**GUIDELINES AND CHECKLIST**

**FOR PASTORAL TRANSITIONS**

**Pastoral relationship are three-way agreements between the pastor, congregation, and the Presbytery, through its Commission on Ministry.**

\_\_\_1. Ordinarily, the departing pastor informs the COM Chair, Executive Presbyter, or COM liaison before informing the session. If the position is an Associate Pastor, the Pastor/Head of Staff is also informed before the session.

\_\_\_2. Following the announcement to the session, communication is circulated to the entire congregation.

\_\_\_3. The COM liaison meets with the session to:

1. Present overview of the transition process;
2. Call for a congregational meeting to dissolve the (installed) relationship;
3. Plan exit interviews (pastor w/COM and pastor w/selected group from session);
4. Former Pastor Policy interpreted and signed;
5. Begin evaluation of congregation’s immediate need for pastoral leadership: pulpit supply, pastoral care, session moderator (appointed by COM);

\_\_\_4. If installed, a congregational meeting is called to dissolve the relationship. Moderator shall be the Executive Presbyter, the COM liaison, or another COM member. The COM approves the dissolution and, if requested, a change in status (honorably retired, member-at-large).

\_\_\_5. The session, along with the COM liaison, prepare to lead the congregation through a purposeful transition, adapted to the particulars of the church, using the Focus Points of Transitional Ministry: Heritage, Mission, Connections, Leadership, and Future. Four key transitional questions will also guide the discernment: 1) Who are we? 2) What do we stand for? 3) Who are we here to serve? 4) How do we perceive God calling us into a new future?

\_\_\_6. Based on the needs of the congregation, **pastoral leadership models** are explored:

1. **Stated Supply** (TE): Temporary, not Installed

Define tasks & Compensation

Limited Search

Negotiated Contract (max. of 1 year, renewable) – Approved by Pastor, Session, COM

SS Candidate approved by COM Exams Team

1. **Commissioned Pastor** (RE or Member):

Define tasks & Compensation

Limited Search

Negotiated Commission (Up to 3 yrs., renewable)– Approved by Pastor, Session, COM

CP (w/completed training) Approved by COM Exams Team

CP Commissioned by the Presbytery for this particular service

1. **Designated Pastor** (TE): (2-4 yr.) Temporary, Installed

DP Position approved by COM & Congregation

Search by DPNC (elected by congregation), Session, or COM team

MIF, written by DPNC or Session, approved by Session & COM

(Receive login info from COM Chair as MIF is being drafted)

Circulate, Promote Position

Candidates first screened by COM team (COM Chair, Liaison, EP)

COM team recommends persons to DPNC

DPNC evaluates candidates, conducts interviews, contacts references

Final candidate: Approved by COM Exams Team

EP Check and Background Check conducted

Congregation and COM approve Candidate

Near end of term, COM and Session review relationship,

Recommend a) extend DP, b) move to installed, c) end relationship, begin new search

1. **Interim/Transitional**: (annual, renewable) Temporary, Specialized

Key Step in the Path to the call of the next Installed Pastor

Purpose & Benefits of Intentional Transitional Ministry Presented by COM

Session approves Search Committee

Search Committee prepares MIF (or similar document)

(Receive login info from COM Chair as MIF is being drafted)

MIF Approved by Session & COM

Circulate, Promote Position

EP assists in identifying suitable candidates

Search Committee evaluates candidates, conducts interviews, contacts references

Final candidate: Approved COM Exams Team

EP Check and Background Check conducted

Session and COM approve Candidate & Interim Contract

\_\_\_7. If the position is an installed pastoral relationship, following the approval of COM, the session calls for a congregational meeting to elect a PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee). The session moderator, COM liaison, EP, or another COM member moderates. Names and contact information of the PNC members are given to the COM liaison and reported to the COM.

\_\_\_8. The COM liaison will meet with the PNC at its first meeting. The meeting will include:

1. Overview of search process;
2. Introduction to CLC, MIF, PIF;
3. Purpose and benefits of a Mission Study, explore options;
4. Election of PNC Chair and scribe;
5. Importance of confidentiality and proper communication with the congregation;
6. Sharing of resources and guidelines for the COM.

\_\_\_9. PNC prepares Ministry Information Form, seeks approval from the session and the COM Transitions Team. As the draft MIF is begun, receives CLC log in information from the COM Chair and actively posts the MIF with CLC, upon Session and COM approvals.

\_\_\_10. Personal Information Forms are received, reviewed and ranked by the PNC. Other avenues for promoting the position are explored. Candidate’s current church’s websites and online preaching are researched.

\_\_\_11. Zoom interviews with candidates are scheduled, references are contacted. Before scheduling in person interviews, the Executive Presbyter is informed and forwarded the candidate’s PIF, to conduct EP check.

\_\_\_12. Prior to the PNC requesting session to call for a congregational meeting to approve the nominee, the Stated Clerk conducts a background check, the COM Exams Team meets with the candidate, the Transitions Team reviews the terms of call, and both groups present their recommendations to the full COM for their action.

\_\_\_13. Included in the meeting with the Exams Team, the candidate will be asked how the COM can best assist in creating a support system. Options such as joining a lectionary group, being connected with a pastoral mentor, meeting regularly with neighborhood pastors will be explored. The COM liaison will initiate the requested support.

\_\_\_14. Upon COM approval of the candidate and the terms of call, the PNC requests that the session call a congregational meeting to approve the nominee, and the terms. The COM liaison, EP, or another COM member moderates. The congregation is also asked to approve the PNC members to sign the call, and the PNC is dismissed, with thanks. The call form is forwarded to the Stated Clerk.

\_\_\_15. The new pastor begins and the PNC, ordinarily, assists with onboarding and attentive support throughout the first year.

\_\_\_16. The commission to install and/or ordain is approved (by COM if installed, by the Presbytery if ordained) and the installation/ordination worship service is celebrated.

Approved by PMT Commission on Ministry - April 11, 2023