*Cost varies by region*)

†
†
†

Vouchered Expenses (Reimbursements)

Continuing Education

Professional Expenses (*incl. mileage at IRS rate*)

Other Vouchered Expenses

†

TOTAL \$ Paid by Church/Employer

Vacation (*minimum 4 weeks*)

Study Leave (*minimum 2 weeks*)

Other Time Off: _____

†

Footnotes

† = **Optional**

¹Pastor's elective contributions to the PC(USA) 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan are listed here and INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

²Most contributions by a church to a pastor's 403(b) account ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary (see footnote 5).

³Payments made by the employer or reimbursed to the pastor for optional or supplemental insurance ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary unless the same benefits are offered to all employees.

⁴Sums paid or contributed by a church to a deferred compensation plan or other account on behalf of a pastor residing in a manse (to compensate for equity which the pastor forgoes by not owning his or her own residence) ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

⁵When a church matches some or all of a pastor's voluntary contributions to his or her 403(b) account, the church's MATCHING contribution is NOT included in Effective Salary (see footnote 2).

*For more information about Effective Salary, see "Understanding Effective Salary," available on www.pensions.org.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS (to be negotiated):

1. Benefits will be provided for the Transitional Pastor under the Pastor's Participation Plan, if appropriate, or other options offered by the Board of Pensions.
2. Salary continuation contingency: Salary, housing allowance and Board of Pensions benefits shall be paid by the Church for a period not to exceed ___ months beyond the end of the Transitional/Interim Pastor's service or contract. This contingency will end at the start of the Interim Pastor's next full-time service, and be adjusted in case of part-time work. However, if the Interim Pastor departs at his/her own initiative, all compensation including salary and related terms of call will be discontinued on the last day of service to the church, unless negotiated otherwise with the Session.
3. The Transitional Pastor's Teaching Responsibilities will include New Members Classes and occasional Sunday School or Wednesday night classes and special/seasonal events.
4. The Transitional Pastor will attend and be involved in select church-wide events, activities and outreach gatherings.
5. The Transitional Pastor will facilitate stewardship and budget processes.
6. Other provisions as agreed by the Session and Transitional Pastor.

The Session takes official action to enter into this contractual relationship on (date): _____.

Transitional/Interim Pastor, _____, agreed to this contractual relationship on (date): _____.

Northeast Georgia Presbytery, acting through its Committee on Ministry, agreed to this contractual relationship on (date): _____.

Signing for the Session: _____ Date: _____

Signing for the Presbytery: _____ Date: _____

Signature of the Transitional/Interim Pastor: _____ Date: _____

(form updated March 2022)

APPENDIX F EXAMINATIONS ACTION TEAM

Overview: Appointed by the Committee on Ministry, the Examinations Action Team membership consists of a balance of Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. Experience serving on or having served on a Committee on Ministry is preferred.

The Examinations Action Team reviews materials provided by the candidate including the Personal Information Form, the Statement of Faith, and the Journey of Faith. The Team examines candidates called by a member congregation or organization within the Northeast Georgia Presbytery, whether by transfer from another presbytery or moving within the Presbytery. Questions to candidates concern polity, scripture, and other essential matters related to our Reformed Traditions, and other theological and pastoral considerations, as well as an observation of personal attributes appropriate to the call and circumstances/place of service.

The Examinations Action Team makes recommendations regarding candidates to the Committee on Ministry.

Responsibilities of the Chair of the Examinations Action Team

1. After notification about a candidate from a liaison, obtain from the candidate a one page Statement of Faith, a one page Journey of Faith, and the PIF. Acquire from the liaison the Terms of Call (Installed) or Contract (Covenant Pastor.)
2. Request the candidate to contact the Presbytery Business Administrator (Anita Green, anita@negapby.org) at least two weeks before the examination regarding the criminal background check. A clear report will be reported by the Business Administrator to the Chair of the Examination Team. If there are questions about the report, the Business Administrator will report that to the Stated Clerk. The General Presbyter completes a separate reference check.
3. Distribute to Examinations Action Team members the candidate's PIF, Statement of Faith, Journey of Faith, and Terms of Call or Covenant, if applicable.
4. Convene the Examinations Action Team at least one week prior to the COM meeting at which the candidate will be considered. In addition to the candidate, the COM church liaison and members of the PNC also are invited. It is advised that the candidate be contacted by the Chair by telephone to confirm receipt of the meeting invitation and Zoom link, if applicable.
5. Upon the conclusion of a successful examination, the Examination Action Team recommends to the Committee on Ministry that: (a) the Covenant be approved, or; (b) the Terms of Call and Transfer of Membership to Northeast Georgia Presbytery or permission to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery (if the start date is prior to the next Presbytery meeting) be recommended for Presbytery approval. The chair is to

acquire from the candidate a signed Attestation of Sexual Conduct to be signed by the Stated Clerk or the Chair of the Examination Team.

