Presbytery of Eastern Virginia

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

2014

VACANCIES MANUAL

Provisionally Adopted September 2, 2014
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I. PURPOSE

The intent of this document is to provide the Commission on Ministry liaison to a church in transition with quick and simple guidelines for the ministry and work of the vacancies process. Commission members often become liaisons to churches without prior experience in assisting with pastoral vacancies, and must gain the experience needed only by on-the-job training. Thus, the main body of this document offers a brief overview of the work of the liaison from the time of the first interaction with the vacant church until a new pastoral call has been completed. Additional details associated with each step of this work are collected in the cited references and attachments.

Liaisons are expected to have a thorough understanding of the PNC Handbook, which is to be used in conjunction with this manual.

II. ROLE OF THE LIAISON TO A CHURCH IN TRANSITION

The Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison for a church is the spokesperson for the COM during the search process and provides any and all necessary guidance to the church. Thus, the liaison should be party to any initial visit with representatives from the church in order to establish this “single voice” point of contact. When the appointed liaison is no longer a member of COM a new liaison must be appointed as soon as possible to ensure continuity.

The degree of guidance required of the liaison will vary considerably from church to church. Some church laity will be very familiar with the work of COM and the search process, while others may have no idea what is required. In the latter case, the liaison may need to meet often with church representatives especially after the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is elected. Even so, once the responsibilities of the congregation, session, and PNC are understood the liaison may need no more than a monthly contact (usually by telephone) to assure a smooth search process. It is the responsibility of the PNC, through study and prayer, to understand the mission and particular needs of its congregation and to fill those needs as the Lord guides them. In most cases, the liaison should step back and let the Spirit lead.

The COM liaison should read the material in this manual carefully and refer to it at each phase of the search process. Attachment A, Vacancy Process Checklist, should be kept by the liaison and filled in as each event is conducted. When the search process is completed, this form should be filed in the church’s folder at the presbytery.

Attachment B, Session Guidelines for Seeking a Pastor or Associate Pastor, provides guidelines for the session. Attachment C, Process Chart, provides an excellent visual example of both the duties and order of duties of all involved parties - the congregation, session, PNC, and presbytery. Attachments B and C should be given to and discussed with the session prior to the exit interview if convenient.

III. PROCEDURE WHEN A VACANCY OCCURS

1) The liaison shall send Attachment D, Ethical Responsibilities of Pastor and Congregation (When a Pulpit Becomes Vacant), to the departing pastor and the clerk of session.
2) The liaison will notify the COM Moderator, Vice-Moderator for Vacancies, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the impending vacancy.

3) Ideally, the liaison will attend the session meeting where the pastor announces his or her departure. At the first opportunity, the liaison will meet with the session to explain the vacancy process and discuss the guidelines and process chart (Attachments B and C).

4) The liaison assists the session in forming a Transition Team, typically composed of 3-5 current elders, to identify and recommend a pastor to serve the church during the transition period (see Section V, Church Leadership During Vacancy, below).

5) In the case of a pastor or associate pastor vacancy, the liaison arranges for a PEVA representative to go to the morning worship service the Sunday following the last Sunday the minister is in the pulpit to DECLARE THE POSITION VACANT.

6) The liaison will conduct exit interviews with the pastor and the session (see Section IV, Exit Interviews, below). A written report of both exit interviews will be given to the COM.

7) The COM will appoint a moderator of the session (if there is no pastor) in consultation with the session and the suggested appointee. The liaison will notify the appointee and the Clerk of Session immediately, exchanging contact information of the clerk and appointee.

8) Only after the position has been declared vacant, the exit interviews completed, and a Mission Statement has been approved by COM may the session of a local congregation begin the selection of a Pastor Nominating Committee.

IV. EXIT INTERVIEWS

The liaison conducts separate interviews with the exiting pastor and with the session. The primary purpose of these interviews is to be as helpful as possible to both the departing pastor and to the church he or she is leaving. The interviews should provide valuable insight into the nature of the congregation (strengths, weaknesses, expectations, etc.) that will help the session and interim pastor, and alert the COM to any issues that may call for special care during the transition period.

1) Scheduling the Interview
   a) The liaison should invite another member of the COM to assist in the interviews. Ideally, the team will be a ruling elder and a teaching elder. The General Presbyter may also be invited to attend.
   b) In churches with more than one pastor, the liaison may offer to meet separately with the remaining pastor(s).
   c) The exit interview with the pastor should occur shortly before departure. When contacting the pastor to set up the interview, be sure to include the spouse in the invitation.
   d) The exit interview with the session (and other pastor(s) if applicable) should occur soon after the pastor’s departure. When scheduling the interview, the liaison should encourage the session to invite others in addition to the active ruling elders if they wish.

2) Conducting the Interview
   a) Arrive early so the interview will begin at the agreed upon time.
b) Introduce yourself (and your COM colleague, if applicable).
c) Begin by assuring the interviewee(s) that your purpose is to be as helpful as possible, both to them and to the church.
d) Sample questions are listed in Attachment E for pastors and Attachment F for the session and remaining pastor(s). These are suggested questions that may be adapted or expanded as desired.
e) A copy of Attachment D, Ethical Responsibilities of Pastor and Congregation, should be given to every participant and discussed at these interviews. The liaison should also request that the session distribute this document to the congregation.
f) When interviewing the session, the liaison may take the opportunity to give an overview of the Vacancies process and discuss Church Leadership during the Vacancy (see Section V, below).

3) Reporting
After each interview, the liaison prepares a written summary and sends a draft to the participant(s) for review. The liaison sends copies of the final summaries to the departing pastor, session and the COM.

V. CHURCH LEADERSHIP DURING VACANCY

It is the responsibility of the session to set the direction of church leadership during the vacancy period. The liaison should help the session make informed, faith-based choices that will help to position the church for a healthy future.

