

# TOOLS FOR COMMITTEES ON MINISTRY YOU WILL NEED:



*THE BIBLE*

*THE BOOK OF ORDER - (ANNOTATED EDITION FOR C.O.M.  
MODERATOR)*

*GENERAL ASSEMBLY HANDBOOK FOR COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY  
PDS#72-213-01-001(\$10)*

*ON CALLING A PASTOR: A MANUAL FOR CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS  
PDS#72214-00-40*

*ON SEEKING A CALL: A MANUAL FOR CHURCH PROFESSIONALS CONSIDERING  
NEW MINISTRIES PDS# 72-214-001-01*

YOUR PRESBYTERY'S HANDBOOK OR GUIDELINES FOR YOUR COMMITTEE

GUIDELINES FOR SESSION PERSONNEL COMMITTEES PDS#7221099001(\$5)

LIST OF THE AFLOCK@ FOR YOUR SHEPHERDING CARE - CHURCHES, PASTORS,  
INQUIRERS, CANDIDATES WITH NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE, E-MAIL

NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE, AND E-MAIL OF FREQUENTLY USED RESOURCES SUCH AS:

SYNOD STAFF PERSON

GA CHURCHWIDE PERSONNEL SERVICES -

100 WITHERSPOON ST., LOUISVILLE, KY 40202-1396  
1-888-728-7228

[MMYERS@CTR.PCUSA.ORG](mailto:MMYERS@CTR.PCUSA.ORG)

CPS WEB PAGE - [HTTP://CPS.PCUSA.ORG](http://CPS.PCUSA.ORG)

Church Leadership Connection – [www.clc.pcusa.org](http://www.clc.pcusa.org)

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY OFFICE

100 WITHERSPOON ST., LOUISVILLE, KY 40202-1396  
1-888-728-7228

[MWARREN@CTR.PCUSA.ORG](mailto:MWARREN@CTR.PCUSA.ORG)

BOARD OF PENSIONS - 1-800-773-7752 [WWW.PCUSA.PENSIONS.ORG](http://WWW.PCUSA.PENSIONS.ORG)

PRESBYTERIAN DISTRIBUTION SERVICE - 1-800-524-2612 OR [WWW.PDS.PCUSA.ORG](http://WWW.PDS.PCUSA.ORG)

ALBAN INSTITUTE - 1-800-486-1318

CAREER CENTER AND PASTORAL COUNSELORS MOST OFTEN USED BY YOUR COMMITTEE

*BENEFITS ADMINISTRATIVE HANDBOOK* FOR PRESBYTERIES, SYNODS, ETC. (FROM BOARD OF PENSIONS)

*STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL CONDUCT* (PUBLISHED BY OFFICE OF THE GA; ALSO AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM PCUSA WEB PAGE)

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY OF YOUR PRESBYTERY

RESOURCES SPECIFIC TO THE WORK OF YOUR COMMITTEE AND YOUR SUB-COMMITTEE (SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS IN *COM HANDBOOK*)

**Support for New Pastors:**

Fox, Susan E. and Kurtis C. Hess, *Here I Am, Lord, Now What?; Transition and Survival in the First Parish*, TAS<sup>2</sup>TE of Ministry, Pby of WV - 304-744-7634.

**Triennial Visits:**

*The Triennial Visit Resource Book*, ed. R. H. McCuen, Jr. 1993 PDS

**Congregational Mission Studies:**

Blunk, Henry A., *Smaller Church Mission Study Guide*, Geneva Press, Philadelphia, 1978  
(out-of-print; see your Presbytery Resource Center).