If the examination results in a need for further examination or action, the Chair of Examinations will notify the Chair of the Committee on Ministry.

6. Following a successful examination, the Examinations Chair will forward the candidate's documents to the COM Chair. Once approved by COM, the COM chair will forward the documents to the Business Administrator to include in the docket of the next Presbytery Meeting. The PIF is not included in Presbytery meeting materials.
7. The Chair or another member of the Examinations Action Team will ask the first question of the candidate at the examination of the candidate at the Presbytery meeting. Questions from Commissioners may follow. Once those are completed, the candidate is excused for a time of discussion, debate, and vote. The candidate is then invited to return to the meeting and advised of the result.

Examination of Candidates by Examinations Committee (G-2.0104b)

1. Liaison informs Chair of Examinations that Candidate is secured and ready to be examined.
2. The following items are completed and forwarded to the Chair of the Examinations Committee prior to the examination:
 - a. Candidate's PIF
 - b. Candidate's 1 page Statement of Faith
 - c. Candidate's 1 page Spiritual Autobiography / Journey of Faith
 - d. Terms of Call (Installed Pastor) or Contract (Covenant Pastor)
 - e. Background Check – contact Presbytery Business Administrator at least 2 weeks prior to Examination
 - f. EP reference Check by General Presbyter
 - g. Signed Attestation to Sexual Misconduct Questions (to be signed by Stated Clerk or Chair of Examinations Team upon successful examination).
3. Candidate meets with Examinations team to determine for the particular ministry to which they are called. The COM liaison is typically a part of the examinations team, and member(s) of the PNC or Search Committee are present for the first portion of the examination.

APPENDIX G

Presentation of Candidate to Presbytery

If Pastor is transferring membership into Northeast Georgia Presbytery, the candidate is presented to the Presbytery.

1. Statement of Faith and Journey of Faith are sent to the Business Administrator by the COM chair (after COM approval) to be included in the Presbytery Docket. Terms of Call are also sent to the Business Administrator for review and comparison to Presbytery Minimum Salary Standards and are included in the COM report.
2. Installation Date and Installation Commission (if Pastor is installed) are approved by COM and included in COM report as recommendations for approval by Presbytery.
3. A member of the Examinations Committee presents the Candidate to the Presbytery and invites them to make a brief introduction. One question is asked of the Candidate by the Examinations Committee Member and the floor is open for questions of the Candidate.
4. The Presbytery approves terms of call, transfer of membership (if applicable), and installation commission (if applicable).

APPENDIX H

Congregational Mission Studies

What is a Congregational Mission Study?

A mission study is an intentional process undertaken by a congregation, enabling it to tell its story. It is led by the Session, actively involves the whole body, and aims to be unrelentingly authentic, genuine, and honest. Through it, a church engages its own history, its current sense of identity and purpose, and the community in which it is located, all with an eye towards expressing its vision for the future.

Why do a Mission Study?

Congregational mission studies are commonly conducted at times of pastoral transition. However, this is far from the only occasion such a study may be appropriate and helpful. Other circumstances in which a congregation might undertake a mission study include:

- Whenever new energy and directions for mission and ministry are desired.
- When there is a pervasive sense of complacency, of having “plateaued.”
- When the congregation has suffered an extended period of internal conflict, especially when this conflict has negatively impacted ministry effectiveness.
- When church membership has substantially grown or declined.
- When the community around a church has undergone significant changes.
- When a mission study has not been conducted in more than 7 years.

Mission studies seek to answer questions such as these:

Who are we?

- How does our recent history impact where we are in our life and ministry?
- What shapes does our work take? How effective are we in ministering to our members and the community?
- What are our chief strengths as a congregation? What are our main challenges?

Who is our neighbor?

- What is the character of our surrounding community? (Demographics, community values and attitudes, neighborhoods, businesses, educational institutions, charitable organizations, and other religious congregations)
- What challenges does it face? What opportunities does it present?

Who is God calling us to be? What is God calling us to do?

- How can we address the identifiable needs of our community in the light of the gospel? How can we embrace its opportunities? What do we need to carry out our call?
- How are we willing to change to be more effective in reaching and serving our community? What barriers to change do we experience? How can we overcome those barriers?

What is the process involved in conducting a good Mission Study?

The Session's Role

- The Session spearheads the whole process and is responsible for keeping the congregation and Presbytery's COM informed of all news and updates.