1) Intentional Interim Pastor
a) It is highly recommended that an Intentional Interim Pastor be engaged for the vacancy period.
   1. PEVA believes that well-trained Intentional Interim pastors enhance the ministry of our congregations. An Intentional Interim Pastor is trained specifically to guide churches in transition, to aid in healing, conduct the mission study and address concerns that may hinder the search for a new, installed pastor.
   2. An Intentional Interim Pastor is selected for a period of one year, with a possibility of renewal for up to two additional periods of six months each, up to a maximum of two years. An Intentional Interim Pastor is rarely eligible to serve as an installed pastor; such cases must be approved by a ¾ vote of the presbytery.
b) Selection Process
   1. The session appoints a Transition Team, which is responsible for interviewing candidates forwarded by presbytery and recommending an interim pastor to the session. The liaison should attend the first meeting of the Transition Team to review the process, emphasize confidentiality and offer assistance.
   2. No congregational meeting is required to select an interim pastor. However, the interim pastor must be examined by the COM and the Terms of Call approved before the pastor can begin work at the church.
   3. Intentional Interim Pastors ordinarily will be paid the same as the previous pastor. This is advisable, both to attract a skilled, experienced interim pastor and to maintain continuity in giving and budgeting in anticipation of the new pastor’s compensation package.
   4. The liaison should attend the new pastor’s installation service.
c) Attachments G, H, I, and J contain PEVA’s Guidelines for Intentional Interim Ministry, followed by a sample covenant and templates for the quarterly reports to COM and six-month evaluation. The liaison should provide copies of these guidelines to the Transition Team, session and interim pastor, noting the requirements for reporting, evaluation and exit interviews.

2) Other Church Leadership Possibilities
   a) A Designated Pastor is a two to four-year call, appropriate in situations where a church’s stability would be challenged by a full vacancy process, the church is not positioned to attract applicants, or is in need of redevelopment. The session chooses from a limited number of applicants recommended by PEVA. This is a called position and the Designated Pastor must be elected at a called congregational meeting. A Designated Pastor is eligible to become an Installed Pastor after two years.
   b) A Temporary Pastor, sometimes referred to as a Stated Supply Pastor, serves in a church that is not seeking an Installed Pastor. The session selects the candidate. The candidate, covenant and terms of call must be approved by the COM. The relationship is established only by the presbytery and shall extend for a period not to exceed twelve months renewable with the approval of the COM. A Temporary Pastor is not ordinarily eligible to serve as the church’s next Installed Pastor.
   c) In some cases a session may choose to use an Occasional Supply Pastor during a vacancy but this is strongly discouraged by COM except on a very temporary basis. A list of Occasional Supply Pastors is maintained by the Presbytery Office and is on the PEVA Web site.
   d) The call form for a Designated Pastor and agreement for a Temporary Pastor are provided as Attachments K and L, respectively.

3) Moderator of Session
Regardless of the type of ministry chosen during the vacancy, it is the responsibility of COM to appoint a moderator of the session. In most instances, the Interim, Designated or Temporary Pastor will serve as the moderator.

VI. MISSION STUDY

It is PEVA practice to require churches to conduct a mission study after a pastor leaves and prior to electing a PNC. A mission study is required for all installed calls (including Designated Pastor) and may be waived by COM only if a similar study was conducted within the prior two years. The study should involve as many of the congregation as possible since it is important, particularly at this time, for the total congregation to understand and concur with the ministry and work of the church.

If the church has an interim pastor, he or she will guide the church through the mission study; otherwise, the COM liaison will consult with presbytery on resources available to the congregation. Work with the session on a Mission Study that will be most beneficial to the congregation. A mission study typically includes:

- Review of church history
- Mission statement
- Statistics – demographics
- Financial history and projections
• Vision, as compiled from congregational input.

Once the study is completed, it should be summarized in a Mission Overview. The session submits the Mission Overview to the COM, requesting authorization to proceed to elect a PNC. A sample Mission Overview template is in Attachment M. If the Mission Study is waived, the session need only submit their Mission Overview to COM.

VII. THE ROLE OF THE LIAISON IN THE SEARCH PROCESS

When COM approves the Mission Overview, the liaison notifies the Clerk of Session that the church is authorized to begin the search process.

1) Forming the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)
The liaison should offer to assist the session in preparing a charge to the congregational nominating committee. The session and congregation give exclusive search authority to the PNC; once the PNC is elected, the rest of the congregation and the session have no role until the PNC presents their nominee for vote at a congregational meeting. The liaison should also meet or communicate with the church’s Nominating Committee to give advice on the make-up of the PNC.
   a) There is no set number of PNC members. PNC members should be:
      • knowledgeable about the church,
      • representative of the whole congregation,
      • familiar with Presbyterian theology and government,
      • able to make a significant time commitment,
      • willing to listen for the voice of God and not be swayed by personal desires or church politics, and
      • able to honor confidentiality.
   b) The liaison should attend the congregational meeting when the PNC is elected, to answer questions or advise the congregation on the election process and work of the PNC.
   c) Once the PNC is elected, the liaison should encourage the session to communicate the PNC members’ names to the entire congregation with a request for prayers as the PNC conducts its work. Some churches publish a flyer with photos and bios.

2) Orienting the PNC
The liaison attends the PNC’s first meeting to orient the members and help them get organized. This will take 30 to 45 minutes. The liaison needs to take care at this meeting not to confuse the PNC with too much detail, but to provide a brief and general overview. Have a copy of the PEVA PNC Handbook for each member, along with a handout with the liaison’s contact information.
   a) A new COM liaison should invite an experienced member of COM to assist with this orientation
   b) Orientation consists of familiarizing the PNC with the contents of the PEVA PNC Handbook, giving particular emphasis to:
      • Getting organized: electing leaders and setting regular meeting times (weekly is suggested—it’s easy to cancel an unnecessary meeting).
      • Having a budget for interview expenses (both PNC and candidates), and guidance from session on salary range, benefits and moving expenses.
      • Confidentiality in the search process and in communications with candidates.
      • The Ministry Information Form (MIF).
- Communicating regularly with session and the congregation, to build and retain trust.
- Presbytery’s role (MIF review/approval, Executive Checks before face-to-face meetings, COM examination before congregational vote on the selected candidate). Note that the COM meets the first Tuesday of each month and agenda items need to be sent at least a week in advance.
- Differentiating between the Exec Check, reference checks and background checks.

c) The liaison should emphasize the importance of adhering closely to these rules.
d) Once the PNC is clear on its responsibilities the liaison should step back and let the Spirit lead. Only on rare occasions should the liaison be a participant at subsequent PNC meetings, but rather should work behind the scenes with the PNC chairperson to assure an orderly and rewarding search process.
e) The liaison should be copied on committee minutes and e-mails.
f) Following the orientation meeting with the PNC, the liaison shall give the name, address and telephone number of the PNC Chair to the Vice Moderator for Vacancies and Administrative Secretary at presbytery.

