



**Presbytery of East Tennessee
Handbook for the Committee on Ministry**

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Contents

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Authority to Act on Behalf of Presbytery | 4 |
| Responsibilities | 5 |
| Policies and Procedures..... | 6 |
| Appendix A: COM Liaisons..... | 8 |
| Appendix B: Role of the COM Liaison in Times of Pastoral Transition..... | 10 |
| Appendix C: Examinations Policy..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Appendix D: Temporary Members..... | 22 |
| Appendix E: Guidelines for Establishing Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning Commissions | 24 |
| Appendix F: Mentor Guidelines for CLPs and Teaching Elders..... | 25 |
| Appendix G: Requirements for CLPs..... | 26 |
| Appendix H: Sabbatical Policy..... | 32 |
| Appendix I: Family Leave Policy..... | 36 |
| Appendix J: Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Policy..... | 38 |
| Appendix K: Separation Policy | 39 |
| Appendix L: Exit Interview Policy | 41 |
| Appendix M: Social Media Guidelines | 42 |
| Appendix N: Debt Assistance Policy | 43 |
| Appendix O: Covenants and Forms..... | 44 |
| Pastoral Call Form..... | 45 |
| Covenant with Interim Pastor..... | 49 |
| Covenant for a Temporary Pastoral Relationship | 53 |
| Covenant with a Commissioned Lay Pastor | 54 |
| 2024 Minimum Salary Information for Pastors..... | 55 |
| 2023 Salary Guidelines for Directors of Christian Education | 58 |
| Minutes for Ordination/Installation of a Teaching Elder | 60 |
| Minutes to Commission CLP | 61 |
| Pastor Exit Interview..... | 62 |
| Session Exit Interview..... | 64 |

Introduction

Historically the Committee on Ministry was authorized and required through the Book of Order. The current Book of Order does not require presbyteries to have a Committee on Ministry but does require presbyteries to develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve teaching elders and congregations within their bounds. (Book of Order, G-3.0307) To accomplish this, the Presbytery of East Tennessee has chosen to continue using a Committee on Ministry.

The Committee on Ministry is charged with building relationships and strengthening the connectional church. Its primary purpose is to care for the congregations within the Presbytery of East Tennessee and the people who serve these congregations (pastors, CLPs, and certified Christian educators). The Committee on Ministry also cares for members of the Presbytery of East Tennessee who are honorably retired, at-large, serving in validated ministries, and ruling elders eligible to be commissioned to pastoral service.

The Committee on Ministry's primary role is relational after the model of Jesus Christ. It takes the various forms of pastor, counselor, facilitator, and companion in the journey of faith and ministry with the congregations and persons who are members of the Presbytery of East Tennessee. This is particularly important when there is conflict between a Teaching Elder and the congregation they serve. The Committee on Ministry has a particular responsibility to care for both parties equally, both during and following the process of conflict resolution.

The Committee on Ministry shall be open at all times to communication with teaching elders, ruling elders who are members of Sessions, Sessions of the Presbytery, ruling elders who have been or are eligible to be commissioned to congregations, and certified Christian educators within the bounds of the Presbytery.

The number of members should be 21, with as close to an equal balance of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders as possible.

The elected officers of the Presbytery and the General Presbyter shall serve on the Committee on Ministry, *ex officio* without vote.

The Committee on Ministry may use Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders not among its members for service in particular capacities as it carries out its work.

The Committee on Ministry shall meet at least quarterly, and at other times when called to do so by the Chair, to fulfill its responsibilities to and for the Presbytery.

The Committee on Ministry shall normally have the following subcommittees:

- Examinations and Validations
- Care of Congregations
- Care of Church Professionals
- Commissioned Lay Pastors

Authority to Act on Behalf of Presbytery

The committee has the authority of the Presbytery to do the following, with the provision that all such actions will be reported to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery (see Manual of the Presbytery of East Tennessee):