Communication with the Congregation

- Encourage the congregation to pray throughout the process for the church, its people and leadership, and for the surrounding community in which they are called to carry out Christ's mission.
- Keep the congregation well-informed, especially in these areas:
 - Importance and purpose of a Mission Study
 - If applicable, the meaning and purpose of an Interim period
 - An approximate timetable for the process
 - Dates of all relevant events pertaining to the process, especially any surveys or congregational listening sessions
 - Making the final Mission Study document available to the congregation

Gathering Information & Stories

- Annual & Statistical Reports for at least the previous 10 years, if possible
- Previous mission statements / strategic plans
- Current website, bulletin, and newsletter information
- Intentional, Informal conversations with a wide spectrum of current and former church members and leaders
- "Congregational Listening Sessions" and/or church-wide surveys
- Gather information on the surrounding area to develop a community profile

Communication with Presbytery

- Keep the Presbytery's COM "in the loop" regarding the process, timing, and progress of the study.

Final Steps

- When the full process is complete, the final Mission Study report is submitted to the Session for its review and approval.

- Upon final approval by the Session, submit it to the COM for approval, if applicable (e.g. if the church is in the midst of a pastoral transition and is looking to form a Pastoral Nominating Committee).

A typical framework for the final written report includes the following sections:

- **Introduction** – Including the reasons for pursuing such a study at this time. Some may find it appropriate to include a recent history of their congregation in this section.
- **Research** – A detailed description of the methodology by which you pursued your study, the timetable, what you did, and who was involved.
- **Summary** – A summary review of the results of your survey/questionnaire and/or any other research conducted.
- **Reflection** – An interpretive reflection on the meaning of your research results, considering who you are as a congregation, the nature of your community context, and where you discern God is leading you going forward.

Who is a Mission Study report for?

A congregational mission study report has many different possible uses and may be intended for a number of different audiences. These groups include:

- A church's leadership in discerning directions for current and future ministries.
- Potential candidates for pastoral positions or congregational leadership.
- A Pastor Nominating Committee.
- Current and potential members of the congregation.
- Any others connected to a congregation who wish to better understand it and where it's headed.

Resources for Mission Studies

One of the best resources for congregational mission studies is available through the PC(USA) Research Services, www.pcusa.org/ministries/research/help. These resources are downloadable at no cost.

A particularly good example of a mission study done in Northeast Georgia Presbytery is that of Oconee Presbyterian Church in 2021-2022.

A book especially recommended for congregational discernment is Roy Oswald's *Discerning Your Congregation's Future: A Strategic and Spiritual Approach* (The Alban Institute, 1996).

Additional resources and guidance for conducting and writing mission studies are available from the Committee on Ministry. Interested persons should contact their congregation's COM liaison, the COM Chair, or the General Presbyter for assistance.

APPENDIX I
2022 Minimum Salary Standards for Ministers
Northeast Georgia Presbytery

The purpose of this policy is to

1. Aid Pastor Nominating Committees in negotiating Terms of Call or Contracts/Covenants with new pastors
2. Assist sessions with the Annual Salary Standards Review.

These minimum standards are intended to apply to all full-time ministers who are members of Northeast Georgia Presbytery. The minimum standards should be prorated for part-time ministers.

Cash Compensation

	Full-time Ministers without Manse	Full-time Ministers with Manse	Part-time Ministers without Manse	Part-time Ministers with Manse
Minimum Cash Salary¹	\$28,200	\$28,200	Prorated percentage of \$28,200	Prorated percentage of \$28,200
Minimum Housing Allowance	\$15,700	-	Prorated percentage of \$15,700	-
Minimum Utilities Allowance	-	Actual cost of all utilities	-	Prorated percentage of actual cost of all utilities
Housing Equity Allowance²	-	To be negotiated and reported on NEGP Terms of Call Form, Line 8	-	To be negotiated and reported on NEGP Terms of Call Form, Line 8
Social Security & Medicare Allowance³	7.65% of Effective Salary as defined by Board of Pensions	7.65% of Effective Salary as defined by Board of Pensions	7.65% of Effective Salary as defined by Board of Pensions	7.65% of Effective Salary as defined by Board of Pensions