3) The Ministry Information Form (MIF)
   a) The liaison will review and certify the MIF as being a fair representation of the congregation, making sure it meets the minimums for compensation as established by the presbytery. It is desirable, but not always possible, for the liaison to offer editorial comments on the completed MIF prior to the PNC submitting it to the session.
   b) Once the session has approved the MIF, the liaison forwards it to the COM Moderator, Vice Moderator for Vacancies, General Presbyter, General Clerk and PEVA Administrator, for review at the next COM meeting. The liaison is the PNC advocate at the COM review meeting and should be prepared to attest to the accuracy of the MIF at that time.
   c) The liaison notifies the PNC Chairperson when the MIF is approved or if COM requests any changes.
   d) The liaison can advise the PNC on how to obtain the online password from the PEVA Administrator, who can assist with entering the MIF in the system, and receiving PIFs through the matching process.

4) The Selection Process
   The liaison should stay in touch with the PNC Chairperson by phone and/or e-mail. Frequency depends on the PNC’s level of experience and any issues that arise.
   a) The liaison should get a status report each month from the PNC Chair prior to the COM meeting to keep the Vacancy Chart updated and advise the COM of the progress of the church in its search
   b) When the PNC is ready to have face-to-face contact with candidates, the liaison sends the finalists’ names and PIFs to the General Presbyter for Executive Checks.
   c) If needed, the liaison may offer to assist in finding a neutral pulpit.

5) Processing the Call
   a) Prior to the session calling a congregational meeting for the purpose of calling a pastor or associate pastor, the nominee, whether a member of PEVA or not, must be satisfactorily examined by the COM.
   b) The liaison should review the draft call and covenant, ensuring all elements are included, such as sabbatical leave.
c) The liaison may call the chosen candidate to introduce him/herself and answer any questions about COM or the examination process.
d) The liaison forwards the finalist’s PIF, Statement of Faith, Faith Journey, Covenant and Terms of Call to COM at least ten days before the examination and coordinates COM’s examination with the Vice Moderator for Vacancies.
e) The liaison will inform the PNC of the results of the examination, the approval of the Terms of Call and Covenant, and will advise the PNC Chair to request a congregational meeting be called by the session to present their nominee. Notice must be given to the entire congregation to include two consecutive Sundays. It is recommended that the election be by secret ballot.
f) The liaison may review the PNC’s report and recommendation to the congregation, and should attend the congregational meeting.
g) When the congregation has issued a call, the moderator and PNC chair will immediately contact the minister nominee by telephone to ascertain his/her willingness to accept the Call having heard the results of the vote by the congregation.
h) The PNC Chair will send to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery a signed copy of the Terms of Call and a copy of the completed Covenant.
i) When the congregation has issued a call, COM will present its recommendation at the next stated meeting of presbytery.

VIII. INSTALLATION

1) The liaison should advise the PNC to clarify with the minister who will be responsible for expenses incurred with regard to his/her installation.

2) The “Request to Appoint Commission to Ordain and Install” form, along with suggestions for the service, will be sent to the minister by the Stated Clerk following the issuance of a call by the congregation.

3) The liaison should attend the new pastor’s installation service.

IX. FOLLOW UP

1) The liaison should keep in regular contact with the new pastor, session and PNC, especially during the first six months. If not dissolved at the congregational meeting, the PNC typically remains in place through the first six months of the new pastor’s term, to support and advise him or her through the pastor’s six month evaluation.

2) At the six-month mark, the liaison should remind the PNC and session that a six-month evaluation is due. This evaluation can be conducted by the PNC, the session, or a Personnel Committee appointed by session.

X. REFERENCES

1) Book of Order, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II


4) Guidelines for Fair Compensation for Ministers, CLPs and Certified Christian Educators, Presbytery of Eastern Virginia (updated annually).
**ATTACHMENT A**
**VACANCY PROCESS CHECK LIST**

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<td></td>
<td>_______ Form Transition Team</td>
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<td>_______ Exit Interview with Minister</td>
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<td>_______ Exit Interview with Session</td>
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<td>_______ Exit Interview with other pastors, if applicable</td>
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<td>Position Declared Vacant</td>
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<td>Appoint Moderator of Session</td>
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<td>Mission Overview to COM</td>
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**Persons Approved for Serious Consideration (Exec Check Completed)**

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<thead>
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<td>_______ Draft Covenant and Call reviewed</td>
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<td>_______ Terms &amp; Covenant Approved by COM</td>
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<td>Examination Approved by COM</td>
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<td>Congregational Meeting to Extend Call</td>
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<td>Signed Call Received by Stated Clerk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Installation Service</td>
</tr>
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ATTACHMENT B
SESSION GUIDELINES FOR SEEKING A PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

A. Call a congregational meeting to act on the request of the minister for presbytery to dissolve the pastoral or associate pastoral relationship. (An exit interview will be conducted with the pastor prior to departure.)

B. Your liaison to the Commission on Ministry (COM) will arrange an exit interview after the minister has departed.

C. Your liaison will arrange for a presbytery representative to be present, the first Sunday after the pastor leaves, or shortly thereafter, to “Declare the Position Vacant”, and assure the congregation of the presbytery’s ongoing support during the search process.

D. Distribute copies of “Ethical Responsibilities of Pastor and Congregation” to the congregation (provided by your liaison).

E. If the session decides not to obtain an Interim, Designated, or Stated Supply Pastor, make arrangements with your liaison to have COM appoint a moderator for the session. The moderator should be compensated in accordance with presbytery guidelines.