Congregational Mission Studies; Cushman, James, Henry Snedeker-Meier, Bruce Tischler, David Wasserman (from PDS)

Geores, Carl *Building Your Own Model for Cooperative Ministry*  
(For cooperative parish development) PDS # 305 93 923

**Smaller Congregations:**

*New Times-New Call: A Manual of Pastoral Options for Small Churches*, PDS

*Leadership Options for Small Churches*, (Video) C.O.M. Resourcing Coalition. (Available from the Synod of Lakes and Prairies,

*The Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers (APT) -  
Tent-Talk* - APT newsletter; editor David Vellenga 919-847-1806  
(E-mail:

[DAVE\\_VELLENGA@ecunet.org](mailto:DAVE_VELLENGA@ecunet.org))

APT Ecunet meeting: [TENTMAKING@ecunet.org](mailto:TENTMAKING@ecunet.org)

*Tentmakers Manual*, Available through PDS, 1-800-524-2612 (PDS # 305-92-950)

*Cooperative Parish Manual* PDS # 305-93-921

**Christian Educators:**

[www.apcenet.org](http://www.apcenet.org)

APCE Notebook in Support of Educators, 1997 (Presbytery Resource Centers)

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## A SPECIAL NAME

Think about the significance of the name of this committee. This is a committee and not a commission. It has less authority and power than a commission. Presbytery, however, may delegate to the committee the authority "to find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for service of ministers, to approve the examinations of ministers transferring from other presbyteries required by G-11.0402, to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, and to dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, with the provision that all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery." G-11.0502-h). It is still one of the preeminent committees of presbytery, listed in the structures specified in the constitution (G-9.0902). Both the traditions which joined to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) always regarded this committee as preeminent in presbytery. Each held the commission or committee in high regard not only because of its role in church government but also because of the quality and character of the persons who have been its leaders.

The name "ministry", not "the minister" and not "ministerial relations", suggests a broader responsibility than parish ministers and the personnel needs of churches. The Book of Order clearly states, however, that this committee is not to deal with all aspects of the presbytery's program for ministry but to confine itself "to serve as pastor and counselor to the ministers of the presbytery, to facilitate the relations between congregations, ministers and the presbytery, and to settle difficulties on behalf of presbytery when possible and expedient" (G-11.0500).

## SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

### **Between the COM and Executive/General Presbytery or other Presbytery Staff**

1. Setting the Meeting Agenda
  - Begin with "what decisions must be made during this meeting"?
  - Correspondence received by both parties that need COM attention.
  - Sharing Information about churches that both should know.
  - Just before the scheduled meeting for additional information that the COM should be prepared to consider.
2. Responding to communications to the EP that relate to the COMs work. Church members usually call the Executive when they have issues to discuss. It is important that the Executive keeps the COM Moderator informed and that the EP and COM work together. It is equally important that the COM Moderator keep the EP informed of the COM's involvement in congregations. Good communication between the EP and the COM Moderator provides a unified message to congregations and helps both the EP and COM avoid becoming involved in destructive triangles. Personal opinions about whether either is acting appropriately should be discussed in private meetings between the EP and relevant COM members.

### **Between the COM and Stated Clerk**

1. Correspondence received for COM action that will require Book of Order interpretation.
2. Actions taken during meetings that require the attention of the Stated Clerk.
3. Congregations that need pastoral attention from the COM as the result of allegations or charges against the pastor or other professional staff.
4. Many COMs request that the Stated Clerk participate in its meetings for advice and counsel. Immediate communication with the Stated Clerk following all COM meetings is vitally important when the Stated Clerk does not participate in meetings.

### **Between the COM and CPM Moderator**

1. For coordination of receiving first call candidates/pastors into the Presbytery.
  - Which Committee will examine the candidate?
  - Which Committee will request the candidate's file from the presbytery of care when appropriate?
  - Which Committee will examine candidates from your Presbytery that are being called to congregations in your Presbytery?
  - Which Committee will examine candidates from your Presbytery that are being called to congregations in other presbyteries?
2. For coordination of ordaining first call pastors that will be installed in other presbyteries.