Benefits

	Full-time Ministers without Manse	Full-time Ministers with Manse	Part-time Ministers without Manse	Part-time Ministers with Manse
Paid Vacation	4 weeks including 4 Sundays	4 weeks including 4 Sundays	4 weeks including 4 Sundays	4 weeks including 4 Sundays
Study Leave	2 weeks including 2 Sundays	2 weeks including 2 Sundays	2 weeks including 2 Sundays	2 weeks including 2 Sundays
Pension through the Board of Pensions	Installed: Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP) paid by church. Contracted: Pastor's Participation or Minister's Choice Plan (optional)	Installed: Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP) paid by church. Contracted: Pastor's Participation or Minister's Choice Plan (optional)	Installed: Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP) paid by church. Contract 20+ hr/wk: Pastor's Participation or Minister's Choice Plan (optional)	Installed: Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP) paid by church. Contract 20+ hr/wk: Pastor's Participation or Minister's Choice Plan (optional)
Death & Disability through the Board of Pensions	Installed: Included in Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP). Contracted: Included in PPP or Minister's Choice	Installed: Included in Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP). Contracted: Included in PPP or Minister's Choice	Installed: Included in Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP). Contract 20+ hr/wk: Included in PPP or Minister's Choice	Installed: Included in Pastor's Participation Plan (PPP). Contract 20+ hr/wk: Included in PPP or Minister's Choice
Medical coverage through the Board of Pensions	Installed: Included in PPP. Contracted: Included in PPP; optional with or without Minister's Choice	Installed: Included in PPP. Contracted: Included in PPP; optional with or without Minister's Choice	Installed: Included in PPP. Contractrd 20+ hr/wk: Included in PPP; optional with or without Min. Choice	Installed: Included in PPP. Contracted 20+ hr/wk: Included in PPP; optional with or without Min. Choice

Other Compensation

	Full-time Ministers without Manse	Full-time Ministers with Manse	Part-time Ministers without Manse	Part-time Ministers with Manse
Moving Expense	Actual amount	Actual amount	Actual amount	Actual amount
Continuing Education ⁴	\$400	\$400	Prorated percentage of \$400	Prorated percentage of \$400

Professional expense reimbursements should be made through an accountable reimbursement plan and should include:

- expenses necessary for the performance of the job
- professional subscriptions and books
- mileage for use of a personal automobile at the current Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate for business travel.

Additional Information

- The Committee on Ministry conducts an Annual Salary Standards Review to ensure all pastors' compensation packages meet or exceed that year's minimum salary standards. Reporting forms are emailed to clerks of session each January, to be completed by March 31.
- The Board of Pensions provides a guide to structuring ministers' terms of call, *Living by the Gospel*, as well as a dues calculator on its website, www.pensions.org.
- Northeast Georgia Presbytery has adopted a Sabbatical Leave Policy. Please contact your Committee on Ministry liaison for more information.

Committee on Ministry Recommendations

- The Committee on Ministry recommends that the base minimum salary be increased by 1% for each year the minister has been ordained.
- The 223rd General Assembly of the PC(USA) appointed a task force to study, work, pray and discern on the issue of paid family leave for PC(USA) employees, including but not limited to ministers. The Committee on Ministry encourages church sessions to begin now to study, research, and prayerfully discern their own family leave policy.
- The Committee on Ministry strongly recommends that both churches and clergy take advantage of the resources offered by The Board of Pensions and its website (www.pensions.org). These resources include information about benefits selection and administration, tax questions, changes to healthcare, retirement planning, and much more.

¹ Updated 8/18/21 by a 5.4% increase, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index.

² The Committee on Ministry recommends that pastors living in a manse receive compensation for the equity that they forego by not owning their own residence.

³ Unless the minister has properly followed IRS rules to opt out of Social Security.

⁴ Unused continuing education funds may be carried forward for up to three years.

APPENDIX J
Installed 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

 (title)

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 compensation:

Effective Salary	
Cash Salary (<i>NOT including 403(b) contributions</i>)	
Manse Value or Housing Allowance	
Other ^{1, 2, 3}	†
Manse Equity (<i>paid directly or through 403(b)</i>) ⁴	†
Total Effective Salary	
Employer's <i>Matching Contribution</i> – 403(b) ⁵	†
50% of SECA (Social Security) - <i>unless pastor has opted out of Social Security</i>	
Board of Pensions Pastors' Participation Plan	
Pension & Disability (<i>10% of Effective Salary</i>)	
Medical (<i>27% of Effective Salary</i>)	
Vouchered Expenses (Reimbursements)	
Continuing Education	
Professional Expenses (<i>incl. mileage at IRS rate</i>)	
Other Vouchered Expenses	†
TOTAL \$ Paid by Church/Employer	
Vacation (<i>minimum 4 weeks</i>)	
Study Leave (<i>minimum 2 weeks</i>)	
Other Time Off: _____	†
Eligible for Sabbatical? If yes, indicate year: _____	†

Footnotes _____

† = Optional

¹Pastor's elective contributions to the PC(USA) 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan are listed here and INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

²Most contributions by a church to a pastor's 403(b) account ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary (see footnote 5).