F. Arrange for a Mission Study to be conducted involving the congregation and summarize the study with a written Mission Overview.

G. Submit your Mission Overview, along with a request for permission to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to your liaison at least ten days before the next scheduled COM meeting (first Tuesday of each month).

H. Your liaison will advise you of COM’s action on your Mission Overview. After approval, your church will be authorized to form a PNC. There is no set number of PNC members, typically 5 to 8. The church nominating committee should seek PNC members who are:
   - knowledgeable about the church,
   - representative of the whole congregation,
   - familiar with Presbyterian theology and government,
   - able to make a significant time commitment,
   - willing to listen for the voice of God and not be swayed by personal desires or church politics, and
   - able to honor confidentiality.

I. The PNC must be elected by a called congregational meeting.

J. Note that the session and congregation give exclusive search authority to the PNC. Once the PNC is elected, the rest of the congregation and the session have no role until the PNC presents their nominee for vote at a congregational meeting.

K. As soon as the PNC is elected, call your COM liaison. Your liaison will attend the first meeting of the PNC to orient them and explain the process.

L. Give the PNC general compensation guidelines for the new pastor, including moving expenses, in accordance with PEVA’s Guidelines for Fair Compensation.

M. In consultation with the PNC Chair, ensure a line is inserted in the Operating Budget to cover PNC expenses.

N. The Ministry Information Form (MIF) is presented to the session, by the PNC Chair, for approval and signature of the Clerk of Session prior to forwarding to the COM for its approval.

O. When the PNC has selected a candidate, the candidate must be examined and the terms of call and covenant approved by the COM. After COM approval, the session shall convene a congregational meeting to call the new pastor.

P. A minister of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, or a moderator approved by the presbytery to moderate the session, must serve as moderator of the congregational meeting. The vote should be by secret ballot.
Q. The PNC normally stays in place to serve as a transition team during the first six months of the new pastor’s term.
R. Ensure that the new pastor is given a personnel evaluation after six months.
## ATTACHMENT C
### PROCESS CHART WHEN A CONGREGATION IS SEEKING A PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

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<th>CONGREGATION</th>
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<th>PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (PNC)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Notify COM Liaison of impending vacancy.</td>
<td>1. Notify COM and PEVA of impending vacancy (p. 4).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Read and share “Ethical Responsibilities” form as appropriate (p. 3).</td>
<td>2. Send Attachment D—“Ethical Responsibilities” form to departing pastor and clerk of session (p. 3).</td>
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<td>3. Participate in exit interview with COM Liaison (p. 4).</td>
<td>3. Conduct exit interview with session and departing pastor (p. 4).</td>
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<td>4. Meet w/rep(s) of COM re: Interim, makeup of PNC, moderator of session, Mission Study (p. 4).</td>
<td>4. Meet with session to discuss guidelines and process. Assist in forming transition team; arrange for PEVA rep to declare position vacant. COM appoints moderator (p. 4).</td>
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<td>5. Appoint transition team to interview interim candidates (p. 5).</td>
<td>5. Meet with transition team, assist with interim selection (p. 5).</td>
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<td>6. Charge the church nominating committee to nominate members of the PNC (p. 7).</td>
<td>7. Meet w/COM liaison for orientation (p. 7).</td>
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<td>7. Call congregational meeting to elect PNC (p. 7).</td>
<td>7. Meet w/PNC for orientation (p. 7).</td>
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<td>10. Receive and review PIFs - sort, evaluate, prioritize for consideration - meet EEO requirements - Preliminary contact only.</td>
<td>11. Monthly status reports to COM Liaison (p. 8).</td>
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<td>11. Monthly status reports to COM Liaison (p. 8).</td>
<td>11. Maintain regular contact with PNC.</td>
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<td>12. Request approval for face-to-face contact; send PIFs to COM liaison (p. 8).</td>
<td>12. Send finalists’ PIFs to General Presbyter for exec checks (p. 8).</td>
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**CONTINUE INVOLVEMENT IN MINISTRY AND PROGRAMS**

**CONTINUE INTERIM WORK OF SESSION AND CONGREGATION**
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<tr>
<td>18. Attend congregational meeting; issue call and approve terms of call and covenant (p. 9).</td>
<td>13. Conduct interviews, reference checks on approved candidates; hear preach.</td>
<td>13. Offer to assist in finding neutral pulpit if needed.</td>
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<td>14. Negotiate covenant and call, forward draft to COM Liaison for review (p. 9).</td>
<td>14. Review covenant and call to ensure minimums and all elements covered (p. 9).</td>
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<td>15. Schedule candidate to be examined by COM.</td>
<td>15. Coordinate COM exam with COM Vice Moderator for Vacancies (p. 9).</td>
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<td>16. Accompany candidate to COM examination.</td>
<td>16. COM examine candidate, review covenant and call.</td>
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<td>17. After COM approval, request session call a congregational meeting to present nominee (p. 9).</td>
<td>17. COM approve call and covenant; Liaison notify PNC of results of exam and authorize PNC chair to request a congregational meeting be called by session to present nominee (p. 9).</td>
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<td>18. Attend congregational meeting; issue call and approve terms of call and covenant (p. 9).</td>
<td>18. Present report and nominate candidate at congregational meeting.</td>
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<td>21. With PNC and pastor, evaluate terms of call and covenant at six month mark (p. 9).</td>
<td>21. With Session and pastor, evaluate terms of call and covenant at six month mark (p. 9).</td>
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18. Attend congregational meeting; issue call and approve terms of call and covenant (p. 9).  
17. After COM approval, call a congregational meeting (p. 9).  
14. Negotiate covenant and call, forward draft to COM Liaison for review (p. 9).  
15. Schedule candidate to be examined by COM.  
16. Accompany candidate to COM examination.  
17. After COM approval, request session call a congregational meeting to present nominee (p. 9).  
18. Present report and nominate candidate at congregational meeting.  
20. Install minister at congregational worship service.  
18. Attend congregational meeting; issue call and approve terms of call and covenant (p. 9).  
20. Assist with installation.  
21. With PNC and pastor, evaluate terms of call and covenant at six month mark (p. 9).  
19. Introduce pastor to Presbytery at next stated meeting. Presbytery appoint an Installation Commission (p.9).  
20. Attend installation.  
21. Maintain regular contact with session, pastor and PNC (p. 9).
ATTACHMENT D
ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTOR AND CONGREGATION
(When a Pulpit Becomes Vacant)