- Review and approve Ministry Discernment Profiles;
- Find in order and approve calls issued by congregations;
- Examine, approve and present calls for services of teaching elders in installed positions;
- Review and approve temporary pastoral relationships, i.e., stated supply, temporary supply, interim, and commissioned lay pastors in particular pastoral service;
- Examine, approve and present for membership teaching elders in good standing transferring from other presbyteries;
- Review terms of call approved by sessions for compliance with Presbytery minimum requirements;
- Grant requests from teaching elders for release from exercise of ordered ministry (G-2.0507) with the reasons for such release recorded in the minutes of Presbytery;
- Dissolve pastoral relationships in cases where the congregation and pastor concur;
- Grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the Presbytery;
- Dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries;
- Approve the ordination and/or installation commissions for teaching elders;
- Approve the commissioning commissions for ruling elders;
- Approve teaching elders moving onto the field before the next meeting of the Presbytery;
- Validate the ministries of those teaching elders involved in specialized ministries in a non-congregational setting;
- Call meetings of sessions (G-3.023);
- Appoint moderators of session for congregations without an installed pastor.

[The terms Teaching Elder and Minister of Word and Sacrament are used interchangeably.]

Responsibilities

The Committee on Ministry has the following responsibilities:

1. The committee will promote the spiritual health, peace and harmony of congregations, especially regarding relations with pastors in installed or temporary relationships.
2. The committee will ensure that all candidates for ordination and teaching elders seeking membership in the Presbytery are properly examined.
3. The committee will conduct background checks on anyone seeking membership in the Presbytery.
4. The committee will have the responsibility to validate the ministry of all ministers of the Presbytery, especially those persons involved in specialized ministries.
5. The committee will train and oversee ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service (G-2.10).
6. The committee will represent the Presbytery regarding calls for the services of Ministers of Word & Sacrament. It will counsel with congregations, regarding calls for permanent pastoral relations. It will advise a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) on the merits and availability of any candidate, minister, or lay pastor considered for nomination to the congregation, and will have the privilege of suggesting possible names to a congregation's PNC. No call to a permanent pastoral relationship will be in order for consideration by the Presbytery unless the congregation has received and considered this committee's counsel.
7. The committee will appoint a liaison to each congregation in the Presbytery who will represent the committee, especially in times of transition and/or when seeking to establish installed or temporary pastoral relationships.
8. The committee will counsel with sessions seeking Temporary Pastoral Relationships, and it will provide a list of pastors and qualified lay persons to supply vacant pulpits.
9. The committee will confirm the current placement and report to the Presbytery of work in which each teaching elder, commissioned lay pastor, and certified educator is engaged. For any teaching elder performing work which is not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery or a higher council or agency of the Church, the committee shall require an annual progress report.

10. The committee will counsel with teaching elders who regularly fail to participate in the life of the Presbytery.
11. The committee will ensure that all teaching elders and commissioned lay pastors in active service complete the annual Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training.
12. The committee will see that care and counseling is available for pastors, other church professionals, their spouses, and their families. Further, it shall see that pastoral care is given to retired teaching elders and other church professionals, especially those suffering from disabilities and infirmities, and their families.
13. The committee will see that appropriate recognition is given to pastors and other certified church professionals upon their retirement.
14. The committee will be the liaison with the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA).
15. The committee will recommend to Presbytery minimum salary and benefit requirements for installed pastors and certified church educators, and will ensure that all calls to permanent pastoral relationships meet or exceed the Presbytery's minimum standards.
16. The committee will conduct exit interviews with all pastors leaving installed pastoral relationships, as well as with the session of that congregation.

Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures will guide the work of the Committee on Ministry. They may be found in the Appendix of this Handbook.

- COM Liaisons
- Role of the COM Liaison in Time of Pastoral Transition
- Examinations Policy
- Guidelines for Commissions to Ordain/Install/Commission Ruling Elders
- Mentor Guidelines for Teaching Elders and Commissioned Lay Pastors
- Commissioned Lay Pastor Policy
- Sabbatical Policy
- Family Leave Policy
- Sexual Misconduct Training Policy
- Separation Policy
- Exit Interview Policy for Pastor and Session
- Social Media Guidelines
- Debt Assistance Policy

Covenants and Forms

The following are included in Appendix N:

- Terms of Call Form for Teaching Elders (installed positions)
- Interim Pastor Covenant Form
- Covenant for a Temporary Pastor Relationship Form
- CLP Covenant Form
- Minimum Terms of Call for Ministers
- Salary Guidelines for Certified Christian Educators
- Installation Commission Minutes Form – Teaching Elder
- Commissioning Minutes Form – CLP
- Exit Interview Forms for Pastor and Session

Appendix A: COM Liaisons

In order to foster greater connection between congregations and the COM, and in order to be proactive regarding the spiritual health and vitality of our congregations, each congregation in the Presbytery will have a COM liaison appointed to it. To achieve the goal of every congregation in the Presbytery having a COM liaison, liaisons will be assigned to congregations using the geographical clusters on the following page.