### **Between the COM Moderator and Synod and General Assembly**

- Join the New Committees on Ministry Presbynet Meeting
- Become Familiar with Online resources (Ministry and Vocations Menu)
- Become familiar with PDS resources for Committees on Ministry
- Synod Staff and other COM Moderators in your Synod
- The COM Office at the Presbyterian Center – 888-728-7228 extensions 5503 or 5381

### **Organizing for Successful Ministry Within Presbytery**

1. Familiarize yourself with chapter 11.0500 of the *Book of Order*.
2. Ask the Executive/General Presbyter or Stated Clerk what authorities the Presbytery has delegated to the COM.
3. Have an annual orientation and planning retreat.
4. Develop a COM mission statement in consultation with the Executive/General Presbyter, the goals and evaluation entity of presbytery and members of the COM. The Mission Statement will inform the structure of the COM. Organize so that the COM will be devoting about 50% of its time and resources (especially human resources) towards accomplishing its mission. If, for example, your mission is to help build healthy pastoral relationships with congregations, you will want a sub-committee structure to help it happen. You might want a sub-committee for triennial visits and another for providing professional development opportunities and another for training liaisons/vacancy counselors to work with congregations seeking new leadership. There are many organizational structures available once the COM has

- established its mission. The COM's mission statement helps it know when to say "yes" and "no" in this world of increased choices, external pressures and limited time.
5. Develop a leadership team. The chairpersons of the sub-committees of the COM generally fulfill this function.

### **Working with Chairpersons of the COM's sub-committees**

1. Before each meeting

Inform each chairperson of items their group will be considering and provide available information they will need.

2. Between meetings

Check with each chairperson to discover the status of actions approved during the previous Committee meeting.

### **Working with Congregations Seeking Pastoral Leadership**

1. Our 2001 survey of COM Moderators revealed that the COM spends about ¼ of its time assisting congregations during their search for new pastoral leadership. Close contact with congregations seeking new leadership is important. First, it requires a significant amount of COM time and energy so you want to do it well. Secondly, helping congregations locate good leadership that matches well with a congregation not only helps congregations serve more effectively; it reduces the time and energy that COMs spend intervening in congregations (about ¼ of COM time is spent in interventions).
2. Most COMs use trained liaisons or vacancy counselors that are assigned to each church seeking leadership. This person is the primary contact between the congregation and the COM. Get the liaison or vacancy counselor involved as soon as you become aware that a congregation will have a vacancy occurring. The liaison/vacancy counselor begins work by conducting exit interviews with the person(s) leaving and the session. They shepherd the congregation throughout the search process, even to the point of conducting a six to twelve month "check-up" on the new relationship Presbytery has established. Pages 43-67 of the COM Handbook contain additional information about the COM relationship with congregations seeking new leadership. The information is also available online. Start with the PCUSA Homepage ([pcusa.org](http://pcusa.org)) and follow the links from Ministry and Vocations to Resources for Ministers to the COM Handbook link. You can download all portions of the Handbook you need.
3. Provide enough copies of "On Calling a Pastor" to all members of the members of the PNC and make certain that the liaison/vacancy counselors have been trained to use it. This resource is available at the Internet address listed above. Hard copies are also available from PDS free of charge.

### **Moderating Meeting**

1. Prepare and mail the agenda and other information to COM members at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. **Opening Worship/Devotional** – Rotate responsibility among Committee members

3. **A short group-building exercise** – This doesn't have to be long, but it is important for the overall morale of the Committee.
4. **Approving the Agenda** – Doing this early helps avoid having members present difficult issues late in the meeting when members are tired and hoping to go home soon.
5. **Articulate the vision** – Frequent reminders of the COMs mission as it serves the presbytery.
6. **Tend to relationships within the committee** – Frequent assessment of the satisfaction of members with the way the COM is conducting its business. Do all members feel that they are respected, invited to participate and have important work to do on the committee's behalf? Two useful worksheets are attached in Appendix A for your use as you frequently test the climate of your Committee (*GET "HOW IT FEELS HERE" AND "FINDING NORMS"*)
7. **Foster communication and deliberation** – assure that all issues are fully discussed before a vote is taken. Be open to deferring a decision until members are satisfied that the decision is ready to be made.
8. **Guide decision-making** – help keep the discussion on task. Use your best judgment here. A certain amount of free discussion is good for COM morale, but continued detours into subjects not related to the matter before the Committee will have a demoralizing effect on the members. Don't be hesitant to express your opinion on matters but let others provide their input first. This will help you avoid leaving the impression that you are dictating the decisions of the Committee. Make certain you present your opinion in a collegial tone. It is important that those with opposing views don't feel "put-down".
9. **Monitor follow-through between meetings (refers to assignments to COM members).**
  - Make certain actions and people are connected.
  - Contact persons responsible for actions to discover progress or difficulties.