One of the most important relationships Christians have is that between parishioner and pastor. This relationship is comparable to a family, especially when pastoral relationships are long and the bonds of affection run deep between a congregation and the pastor who has been with them during times of crisis and of joy. It is very difficult for church members to understand that the relationship must change significantly when a pastor accepts a call to serve elsewhere or retires and that they must share their faith journey with another pastor whom God has called to fill that role. It is also difficult for the departing pastor, and especially for the retiring pastor, who has devoted so much of his or her life to ministry. As retirement is a challenging transition for all working people, it is more so in a profession where work and identity are so closely bound.

The Book of Order makes the following statement: Former pastors, associate pastors, and assistant pastors may officiate at services for members of a particular church, or at services within its properties, only upon invitation from the moderator of the session or, in case of the inability to contact the moderator, from the clerk of session.

Nothing more really needs to be added. We all know, however, that human nature being as it is, the following is directed by the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia through its Commission on Ministry:

TO THE SESSION OF THE CHURCH: The session should read and/or distribute this paper to the congregation, urging them to “let go” of the former pastor. It is the session’s responsibility to use its discretion as to how best to help the congregation to make this transition.

TO THE CONGREGATION: Church members should not request or expect any pastoral functions from the former pastor. It is embarrassing for the former pastor and is not ethically proper for members of the congregation to make requests of their former pastor. It is best for all concerned that the interim pastor or the newly installed pastor be the person to whom members of the congregation turn to for their pastoral needs.

TO THE DEPARTING PASTOR: Remember you are no longer the pastor and that you must abide by the Book of Order. Before you depart, advise the congregation of the change that is to take place in your relationship.

TO THE RETIRING PASTOR: Remember you are no longer the pastor and that you must abide by the Book of Order. Before you retire, advise the congregation of the change that is to take place in your relationship. If you continue to live in the same area, it is advisable for you and your spouse to refrain from attending regular worship for a period of time, even after the new pastor is installed.

TO THE STATED SUPPLY AND/OR THE INTERIM PASTOR: Remember the former pastor is a colleague in ministry, not a rival. You are present to help the congregation and the former pastor who remains in the community through this period of adjustment. Be sensitive to the situation and the needs of both parties.

TO THE NEW INSTALLED PASTOR: Remember that the former pastor is your colleague in ministry, not a rival, and you follow a person who meant much to this congregation and to whom the congregation meant much to her/him. Do not be overly sensitive to the congregation and
their memories of this person. You will enhance your own chances of the love and respect that person had from the congregation by becoming that person’s friend, especially if that person remains in the community. If you should for some reason have a problem with this person’s presence, discuss it with her/him.

TO THE PASTORS OF PRESBYTERY: When a pastor retires and remains a member of the presbytery, you should reach out to this person and invite her/him and their spouse to worship in the church where you serve. That person can become a source of help for you!

TO THE PRESBYTERY: The presbytery should be much more sensitive to assisting its retired pastors in making this transition in their lives. The Nominating Committee should use these persons to serve on various committees. The Commission on Ministry should encourage these persons to pursue being Stated Supply, Occasional Supply, and Interim Pastors.
ATTACHMENT E
EXIT INTERVIEW WITH THE PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Pastor: ________________________________  Interview Date _____________________

Interviewer(s) ________________________________________________________________

Our purpose in this interview is to learn how we may be supportive of you during your transition from this pastorate. At the same time, we want to use your insight and wisdom in helping the session of the church you are leaving. Your experience is unique and we want to learn from that in planning for the future.

Ideas that are gathered from this interview, as well as the interviews with the session (and those invited by the session), will be put in summary form and given to you and the session.

Confidentiality will be maintained by avoiding direct quotes, or even any indirect reference to individuals. Only ideas and concepts will be shared. If there are things you would like for us to communicate with the session with your name attached, we will consider that.

Our questions are not exhaustive. You may think of other concerns you will want to add as we go along. You also will have an opportunity to review a draft of our report and make changes and additions before it is forwarded to the session and the Commission on Ministry.

1. What do you consider your most significant contribution to the life of this congregation during your pastorate?

2. Perhaps there are other accomplishments that have been satisfying but may not fall under the category of “significant.” If so, would you share those with us?

3. What would you say has been your most enjoyable accomplishment while in this position?

4. What was the reaction of the congregation when you announced your plans to leave?

5. Each pastor has some dreams as well as expectations when arriving at a new place of service. As you recall how you felt when you arrived, can you compare those feelings with what actually happened?

6. If you were beginning this pastorate now, would you approach any part of it in a different way than you did?

7. Are there concerns present in this position that you hope the session will address before the next pastor is called?

8. To the pastor who is moving: Calls come in various ways. Some feel called away in greater degree than they feel called to a new place. How would you characterize the call to which you are responding?

9. To the pastor who is retiring: All of us dream of retirement for a variety of reasons. Now that you are standing on the threshold of this experience, what plans do you have, such as where you plan to live, do you plan to travel, are you available for supply preaching, and so on?
10. As you consider your next steps, what can the presbytery provide to assist you in realizing your dreams?

11. As you know, we plan to share results of these interviews with the session. Are there messages you would like to send to the session? Do you want this to come directly from you, or indirectly from our impressions of our total interview process?

12. Have you discussed with the session your mutual expectations about your future relationship with this, your former pastorate?

13. To the spouse: Are there things you would like to add, either in a general comment or a specific concern you feel needs more attention?