³Payments made by the employer or reimbursed to the pastor for optional or supplemental insurance ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary unless the same benefits are offered to all employees.

⁴Sums paid or contributed by a church to a deferred compensation plan or other account on behalf of a pastor residing in a manse (to compensate for equity which the pastor forgoes by not owning his or her own residence) ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

⁵When a church matches some or all of a pastor's voluntary contributions to his or her 403(b) account, the church's MATCHING contribution is NOT included in Effective Salary (see footnote 2).

*For more information about Effective Salary, see "Understanding Effective Salary," available on www.pensions.org.

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

Certification of Call

A. Action by Presbytery of Call

1. The Presbytery of _____ has reviewed and approved this call.

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

B. Action by the Minister's/Candidate's Presbytery

1. The Presbytery of _____ finds it expedient (not expedient) to release _____ to accept this call.

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

C. Acceptance of the Call

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
Minister

Complete and sign four original copies. When all parties have signed, an original copy goes to 1) the minister, 2) the calling church, 3) the presbytery of call and 4) the minister's presbytery of membership/care.

(form updated March 2022)

APPENDIX K

Covenant Pastor Contract

This covenant is between the Session of _____ Presbyterian Church
of _____ and _____ (Covenant Pastor) from
_____ through _____.
(Month/day/year) (Month/day/year)

Introduction:

Temporary Pastoral Relations (per the *Book of Order*, G-2.0504b):

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 minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be 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 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 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.

Responsibilities:

It is agreed that the Covenant Pastor will fulfill the following responsibilities:

- _____ Lead worship _____ Sundays per month
- _____ Teach groups/classes as specified (page 3)
- _____ Make pastoral visits to the sick and shut-ins
- _____ Call on prospective and new members as appropriate
- _____ Officiate at weddings as requested
- _____ Officiate at funerals as requested
- _____ Plan and moderate Session and Congregational Meetings
- _____ Work with the church groups or committees as specified (page 4)
- _____ Train newly-elected officers
- _____ Assist with a Mission Study
- _____ Participate in the ministry and mission of Northeast Georgia Presbytery
- _____ Perform other administrative duties as specified (page 4)
- _____ Other responsibilities as specified (page 4)

Goals For This Ministry Will Be as Follows:

- Maintenance of a healthy congregational life;
- Continuity of leadership;
- Development of short-range goals as specified (page 4);
- Development of long-range goals as specified (page 4); and
- Other goals as specified (page 4).

Accountability:

As a member of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, or a member of another presbytery laboring in the bounds of our presbytery, the Covenant Pastor will be accountable to the Session and to Northeast Georgia Presbytery, through its Committee on Ministry, according to the *Book of Order* (G-2.0504 b).

It should be clearly understood that a Covenant Pastor, with the approval of the Committee on Ministry and presbytery, serves as the pastor of that church. When a pastor receives a call or plans to retire, the Committee on Ministry should be notified in order to consult with the Session to plan for appropriate closure to the pastoral relationship and to consider the type of pastoral leadership most suited to the church's current needs. If the Session and the Committee on Ministry are clear that a Pastor Nominating Committee should be formed to seek a called pastor (part-time or full-time), the Session should organize a search committee for an Interim Pastor, and the Committee on Ministry's church liaison will serve as a resource for the transition in pastoral leadership. When the situation is less clear, the employment of a Covenant Pastor may serve a valuable role in assisting the church in assessing its needs in terms of pastoral leadership.

Duration:

The Covenant Pastor may be appointed for a period of up to 12 months. He/She may be reappointed after the Presbytery (through its Committee on Ministry in dialogue with the pastor and the Session) has reviewed his or her effectiveness. Sessions are encouraged to begin discussion regarding renewal of the employment of the Covenant Pastor at least three months prior to the date of renewal. Ordinarily, the Presbytery appoints Covenant Pastors on a calendar year basis. Covenant Pastors who are employed within a calendar year are encouraged to move to a calendar year basis when renewed.

As indicated above, this covenant is for a period of _____ months from the beginning date of service. This covenant may be terminated:

- a) By the Session upon thirty (30) days written notice, in consultation with the Committee on Ministry; or
- b) By the Covenant Pastor upon thirty (30) days written notice, in consultation with Committee on Ministry, and forfeiture of any payment beyond that due for actual services in the thirty (30) day period.

This covenant may be extended in twelve month periods.