Two COM members will be assigned to each cluster. Ideally, liaisons will be assigned to congregations in the same geographical area in which they live. In consultation with the moderator of COM and the General Presbyter, they shall divide up the congregations in the cluster in a manner they feel will best serve the congregations of that cluster. Every member of the COM will have at least one congregation for which they are a liaison, but no one shall be assigned to more than three congregations at any one time. The COM may use Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders not among its members for service as liaisons in carrying out its work, if that best serves a particular congregation.

Ideally, congregational COM liaisons will work with the same congregation(s) during their 3-year term on COM. However, liaisons may be reassigned during a term depending on workload or status of a congregation. COM liaisons will make contact with their congregation(s) when assigned. The COM liaison shall make contact with the congregation's leadership (installed pastor, interim, stated supply, CLP and/or clerk of session), introduce themselves, and provide contact information. If the congregation is not in transition, i.e. installed pastoral relationship, CLP, stated supply, etc., they will let the pastor and session know that they are there as a resource should any questions or conflicts arise which the COM might be able to help with. The liaison should make contact with the congregation at least every six months after that. This may be done by calling, Zooming, or emailing with the pastor or clerk of session, or it may be done in person at a session meeting or other in-person meeting, at the discretion of the liaison and depending on the wishes of the congregation's leadership.

In times of pastoral transition, COM liaisons will guide congregations through all steps of the process of seeking a temporary and/or installed pastoral relationship, including helping the session assess the congregation's pastoral needs, finding an interim, forming a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), calling a new pastor, or any other needs the congregation may have. (More information on this process may be found in Appendix B of this handbook, *The Role of COM Liaisons in Times of Pastoral Transition*.) Liaisons may also recommend or assist in finding a moderator of session or pulpit supply preachers when there is a pastoral vacancy.

Cluster 1:

2nd Chattanooga
Korean Chattanooga
Northside
Renaissance
Rivermont

Cluster 2:

1st Cleveland
1st Soddy Daisy
Mowbray
New Hope
Northminster

Cluster 3:

1st Sweetwater
1st United, Athens
Center
Madisonville
Mars Hill
Fork Creek

Cluster 4:

1st Harriman
1st Rockwood
1st Spring City
Bethel
Fairfield Glade
Lancing
Wartburg

Cluster 5:

1st Huntsville
1st LaFollette
Cross Roads
Fountain City
Powell
Shannondale
Washington

Cluster 6:

1st Lenoir City
1st Oak Ridge
Concord
Farragut
Korean Knoxville
West Emory

Cluster 7:

Baker's Creek
Big Spring
Clover Hill
Highland
Houston Memorial
New Providence
Pine Grove

Cluster 8:

2nd Knoxville
Erin
Lake Hills
New Covenant
Sequoyah Hills
Westminster

Cluster 9:

1st Knoxville
4th United
Emmanuel
Graystone
Lake Forest
New Prospect
Shiloh

Cluster 10:

1st Sevierville
Caledonia
Eusebia
Gatlinburg
Rocky Springs

Appendix B: Role of the COM Liaison in Times of Pastoral Transition

The COM liaison already assigned to a congregation will continue to be the COM liaison during times of pastoral transition. They will walk alongside the PNC, interim and General Presbyter in guiding, supporting and encouraging the congregation in its transition time.

Before the announcement of a pastor's departure, it is advantageous for the pastor to be in conversation with the General Presbyter (GP) and allow the GP to be a part of informing the Session. This will assure the leaders of the congregation of the Presbytery's support and initiate the process of informing them of the proper steps to take to begin the transition process.