### **Continual Training for Members of the COM**

1. Many COMs begin their meeting with a 30-minute training experience. These experiences can be rotated with group-building experiences during meetings.
2. Training in a particular portion of the COM's work is often included in the annual retreat.
3. Synod sponsored leadership-training events.
4. Your COM office in Louisville conducts training during Synod events or with clusters of presbyteries. Some of the training events we offer are described below.

### **TRAINING EVENTS OFFERED BY THE COM OFFICE** **Events conducted in Synods, Clusters of Presbyteries, Presbyteries**

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The **Leadership Effectiveness Analysis (LEA)  
**For COM Team Building and Individual Leadership Skills****

**Leadership is:**

- ❖ **the ability to influence others. Leaders know what they want to do and how to enlist the help of others to make it happen,**
  - ❖ understanding your own power and how to use it intelligently,
  - ❖ **a function of behavior, not how you think or your attitude. It is your words and actions, therefore it can be learned and changed.**
  - ❖ a function of how other people perceive your behavior. Their perception of your behavior influences their reaction to you.
1. We can conduct Synod and Presbytery Clusters events. Participants will learn about their own leadership style and design a plan to use them more effectively. COMs will learn about their Committee leadership effectiveness and how to work more effectively as a group.
  2. We can train Presbytery COMs to interpret the LEA so that they can conduct leadership training events for their church professionals.

**We maintain a list of approved interpreters that can conduct meetings in your area. Contact Michael Warren at 888-728-7228 X 5381. Email [mwarren@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:mwarren@ctr.pcusa.org).**

**The Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (MBTI)**

For COM Team Building

Members will learn which aspects of the COM's ministry appeal to them most naturally.

COMs will look at their structure and how to best use their members to avoid burnout.

**Contact Michael Warren at 888-728-7228 X 5381, [mwarren@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:mwarren@ctr.pcusa.org).**

## **THE COM - WORKING WITH CONGREGATIONS**

### Guiding congregations during the search for new leadership

- Effective Liaisons from Exit Interview through six-month pastoral visit with new leaders.
- Using the Church Leadership Connection.
- Using the Strategic Directions Questionnaire (SDQ) to clarify leadership needs. The SDQ is a companion to the LEA described above. It helps build mutual expectations for members of the PNC and clarifies the leadership needs of their congregation.

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### Helping build healthy relationships

- Supporting first call pastors.
- Six – twelve month after installation visits to discuss the pastor/session working relationship.
- The Triennial Visit as a pastoral visit.
- Clarifying roles and expectations.

### **The COM and the AAEEEO Policy of the General Assembly**

One of the major responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry is to insure the implementation of equal employment opportunity for ministers and candidates. The Book of Order states: "It shall provide for the implementation of equal opportunity employment for ministers and candidates without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, age, or marital status. In the case of each call, it shall report to the presbytery the steps in this implementation taken by the calling group" (G-11.0502-g).

### **Confidentiality**

**Confidentiality** about the work of the COM is critical to the integrity of the Committee and the level of trust the members of your presbytery will place in it. Continually caution members of the COM that matters before it are sensitive and should be held in strictest confidence even to the exclusion of spouses and close friends.

One of the most difficult tasks the COM faces is differentiating between counselor and administrative loyalty to the PCUSA. Your role as counselor to ministers and as steward of the relationships between pastors and congregations may conflict on occasion. Whichever role you as Moderator and the Executive Presbyter intend to fulfill should be made explicitly clear to persons you are assisting. Your ministers should know whether the information they are giving you is confidential or will be incorporated into any reference you might offer on their behalf.