Terms of this Covenant:

The Covenant Pastor is employed either

_____ on a full-time basis OR

_____ to serve approximately _____ hours per week.

After reviewing the presbytery's current Minimum Salary Standards, compensation will be as follows:

Effective Salary

Cash Salary (<i>NOT including 403(b) contributions</i>)	
Manse Value or Housing Allowance	
Other ^{1, 2, 3}	†
Manse Equity (<i>paid directly or through 403(b)</i>) ⁴	†
Total Effective Salary	
Employer's <i>Matching Contribution</i> – 403(b) ⁵	†
50% of SECA (Social Security) - <i>unless pastor has opted out of Social Security</i>	

BENEFITS – OPTION 1: Board of Pensions "Pastor's Participation" Plan (37% of Effective Salary)

BENEFITS – OPTION 2: Board of Pensions "Minister's Choice" Plan

Pension, D&D, Temporary Disability and EAP (<i>10% of Effective Salary</i>)	†
Medical – PPO (<i>Cost varies by region</i>)	†
Medical – EPO (<i>Cost varies by region</i>)	†

Vouchered Expenses (Reimbursements)

Continuing Education	
Professional Expenses (<i>incl. mileage at IRS rate</i>)	
Other Vouchered Expenses	†

TOTAL \$ Paid by Church/Employer

TOTAL \$ Paid by Church/Employer	
Vacation (<i>minimum 4 weeks</i>)	
Study Leave (<i>minimum 2 weeks</i>)	
Other Time Off: _____	†

Footnotes

† = Optional

¹Pastor's elective contributions to the PC(USA) 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan are listed here and INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

²Most contributions by a church to a pastor's 403(b) account ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary (see footnote 5).

³Payments made by the employer or reimbursed to the pastor for optional or supplemental insurance ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary unless the same benefits are offered to all employees.

⁴Sums paid or contributed by a church to a deferred compensation plan or other account on behalf of a pastor residing in a manse (to compensate for equity which the pastor forgoes by not owning his or her own residence) ARE INCLUDED in Effective Salary.

⁵When a church matches some or all of a pastor's voluntary contributions to his or her 403(b) account, the church's MATCHING contribution is NOT included in Effective Salary (see footnote 2).

*For more information about Effective Salary, see "Understanding Effective Salary," available on www.pensions.org.

Specifications Noted in the Covenant:

Teaching responsibilities needed of the Covenant Pastor:

Church committees and groups with which the Covenant Pastor will work:

Administrative duties expected of the Covenant Pastor:

Other responsibilities desired of the Covenant Pastor:

Short-range goals for the church identified for attention by the Covenant Pastor and the Session together:

Long-range goals (if applicable) for the church, identified for attention by the Covenant Pastor and the Session together:

Agreed to (with specifications noted above) on _____ (Date)

Signature, Clerk of Session

Signature, Covenant Pastor

Date approved by the Committee on Ministry: _____

(form updated March 2022)

APPENDIX L

Sabbatical Leave Policy [Proposed]

Sabbatical Leave for a pastor, associate pastor, or church certified educator is a planned period of extensive enhancement for ministry and mission. As an extension of the Biblical concept of the Sabbath day, a sabbatical is a time to step away from usual activities for reflection, renewal, and reinvigoration. It is a time of study and contemplation, not a vacation. Recognizing that churches within Northeast Georgia Presbytery vary in size, programming, and needs, the following are not requirements but guidelines, with broad parameters to provide churches information in order to provide pastors, associate pastors, and certified educators with sabbatical opportunities.

Sabbatical Guidelines approved by Northeast Georgia Presbytery:

1. To be eligible, the pastor, associate pastor, or certified educator must have completed six years of consecutive credited service in the same call.
2. Sabbatical Leave with full pay is normally up to three months but can be extended by adding a negotiated portion of study leave or vacation time.
3. The employing church will continue to provide salary, pension and major medical benefits, and continued education reimbursement. Any other benefits may be determined by mutual agreement among the church, the pastor, associate pastor, or certified educator, and the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery.
4. Planning for Sabbatical Leave usually occurs six months to a year prior to beginning the leave.
 - a. A description of the plan of renewal with goals and expectations must be approved by the Session in consultation with the Committee on Ministry before the planned leave. If requested, the Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry or another designated committee may assist the church in securing a supply pastor for the sabbatical period.
 - b. The church will contract for a supply pastor or certified educator during the period of the Sabbatical Leave.
 - c. It is encouraged that pastors and educators discuss the provision of and begin planning for the funding of a Sabbatical Leave with the session at the time the pastor, associate pastor, or certified educator is first called, although it may be necessary to do so later.