Step One

The liaison and GP will meet with the Session to provide support and hear concerns. The following actions should be taken:

- Inform the Session of the need to call a congregational meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationship.
- Offer for either the GP or liaison to moderate the congregational meeting and conduct a service of dissolution (Book of Occasional Services).
- Inform the COM that such a meeting has taken place so that the COM may act on behalf of the Presbytery in dissolving the pastoral relationship.
- Attend the first worship service after the pastor leaves (or as soon as possible thereafter) to let the congregation know of the Presbytery's support and the proper steps moving forward. (The GP may offer to preach at this service.)
- Share appropriate resources with the Session and congregation as needed.
- See that exit interviews are scheduled with the Pastor and the Session by members of the COM.
- Offer to help secure a Bridge Interim or schedule Pulpit Supply Preachers until an Interim Pastor is found.
- Confer with the Session to determine the congregation's immediate need for leadership – full-time or part-time interim or other. When the need for leadership is determined, the Session should form a 3-person Interim Pastor Search Committee to work with the GP and liaison to secure leadership. It is suggested that this work begin quietly as the congregation celebrates the ministry of the current pastor and prepares for their departure. Allowing this search to begin immediately will decrease the amount of time the congregation is without pastoral leadership.
- See that the contract for interim leadership is presented to COM for approval. This contract, entered into by the Session with an interim, is for one year and may be renewed with the consent of all parties – pastor, Session and COM. (A copy of an interim agreement is on the PET website.)

Step Two

- The Session should be encouraged to wait until interim leadership is in place before electing a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). A PNC is a committee of the congregation and is elected by the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting. Usually, an Officer Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates at this meeting. However, the Session may present the slate of candidates if it is not possible for the Officer Nominating Committee to do so.
- The interim and the liaison should encourage a wide representation of the active members of the congregation on the PNC. The size of the PNC should be a matter of conversation between interim, Session (and ONC is utilized) and be based on the size of the congregation. Candidates should possess a strong sense of vision for the congregation and have the ability and willingness to work collaboratively.
- Upon election, the GP, interim and liaison will work cooperatively to orient the PNC to their duties. Customarily, the GP takes the lead in the first orientation.

Step Three

- The first order of business for the PNC is to conduct a mission study. The interim and the liaison may work closely with the PNC in accomplishing this. (The *On Calling A Pastor Handbook* available online at clc.pcusa.org is a very valuable resource.) The PNC will engage the congregation in those aspects of the mission study deemed appropriate.
- It is very beneficial for the liaison to stay in conversation with the PNC and the interim in order to develop a good relationship of trust and to be alert to any problems or delay in the process. *It is not required that the PNC be the body to take the lead in the Mission Study process; the Session may select another group to proceed with this function with the PNC elected later.*
- When the mission study is complete, the PNC will prepare the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP). Directions, blank copies, and samples are available at clc.pcusa.org. The moderator of COM will need to be contacted to invite the Clerk of Session to create an account in the CLC system. The Clerk of Session will then be able to invite the PNC Chair to access the CLC system and begin the process of filling out an MDP.
- When the MDP is complete, it should be submitted to the Session for discussion and approval. The Session will set a range for the effective salary of a new pastor and other aspects of the terms of call. Upon approval by the Session, the PNC will ask for time on the agenda of the next COM meeting for approval of the MDP. The liaison will know the deadlines associated with the COM docket.
- On the COM meeting date, as many PNC members as possible are asked to attend to discuss with COM members the process in writing the MDP, as well as their hopes and aspirations for the future of the congregation under new pastoral leadership. The COM may ask for revisions of the MDP and, depending on the extent of such, the PNC may be asked to return to COM at the next meeting.
- Upon approval, the COM moderator and the Clerk of Session will approve the MDP in the CLC system. The PNC will then begin receiving matches of possible candidates.