As this pastoral relationship began, certain expectations existed between you and this congregation. Now that you plan to leave, certain different expectations come into view. The Commission on Ministry has prepared a paper on the ethics of the clergy with an appropriate part dealing with relationships with former pastorates. These are guidelines that will help you in making decisions about conducting funerals, weddings, and other forms of ministry. The main concern all of us have is to honor current pastoral relationships.
ATTACHMENT F
EXIT INTERVIEW WITH THE SESSION
AND THOSE INVITED BY THE SESSION TO PARTICIPATE

You are aware of the responsibility of the session in the governance of the local church. The Commission on Ministry is prepared to give you whatever assistance you feel you need. Our concern in this process is to learn from the pastoral relationship that is now drawing to a close. Your opinions are important in this entire process. It is our intention to communicate with the departing pastor and the session, informing all of what we have learned, and making any appropriate suggestions for the future.

Confidentiality will be maintained. If you request some item to be communicated with your name attached, that will be done. Otherwise, no names will be used in the summary report.

The questions below are not exhaustive. You may think of other concerns you will want to add as we go along. You also will have an opportunity to review a draft of our report and make changes and additions before it is forwarded to the session and the Commission on Ministry.

1. As you know your congregation, what positive contributions has your pastor made during this pastoral relationship?

2. Do you feel your pastor has unique strengths that need to be noted?

3. From your perspective, have you seen growth in your pastor over the years of this pastorate?

4. From your perspective, are there specific weaknesses you see in your pastor that you feel can be strengthened?

5. As you know your congregation, do you feel there are areas of concern that the session needs to address before a new pastor is called?

6. What personal hopes and dreams do you have for this church?

7. Are there any specific messages you would like to send to the pastor? If so, do you want your name used, or simply share impressions with the pastor from our total interview process?

You may feel more comfortable with putting your comments in writing. If this is true, you may send them by mail to your liaison with the presbytery’s Commission on Ministry, who will help you through this process.

Liaison Name:
E-mail:
Phone:
Cell:
Introduction. The Presbytery of Eastern Virginia (PEVA) supports Intentional Interim ministry within the church. We believe that well-trained Intentional Interim Pastors enhance the ministry of our congregations. Intentional Interim ministry is an intentional ministry. It has purpose and recognizable features which distinguishes it from other ministry.

Definition. An Intentional Interim Pastor is defined as that person called by the session to serve as pastor between installed pastors. During this period a church must be actively searching for an Installed Pastor. An Intentional Interim Pastor is elected for a term of one year with the possibility of this contract being renewed for an additional six months. In an extreme situation when an additional second six months may be needed, the session must formally make this request to the COM. In no instance can an Intentional Interim Pastor relationship last longer than 24 months. An Intentional Interim Pastor is ordinarily not eligible to become the church’s Installed Pastor.

Training. We believe that training for Intentional Interim ministry work is essential. Consequently, we require Intentional Interims to have completed, as a minimum, Level 1 training. Level 1 training, which focuses on willingness to pursue Intentional Interim ministry, should be followed with the Level 2 training.

Relationship with Presbytery. We require Intentional Interim Pastors serving in PEVA to become members of the presbytery. We believe that membership in the presbytery where the ministry is taking place serves both the presbytery and the Intentional Interim Pastor. We require all Intentional Interim Pastors to be examined by the Commission on Ministry and approved by the COM.

Relationship with the Commission on Ministry (COM). An Intentional Interim Pastor cannot begin work within the presbytery without the approval of the COM. The key contact with the COM is through the COM liaison and the General Presbyter. The Intentional Interim Pastor shall meet regularly with the General Presbyter, ordinarily at the monthly meeting of the Intentional Interim Pastors.

Reporting and Evaluation. The Intentional Interim Pastor will provide a written report to the COM liaison every three months. At the end of the first six months there is to be a mutual evaluation of the Intentional Interim Pastor and the session of the church being served, attended by the COM liaison. The General Presbyter should be invited to attend. At the one-year mark, the Intentional Interim Pastor shall attend a COM meeting to dialogue with the committee on the progress of the Intentional Interim. A written final report is also required. An exit interview shall also be conducted.

Terms of Call. Intentional Interim Pastors within the presbytery ordinarily will be paid on the basis of the terms of call of the previous pastor. Some flexibility and negotiation will be allowed, but in no case will the Intentional Interim Pastor be paid below the fair salary guidelines of the presbytery. Part-time Intentional Interim Pastors should be compensated on the basis of the percentage of time relative to the terms of call for a full-time position. The covenant between the Intentional Interim Pastor and the session of the church being served must be agreed to and approved by the COM.
**Installation Service.** Session shall conduct an installation service for the Intentional Interim Pastor. The COM liaison, General Presbyter, and/or another representative from the COM will be involved in this service.

**Forms.** Templates for the Interim Pastor Covenant, Terms of Call and Quarterly Reports follow.
ATTACHMENT H
INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR COVENANT
(Note: Use the latest form, available on the PEVA Web site)

This Covenant between the Session of _________________ Presbyterian Church of ____________, Virginia and _________________ and the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia Committee on Ministry, is for the purpose of providing intentional interim pastoral services.

The relationship shall begin __________ and continue until __________ (no more than 12 months).

GOALS:

Both the Intentional Interim Pastor and the Session are to work with the congregation on the five “developmental tasks” of interim ministry, so that the congregation will:

1. Come to terms with its history,
2. Discover a new congregational identity,
3. Implement shifts in lay leadership and changes in congregational power structures, if needed,
4. Rethink and renew denominational linkages,
5. Prepare for new pastoral leadership and the future.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Intentional Interim Pastor will:

• Provide spiritual and administrative leadership for the congregation.
• Lead worship and administer the sacraments.
• Officiate at weddings and funerals.
• Provide pastoral care for the congregation.
• Serve as moderator of the session.
• Serve as head of staff.
• Assist boards and committees in their ministry.
• Train newly elected officers and assist in preparing persons for membership.
• Serve as primary facilitator for the session/transition committee-led congregation mission study.
• Assist in the preparation of the Ministry Information Form as requested.
• Participate in the monthly meeting of the Presbytery’s Intentional Interim pastors.
• Attend Presbytery meetings.