A few possibilities for grant funds are available through the Sabbath Sabbatical Assistance program through the Presbyterian Board of Pensions (up to \$4,000 based on eligibility) and the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal program through Christian Theological Seminary (up to \$50,000). Up to \$15,000 of the funds available from CTS may be used by the congregation for expenses and church renewal projects. Information may be found at their websites.

APPENDIX M

Presbytery Family and Medical Leave Guidelines

The care of the family of a pastor, associate pastor, or Christian educator is of utmost importance to the church family of the congregation that is served. Particular arrangements for Family Leave are agreed upon between a pastor and the session at the time of employment or as the need arises. Recognizing that situations of pastors and congregations vary considerably, congregations are strongly encouraged by the Committee on Ministry to provide full pay and benefits for Family Leave for pastors, associate pastors, parish associates, and Christian educators for the reasons and minimum periods that follow below. Leave may be used consecutively or intermittently. Use of vacation time is not required but may be used to extend leave time at the discretion of the pastor/employee. In the event that both parents serve the same congregation, both are entitled to paid family leave and may utilize this leave either simultaneously or sequentially. Following the period of Family Leave, the pastor/employee shall be entitled to return to the same position with the same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description. Paid Family Leave is not intended to be a burden but rather a source of joy as congregations encourage pastors and employees to take time for the good of their families.

The Committee on Ministry stands ready to assist Sessions and Congregations in finding creative solutions for providing this important support for pastors and other staff as they live into new and sometimes vulnerable life circumstances. Whenever circumstances permit, the Committee on Ministry urges pastors, employees, Personnel Committees, and Sessions to work collaboratively in planning for this time of leave to ensure a smooth continuity in the worshipping life of the congregation. The Committee on Ministry liaison shall be kept apprised of any Family Leave arrangements.

Family Leave Policy

The Committee on Ministry strongly urges Church Sessions and Personnel Committees to include in the Terms of Call or contract for employment provision for a minimum of twelve weeks of paid family leave to accommodate the following circumstances:

1. Birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child.
2. To provide care to an ill or disabled family member.
3. To heal following a loss or tragic/traumatic event.

Emergency Medical Leave Policy

For circumstances related to the personal health of a pastor, associate pastor, parish associate,

or Christian educator not covered under the Family Leave Policy, the Committee on Ministry strongly urges Church Sessions and Personnel Committees to include in the Terms of Call or contract for employment provision for a minimum of four weeks of emergency medical leave. This leave may be automatically extended upon the advice of a qualified medical professional. Whenever circumstances permit, the Committee on Ministry urges pastors, employees, Personnel Committees, and Sessions to work collaboratively in planning for this time of leave to ensure a smooth continuity in the worshipping life of the congregation. Recognizing that not all situations can be planned for or anticipated, the Committee on Ministry urges Sessions and Personnel Committees to respond to emergency situations with a spirit of grace and generosity. The Committee on Ministry stands ready to assist congregations and pastors/employees in these times of difficulty. The Committee on Ministry liaison shall be kept apprised of any Emergency Medical Leave arrangements.

NOTE: In some circumstances, it may become necessary and appropriate for the pastor/employee to seek short-term or long-term disability upon the advice of a qualified medical professional.

APPENDIX N

Ministers from other Denominations

Recognizing that it is the Spirit who moves and calls congregations and individuals into covenant partnerships with one another and further, that the Spirit is not bound by denominational lines, the Committee on Ministry authorizes the following policies to provide guidance and structure to these covenant partnerships. These policies are established as a fulfillment of the responsibility of the Committee on Ministry to ensure that scripture is rightly proclaimed and the sacraments rightly administered within the member congregations of Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

For Congregations, Sessions, and Pastor Nominating Committees

In advertising for open positions, a statement shall be included of preference for candidates who are PC(USA) or of a denomination with which the PC(USA) has adopted an agreement of full communion.

For Covenant Relationships

1. The issuance of a call shall follow the same process as calling a non-installed pastoral role and with the approval of the Committee on Ministry, the minister shall be granted full temporary membership in Northeast Georgia Presbytery.
2. As an additional step, the Committee on Ministry will ordinarily require ministers coming from denominations with which the PC(USA) does not have an agreement of full communion to complete training in Reformed Theology, Sacraments, and Polity. The following are approved locations for training:
 1. Savannah Presbytery J. Richard Bass School of the Laity
 2. Lay School of Theology of South Carolina
 3. Church Leadership School of Western North Carolina
 4. Columbia Theological Seminary
 5. Johnson C Smith Theological Seminary
 6. Interdenominational Theological Center
 7. Additional locations are subject to approval by the Committee on Ministry
3. Funding for this training will ordinarily be provided by the congregation issuing the call as an additional line item in the terms of call. This funding should not be designated from the pastor's continuing education funds. Assistance from the Committee on Ministry may be available on a case-by-case basis.
4. The final approval for a course of study is the responsibility of the Committee on Ministry.
5. The Committee on Ministry shall identify and assign a mentor who is an ordained Presbyterian Church (USA) minister to come alongside as a partner.
6. The completion of these training items shall be an important consideration for the renewal of the contract at the 12-month review point.