Step Four

- The PNC should establish a process for receiving and reviewing the Personal Discernment Profile (PDP) from pastors seeking a call. Each PNC will determine who will receive the communications (email) from CLC and how that information will be disseminated to the PNC members. The PNC will receive matches based on the MDP and also PDP's from self-referrals. The PNC may also determine if other methods of advertisement are necessary or beneficial.
- The PNC will determine a process for analyzing the merits of each candidate. In addition, before interviewing begins, the PNC should decide on the method of interviewing and possible questions to be asked.
- Once the interview process has begun, if a PNC desires to speak with a candidate a second time they should contact the liaison *prior* to this conversation taking place. The COM's Examinations & Validations subcommittee will have a brief, informal conversation with the candidate. This conversation is not an examination but will allow the COM to assess the candidate's suitability for the call prior to the PNC moving forward with the conversation.
- As the field is narrowed, the PNC may want to travel to a candidate's current call (with all discretion!) or invite a candidate to visit the PNC in the congregation's hometown. The liaison will assist in securing a neutral pulpit if the PNC wishes to hear the candidate preach in person.
- When the PNC has narrowed the field of candidates to its "finalists," the PNC chair should ask the liaison to have the GP check with the candidate's GP or Executive Presbyterian regarding any "red flags" for the candidate. This is required for a candidate to be considered by a PNC in their final discernment.

Step Five

- When the PNC is ready to extend a call, the PNC meets with the Session to request a congregational meeting. If the terms of call negotiated by the PNC with the candidate fall outside the amount budgeted by the Session these terms must be discussed and agreed upon to be presented for approval by the congregation. At this point, the PNC does not share the identity of the candidate with the Session.
- Extend the call to the candidate.
- Once the candidate has accepted the call, the PNC will notify the liaison and request to be on the agenda of the next Committee on Ministry (COM) meeting. The liaison will contact the chair of the Examinations and Validations subcommittee, who will contact the candidate to schedule an examination. The liaison can assist in providing the COM Examinations Policy (Appendix C) to the candidate. This policy outlines those documents that are required to be sent to COM, the deadlines for such, and the process involved in the examination. Once received, copies should be sent to the current COM moderator and the chair of the Examinations and Validations subcommittee of COM.
- Upon receiving the information for the candidate, the moderator of COM will coordinate with the Presbytery Administrator to conduct a background check on the candidate.
- The Examinations & Validations subcommittee will examine the candidate prior to the next COM meeting and make a recommendation to the full COM regarding the candidate.

- If approved, the PNC members and the candidate will be invited to the next meeting of COM and will be asked to discuss the fit and process regarding the call.
- Upon approval at the COM Meeting, the PNC should ask the Session to call a congregational meeting. At that meeting the PNC will provide information on the candidate and on the terms of call for congregation. At this point it is good for the liaison to assist the PNC in making decisions regarding the customs to be followed on this day. Some congregations wish to have the candidate preach a “candidating sermon” and be present after the meeting for a welcome celebration of some kind. Other congregations do not have the candidate present on the day of the vote but may arrange another “meet and greet” time. Care must be given to giving the candidate time to inform their current congregation of the move before disseminating the news of the call.
- Upon congregational approval, the COM will then make a recommendation to Presbytery. The candidate will appear before the PET on the closest date possible for examination and be made a member of the Presbytery of East Tennessee. The COM may grant the candidate permission to move onto the field prior to Presbytery approval.
- Once approved by Presbytery, the PNC and the candidate should submit the names of the teaching elders and ruling elders to serve on the ordination and/or installation commission, along with the date, time and place of the installation service. (See Appendix D)

Step Six

- CELEBRATE God’s gracious provision and faithfulness to the congregation!
- Consider a “debriefing” with the PNC.
- Discuss with PNC ways they may want to consider (along with the new pastor’s input) of supporting the new pastor and their family in the first year of ministry.

Helpful Resources

On Calling a Pastor at www.pcusa.org
 PET Website www.presbyteryeasttn.org
 Under Resources – Finding a Pastor

Appendix C: Examinations Policy

Committee on Ministry Examinations Policy

The subcommittee on Examinations and Validations will conduct examinations for all teaching elders seeking membership in the Presbytery of East Tennessee. The subcommittee will then make recommendations to the COM as a whole. The COM will make recommendations to the Presbytery.

ORDINATION CANDIDATES

For all candidates for ministry seeking ordination, the COM and its subcommittee on Examinations and Validations will confer and work with the committee responsible for certifying candidates ready to receive a call in their home Presbytery. For ordination candidates, the subcommittee requires the following at least two weeks prior to the examination date:

- A written sermon (either text or full outline), including scripture;
- A one- or two-page narrative Statement of Faith stating their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church (specific areas of theology to be included are cited in a subsequent section of this policy);
- A one-page Journey of Faith;
- A Personal Discernment Profile (PDP).