The Intentional Interim Pastor will not be involved in the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee beyond providing opportunities for it to communicate with the session and congregation about its progress and to provide, in consultation with the COM liaison, general information on the PCUSA call process.

The Session, in addition to its responsibilities in the Book of Order, will:
• Support and advise the Intentional Interim Pastor as they together lead the congregation through the five developmental tasks
• Pray for the Intentional Interim Pastor, remembering that change often triggers anxiety, resistance, and opposition

The Commission on Ministry will appoint a liaison, who will:
• Have a monthly conversation/contact with the Intentional Interim Pastor
• Be present, along with the General Presbyter, at the six month evaluation and the exit interviews
• Provide training for the PNC
• Assist in conflict resolution
• Deal promptly if any interference from former staff members occur

The General Presbyter will:
• Moderate the monthly meeting of the Presbytery’s Intentional Interim Pastors
• Provide pastoral care and professional advice to the Intentional Interim Pastor

COMPENSATION:
The compensation for this agreement shall be that in TERMS OF CALL below:

A. Cash Salary $______________ (year/month)
B. Housing $______________ (year/month)
C. Total Salary (A + B) $______________ (year/month)
D. Salary supplement equal to at least 50% of Social Security Self-employment tax $______________ year/month)
E. BOP Pension and Medical Benefits $______________ (year/month)
F. Reimbursement of Ministry Expenses including
   Automobile……………………………….. $_________per mile
   (reimbursed as used, at current IRS rate)
   Professional…………………………….. $_________ (reimbursed as used)
   Continuing Education …………………… $_________ (reimbursed as used)
   1 week every six months
   Other (dental insurance, retirement savings, etc.) $_________
   Vacation …………………… 1 week per quarter
   Moving Expenses …………………… Negotiable
TRANSITION:
This relationship may be dissolved with the concurrence of the Presbytery through its COM with thirty (30) days notice by either the Intentional Interim Pastor or the Session.

The approval of a call by the COM to a pastor-candidate shall constitute notice.

It is usually preferable for the Intentional Interim Pastor to leave at least one month prior to the arrival of the newly called Pastor.

Signature of the Intentional Interim Pastor ____________________________ Date __________

Signature of the Clerk of Session ____________________________ Date __________

Signature of the COM Liaison ____________________________ Date __________

Signature of the General Presbyter ____________________________ Date __________
ATTACHMENT I
INTERIM PASTOR QUARTERLY REPORT TO COM

INTERIM PASTOR: ________________________________________

CHURCH: ________________________________________

DATE: ________________________________________

1. Significant activities of the Interim Pastor:

2. Significant events in the congregation:

3. Work related to the five developmental tasks of the congregation during the period and ways each has been implemented:
   a. “Coming to terms with history.”
   b. “Discovering a new identity.”
   c. “Shifts of power.”
   d. “Rethinking denominational linkages.”
   e. “Commitment to new leadership and to a new future.”
4. Matters the Interim feels COM should be aware of (such as organizational, procedural, or personnel issues in the congregation; openness to a woman, racial ethnic or older pastor, or personal concerns of the Interim Pastor):

5. Date of last contact

Session contact with COM liaison or presbytery staff: ____________
Interim Pastor contact with COM liaison or presbytery staff: ____________

6. Other comments:

7. Process tasks of the Interim [Strictly optional; may be done face-to-face with liaison]:
   a. “Joining the system.”
   
   b. Analyzing the system.”
   
   c. “Connecting with the denomination.”
   
   d. “Focusing responsibility.”
   
   e. “Exiting and Evaluating.”

Revised 10/28/97
SAMPLE INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR SIX-MONTH EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

PHASE 1 OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD OF ________________________ CHURCH

(Date)

BACKGROUND:

We, as a congregation have been in transition for __ months. Our former pastor left in _______. __________ (Interim Pastor) has been with us since _______.

[Optional – provide overview of progress in the vacancy process]

The purpose of this communication is to receive your evaluations of our congregational life and of _____________’s ministry with us. ___________ requests this as part of his/her contract in order to provide him/her with information as to how he can best serve this church. Your session requests this a way of helping it more accurately assess where we are and what we need to focus on as your leaders.

Please complete this form and return it to the church as soon as possible. You can return it through the mail, box in narthex, or drop it by the church office. After these come in, we will be meeting with a member of the presbytery’s Commission on Ministry to discuss the implications for our life as a congregation and the type of pastoral leadership we need in the future.

I. IMPACT OF THIS INTERIM PERIOD ON THIS CONGREGATION

A. Has this congregation experienced changes in the past 6 months? Please list specifics.

B. How do you feel about these changes and their impact on this congregation?

C. What have you learned that should be considered in selecting the next installed pastor?

II. YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF _____________’s MINISTRY

A. WORSHIP

1. What has gone well in worship during his/her leadership?
2. Where does he/she need improvement in the area of worship?

B. PREACHING

1. How would you characterize his/her preaching? (circle one) helpful so-so not helpful

2. How could he/she improve?

3. I wish he/she would preach sermons on the following topics:

C. PASTORAL CARE

1. He/she has been accessible in times of need. (circle one) yes no uncertain

2. He/she could improve as a pastor if he/she would…

D. ADMINISTRATION

1. Degree of helpfulness in moving through this transition into the future. (circle one) very little moderately helpful effective

2. General Administration of the congregation (circle one) poor adequate very good

3. Areas of administration needing attention:

E. TEACHING

1. Amount of teaching he/she does (circle one) adequate inadequate

2. Effectiveness as a teacher (circle one) ineffective communicator okay, but could be better stimulating teacher
3. Subjects I wish he/she would lead us in studying….