APPENDIX O
PROCEDURE: ANNUAL SALARY STANDARDS REVIEW
Approved by Committee on Ministry November 12, 2020

The Book of Order requires sessions to review annually the minister's terms of call and propose for congregational action such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements (G-2.0804). It also requires presbyteries to establish minimum compensation standards for pastoral calls and Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the presbytery (G.30303c). An annual review of pastoral compensation packages is conducted to ensure each meet or exceed the minimum guidelines. The following is an outline of the procedures for the annual review.

1. **By January 15** of each year:
 - a. Presbytery office will send a notice to each clerk of session requesting that the Annual Salary Standards Review form be completed and returned by February 28.
 - b. Pastors will be copied on this communication.
 - c. Presbytery office will review these forms for compliance with minimum salary guidelines.
 - d. Presbytery office will tabulate this information into a report.

2. **Beginning February 15:**
 - a. Presbytery office will follow up with clerks of sessions who have not yet submitted the form.

3. **One week before the March Committee on Ministry meeting:**
 - a. Presbytery office will send to Committee on Ministry chair the report (template following) with current information submitted by clerks of session.

4. **At the March Committee on Ministry meeting:**
 - a. COM members will review the report, noting missing information and compensation packages which do not meet the minimum requirements.
 - b. COM liaisons will follow up with those churches whose information is missing, requesting forms be submitted to presbytery office by March 31.
 - c. COM liaisons will reach out to those churches whose pastor compensation falls below the presbytery's minimum requirements.

5. One week before the April Committee on Ministry meeting:

- a. Presbytery office will send to Committee on Ministry members the final copy of the report with current information submitted by clerks of session.

6. At the April Committee on Ministry meeting:

- a. COM members will review the report and recommend that presbytery approve.
- b. The final version of the report will be published in the handbook as part of the COM report for the May Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

APPENDIX P
Guidelines for Covenant Pastor Contract Forms

The following steps will be taken for completion and distribution of Covenant Pastor Contract forms:

1. Contracts completed by the pastor and clerk of session will be sent to the presbytery office, and will be forwarded to the COM chair for review at the next COM meeting.
2. Upon approval by COM, chair will sign the covenant, scan and email to the Business Administrator and the church's COM liaison.
3. The Business Administrator will save the scanned copy to the Minister's electronic file and the Church's electronic file. She will make two hard copies, placing one in the Minister's paper file, and give the second copy to the General Presbyter to place in the Church's paper file.
4. The COM liaison will provide completed (all signatures) copies to the pastor and the clerk of session.

APPENDIX Q

Honorably Retired Status

When a Minister of Word and Sacrament retires, it is rightfully a time to celebrate that individual's faithful obedience in the service of God's church, to affirm God's continued call on the individual's life and ministry, and to build up the individual as they transition to a new stage in their discipleship and formation as a follower of Jesus Christ. To that end, it is appropriate for the Presbytery to grant the status of "Honorably Retired" to individuals who have completed their time of active service. The Committee on Ministry establishes the following policy to govern the granting of this status.

- 1. Upon receiving notification of a Minister of Word and Sacrament's intention to retire, any member of the presbytery may nominate in writing that individual to be granted the status of Honorably Retired. That nomination shall be received by the chair of the Committee on Ministry.**
- 2. The Committee on Ministry shall confirm with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery that there are no pending ecclesiastical or civil proceedings against the nominee. If litigation is pending, the nomination shall be held until resolved.**
- 3. If the way be clear, the Chair shall bring the nomination as an item of business for the Committee on Ministry at either a regular or called meeting of the committee. After discussion and debate, the Committee on Ministry shall vote on a recommendation to Presbytery.**
- 4. The chair shall bring the recommendation to Presbytery as a motion from the Committee on Ministry. Time shall be given on the floor of the Presbytery to speak to the ministry of the individual.**

Revocation of Honorably Retired Status

If accusations are made after the fact that an individual designated as Honorably Retired has acted in a manner inconsistent with this designation, the Committee on Ministry establishes the following policy to govern the revocation of this status.

A Judicial Commission may consider and act upon revocation of Honorably Retired status as part of the disciplinary process outlined in Church Discipline. This policy applies to all who have been previously designated Honorably Retired, whether in this presbytery or elsewhere.