During the examination the candidate will be questioned on their Statement of Faith, sermon exegesis, and the areas of theology, worship and sacraments, polity, and Bible. Questions related to sense of call and fitness of call to the congregation will also be asked. The examination will also include an exploration of the ordination questions (W-4.0404).

If the subcommittee on examinations and validations is satisfied with the examination and recommends moving the candidate forward in the ordination process, the candidate shall appear before the COM. The COM may ask further questions of the candidate that cover the areas listed above.

Upon being approved by the COM, the candidate will be presented to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting. They may be asked to preach. Members of the Presbytery will have the opportunity to question the candidate on any of the areas listed above prior to voting on the recommendation.

TRANSFERRING PC(USA) MINISTERS

For PC(USA) ministers transferring from another presbytery into installed positions, the subcommittee requires the following at least two weeks prior to the examination date:

- A one- or two-page narrative Statement of Faith stating their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church (specific areas of theology to be included are cited in a subsequent section of this policy);
- A one-page Journey of Faith;
- A Personal Discernment Profile (PDP).

During the examination the candidate will be questioned on their Statement of Faith and the areas of theology, worship and sacraments, polity, and Bible. Questions related to sense of call and fitness of call to the congregation will also be asked, as well as how their current call has had an impact on their ministry.

If the subcommittee on Examinations and Validations is satisfied with the examination, it may approve the examination on behalf of the COM and Presbytery or it may request that the COM and/or Presbytery examine the minister further. If the examination is approved by the subcommittee, the minister will be invited to meet with the COM as a whole and will be given the opportunity to tell about their background, previous ministry experience, interests in ministry, and sense of call to their new context. Members of the PNC will be invited to share their sense of call with the COM.

The minister will be introduced to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting and will be given the opportunity to tell about their background, previous ministry experience, interests in ministry, and sense of call to their new context. Following this, the Presbytery will vote to receive the minister into its membership and to concur in the call.

PC(USA) MINISTERS TRANSFERRING WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY

For PC(USA) ministers transferring into an installed position within the presbytery, the subcommittee requires the following at least two weeks prior to the examination date:

- A statement on their understanding of fit for this particular call.

Continuing members of the Presbytery of East Tennessee shall be examined only regarding their fitness for the particular new call. Questions related to sense of call and fitness of call to the congregation will be asked, as well as how their current call has had an impact on their ministry.

If the subcommittee on Examinations and Validations is satisfied with the examination, it may approve the examination on behalf of the COM and Presbytery or it may request that the COM and/or Presbytery examine the minister further. If the examination is approved by the subcommittee, the minister will be invited to meet with the COM as a whole and will be given the opportunity to tell about their sense of call to their new context. Members of the PNC will be invited to share their sense of call with the COM.

The minister will be introduced to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting and will be given the opportunity to tell about their sense of call to their new context. Following this, the Presbytery will vote to concur in the call.

FOR BOTH ORDINATION CANDIDATES AND PC(USA) TRANSFERRING MINISTERS, the subcommittee requires the following by the examination date:

- Terms of Call;
- Date to move onto the field.

The following shall be provided to the COM within three (3) months of being received into membership of the Presbytery:

- Ordination/Installation Commission members with place, date, and time. (See Appendix D)

PC(USA) MEMBERS AT-LARGE and RETIRED

For PC(USA) ministers transferring from another presbytery to be an at-large or retired member, the subcommittee requires the following at least two weeks prior to the examination date:

- A one- or two-page narrative Statement of Faith stating their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church (specific areas of theology to be included are cited in a subsequent section of this policy);
- A one-page Journey of Faith.

During the examination the minister will be questioned on their Statement of Faith, the reasons for relocating and sense of ministry in this Presbytery.

If the subcommittee on Examinations and Validations is satisfied with the examination, it may approve the examination on behalf of the COM and presbytery. Upon being approved, the minister will be invited tell about their background, previous ministry experience, interests in ministry, reasons for relocating and sense of ministry in this Presbytery at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. Following this, the Presbytery will vote to receive the minister into its membership.