F. CONFLICT

1. Degree to which he/she appears to accept conflict as integral to our personal, social, Christian reality…

- appears surprised and frightened
- not sure
- encourages openness about differences

2. Response to persons who disagree with him/her

- negative and alienating
- passive and unsure
- sensitive and fair

III. Please use this space for any other messages you want to send to ____________, the session, or the Pastor Nominating Committee.
ATTACHMENT K
CALL TO DESIGNATED PASTOR
(Note: Use the latest form, available on the PEVA Web site as “Designated Pastor Call Form”)

The ________________________ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) of ________________ Virginia, belonging to the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia (PIN 150/190) 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,__________

______________________________

to undertake the office of DESIGNATED PASTOR of this congregation, effective __________, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

That you may be free to devote yourself full-time (part-time) to the ministry of the Word among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to provide you the following:

1. a. Cash Salary of $______________annually, of which $___________________is designated for housing, utilities, furnishings and appurtenances.
   b. Free use of a manse.
   c. Utilities for manse provided (except personal long distance phone calls).
3. Paid vacation of ______________weeks/month.
4. Reimbursement of Professional Expenses for Automobile Expenses, Books, Continuing Education and other Professional Expenses of up to $______________when substantiated to the Church Treasurer or person designated by the Session.
5. Annual Study leave with pay of _____________weeks.
6. Moving Expenses to the field.
7. Regular payment in advance to the board responsible for benefits a sum equal to that requisite percent of your salary which may be fixed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly, during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in this call to this church.
8. We further promise and obligate ourselves to annually review these Terms of Call and the Covenant with an evaluation of the mutual achievement of mission goals by minister and session as to their adequacy with serious consideration given to the current adjusted median family income.
9. In addition, we promise to provide:
In testimony whereof, we have subscribed our names this _______ day of _______ A.D._______

______________________________________   _____________________________________

______________________________________   _____________________________________

______________________________________   _____________________________________

The Pastor Nominating Committee has provided for consideration of candidates without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, age or disabilities.

_____________Yes       _____________No

Having moderated the congregational meeting, which extended this call for ministerial services, I do certify that the call has been made in all respects according to rules of the Book of Order, and that the persons who signed the call were authorized to do so.

Signed: ___________________________________, Moderator of the Meeting  Date:______________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Being convinced of the leading of God’s Spirit, I am ready to undertake the responsibilities stated in this call.

Signed: ___________________________________ Date:_____________________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION ON MINISTRY OF CALLING PRESBYTERY
The Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, having determined that it is for the good of the church, approves this call to: ____________________________________

COM Chairperson: _______________________________ Date: _______________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

APPROVAL OF MINISTER’S/CANDIDATE’S PRESBYTERY
The Presbytery of ____________________________________________ has approved this call and has granted permission to _______________________________________to transfer to the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia.

________________________________________, Stated Clerk   Date: _______________

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

APPROVAL OF CALLING PRESBYTERY
The Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, having determined that it is for the good of the whole church, has found in order this call to ___________________________________________________.

_____________________________________, Stated Clerk   Date: ____________________
The session of _____________________ Presbyterian Church of _______________________, Virginia, requests the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia to appoint _____________ as Temporary Pastor of this congregation to begin ______________ and to end on ____________. We are satisfied with his/her qualifications and trust that his/her ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit. This agreement is made with the privilege for re-negotiation by the Session and Temporary Pastor on terms of compensation and time of service, with review by the Commission on Ministry. The agreement will be evaluated every three months by the session and Temporary Pastor to be sure that it is working to the satisfaction of all. It is understood that any extension of time for this agreement must be approved by the Commission on Ministry and it is further understood that despite the stated ending date, the agreement will terminate upon the arrival of a new pastor or upon 30 days written notice by either the session or the Temporary Pastor.

The following duties will be expected of the Temporary Pastor:

________________________________________________________________________ Units/Hrs______
________________________________________________________________________ Units/Hrs______
________________________________________________________________________ Units/Hrs______
________________________________________________________________________ Units/Hrs______

(Use back for additional duties)
TOTAL UNITS/HRS ______

The session requests that the teaching elder be appointed moderator of session ___yes ___no

In this capacity it is expected that the temporary pastor will attend presbytery meetings.

On behalf of the congregation we promise to support and encourage the teaching elder in the performance of your duties, including the following compensation:

Cash Salary: $___________ + Housing: $ ___________ = Effective Salary: $ ________________

To be paid in regular payments of ____________________.

Reimbursement of automobile mileage at the IRS rate at time of usage

BOP Dues: Medical _______; Pension _______; Death & Disability _______ = Total Dues ______

Social Security Supplement _______ Vacation Leave _________ Study Leave _________

Moving Expenses__________ Other Provisions (Specify) _______________

Date_______________ Clerk of Session______________________________________

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This is to certify that I have received and accepted this agreement to be Stated Supply Pastor.

Date:______________  Temporary Pastor: ______________________________________

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This agreement has been reviewed and approved by the PEVA Commission on Ministry.

Date:______________  COM Representative: ________________________________
ATTACHMENT M
CHURCH MISSION OVERVIEW SAMPLE TEMPLATE

1. HISTORY [Provide a short history of your church.]

2. MISSION STATEMENT [Your church’s mission statement.]

3. MISSION STUDY PROCESS
   Describe the mission study process. For example, this may include:
   a. Time Line.
   b. Composition of the Mission Study Task Force or Committee.
   c. Congregational Participation, such as attendance at small group meetings and number of responses to surveys.
   d. The actual questions asked in the meetings and surveys.
   e. How the responses were compiled.
   f. Statistical reviews performed (demographics, finances, etc.)

4. SUMMARY OF CONGREGATIONAL FEEDBACK
   Group the responses from the small group meetings and surveys. For example:
   \[Worship:\]
   1) Music is excellent (17 responses)
   2) Good preaching (14)
   3) Need more children and youth (9)
   Etc.
   General comments may also be listed individually.

5. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE
   Summarize the ten-year trends of total membership, worship attendance and the demographics of the members.

6. DEMOGRAPHICS
   List the key characteristics of the neighborhoods served by the church, and describe the challenges and opportunities they present to the church, especially in relation to the demographic trends of church members.

7. RESOURCES
   Summarize the church’s ten-year financial and giving trends. Describe any capital campaigns and highlight the church’s financial strengths and challenges.

8. VISION
   Summarize all of the above into the church’s vision of “What We Do Well” and “What We Could Do Better.” Try to keep this to less than one page.

Approved by the session on ___________. Signed ________________________________

Date Clerk of Session