MINISTERS TRANSFERRING TO THE PC(USA) FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Any minister seeking membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA) who is ordained in another Christian denomination should ordinarily fulfill the same requirements that we demand of our own candidates for ordination. These “constitutional conditions” are set forth in G-2.0607. The *Book of Order* also gives some latitude and discretion to presbyteries regarding the constitutional requirements when assessing the qualifications of transfers. (G-2.0610 & G-2.0505) We recognize that ministers who have already served for many years have often already mastered many of the areas that the standard ordination examinations cover.

Therefore, the Committee on Ministry reserves the right to *recommend* to the Presbytery of East Tennessee, when there are good and sufficient reasons to do so, waivers or alternate assessments for certain of the constitutional requirements, especially when the transferring minister has served in ministry for 10 years or more or is coming from another Reformed church and has served at least 5 years.

For any Christian minister wishing to transfer their membership to the PC(USA), the COM must first examine, approve, and recommend them for transfer. At least two weeks prior to the examination date, the following must be submitted to the Examinations & Validations subcommittee:

- A one- or two-page narrative Statement of Faith stating their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of the church (specific areas of theology to be included are cited in a subsequent section of this policy);
- A one-page Journey of Faith;
- A statement certifying that there are no sustained or pending civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical sexual misconduct allegations or complaints against them and that they have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct;
- A statement explaining the reason for desiring to transfer.

The Examinations & Validations subcommittee will examine the person wishing to transfer and make a recommendation to the full COM. The full COM will then further examine the person wishing to transfer and determine whether or not they shall be allowed to proceed with transferring their ordination to the PC(USA). During the examinations the candidate will be questioned on their Statement of Faith and the areas of theology, worship and sacraments, polity, the Bible, and their personal growth in ministry during their career.

Once the examination has been upheld and the person wishing to transfer has been given permission to proceed with transferring, the following steps must be completed. The COM will not present ministers to the Presbytery of East Tennessee for membership, until they have completed *all* of the following:

1. Present proof of ordination from another Christian denomination, are in good standing in that denomination (i.e. no disciplinary charges have been filed) and are willing to surrender that membership upon joining the PC(USA).
 - a. If for some reason the minister is not in good standing with their denomination (i.e. disciplinary charges have been filed or upheld), the minister may provide a statement explaining the circumstances and/or context of the charges. When there is good and sufficient reason to do so, the COM may *recommend* proceeding with the transfer even if the minister is not currently in good standing.
2. Complete the Presbytery's Boundary or Sexual Misconduct Prevention training for the current year.
3. Possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university and a M.Div. degree from a seminary or school of theology accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.
4. Show evidence of having satisfactorily passed at least one year of Ancient/Koiné Greek *and* Ancient Hebrew.
5. Pass the Standard Ordination Exams.
 - a. For ministers who have served 5 or more years in another Reformed church, the COM **may recommend** that an exemption from some or all of the examinations be granted. Such a recommendation would require a 2/3 majority vote in the affirmative. (G-2.0505a(2))
 - b. For ministers who have served 10 or more years in any Christian denomination, the COM **may recommend** alternate assessments or waivers to the Bible Content Exam and the Biblical Exegesis Exam. Such a recommendation would require a 3/4 majority vote in the affirmative. (G-2.0610)
6. Are already serving or have an invitation to serve in one of the congregations of the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

The Committee on Ministry reserves the right to add to the above list of requirements or to ask the PET for further waivers, based on their interviews with a minister and an assessment of their beliefs.

Once all of the above have been satisfied, the transfer shall be complete once the minister:

1. Answers the ordination questions in the affirmative.
2. Furnishes evidence they have surrendered membership and been officially removed from the roll of any and all other Christian denominations with which they have been associated.

Regarding Ministers of other Denominations in Formula Agreement with the PC(USA)

Ministers of denominations with which the PC(USA) is in “formula agreement” have dual standing while serving PC(USA) congregations and do not have to join the PC(USA). They are treated as though they are PC(USA) members for the duration of their calling to a PC(USA) congregation.

TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN A STATEMENT OF FAITH

Specific areas to be included in a minister’s, candidate’s, or CLP’s Statement of Faith should express their understanding of:

- A. Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- B. The Trinity
- C. The nature of the Sacraments in Reformed theology
- D. The nature of sin and redemption
- E. The nature and role of Scripture
- F. Presbyterian church polity and view of the PC(USA)
- G. The mission of the church and Christian responsibility in the areas of peace and justice, as well as social and corporate life

COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS

Approval of Eligibility for Commissioning

Upon successful completion of the Presbytery training as outlined in the *Book of Order* and delineated in the Requirements for Commissioning of Lay Pastors in the Presbytery of East Tennessee, and upon recommendation of the CLP committee, a Ruling Elder may come before the Committee on Ministry through its Examinations and Validations subcommittee to be examined for eligibility to receive a call to ministry. The candidate is asked to provide to the subcommittee at least two weeks prior to the examination date the following:

- The recommendation of the CLP committee, along with any limitations or recommendations, including a mentor;
- A one- or two-page narrative Statement of Faith stating their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church (specific areas of theology to be included are cited in a preceding section of this policy);
- A one-page Journey of faith;
- A CLP information form.

During the examination the candidate will be questioned on their Statement of Faith, motives for seeking a commission, and the areas of theology, worship and sacraments, polity and Bible. The examination will also include an exploration of the ordination/commissioning questions (W-4.0404).

Upon approval of the sub-committee, the candidate will meet with the COM.

The candidate will be recognized at the next Presbytery Meeting with a Certificate of Completion.

Approval for a Call

A candidate who receives a call within 12 months of being approved as ready to receive a call will submit the Covenant with a Commissioned Lay Pastor, outlining terms of call and length of commission, along with a request for the specific privileges needed to further the mission of the congregation to which they are to be commissioned. The COM will meet with the candidate to discuss their sense of call to the particular congregation to which they will be commissioned, as well as the relationship of pastoral duties to other obligations. Members of the congregation may be invited to share their sense of call. The COM may approve the commissioning to a particular call on behalf of the Presbytery. The candidate will be presented to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting for commissioning.

A candidate who receives a call more than 12 months after being approved as ready to receive a call will meet with the subcommittee on Examinations and Validations. The candidate will submit the Covenant with a Commissioned Lay Pastor, outlining terms of call and length of commission, along with a request for the specific privileges needed to further the mission of the congregation to which they are to be commissioned. The committee may also ask for an updated Statement of Faith and/or Journey of Faith. The candidate will be examined on their continued sense of calling to commissioning, as well as any continuing education the candidate has pursued. A discussion of sense of call to the particular congregation to which they will be commissioned, as well as the relationship of pastoral duties to other obligations, will also be held.

If the subcommittee on examinations and validations is satisfied with the examination, the candidate shall appear before the COM. The COM may ask further questions of the candidate that cover the areas listed above. Members of the congregation may be invited to share their sense of call. The COM may approve the commissioning to a particular call on behalf of the Presbytery. The candidate will be presented to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting for commissioning.

Approval for extension of a call

A candidate being considered for extension of a call after three years of service in the same congregation is asked to provide to the Examinations and Validations subcommittee the following:

- A report from the CLP's mentor as to the their spiritual growth and fitness to continue;
- A report from the CLP on the congregation's growth;
- A copy of the CLP's latest annual report to the COM;
- A report on continuing education events that the candidate has attended;
- A request concerning privileges to be extended, if all have not already been given.

During the examination the candidate will be questioned on their Statement of Faith and the areas of theology, worship and sacraments, polity, and Bible. Questions related to sense of call and fitness to continue call based on the above reports will be discussed.

If the subcommittee on examinations and validations is satisfied with the examination, the candidate shall appear before the COM. The COM may ask further questions of the candidate that cover the areas listed above. Members of the congregation may be invited to share their sense of call. The COM may approve the extension of the commission to a particular call on behalf of the Presbytery.

Appendix D: Temporary Members

POLICY ON TEMPORARY MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE

Ordinarily, congregations in the Presbytery of East Tennessee will be served by a Presbyterian Minister of the Word and Sacrament or by a Commissioned Lay Pastor. In cases where it is not practical or a congregation is unable to attain the services of a Presbyterian Minister of the Word and Sacrament, congregations may engage the services of another Christian denomination, who may be received as a Temporary Member of the presbytery. (G-2.0506) The same terms and requirements regarding temporary pastoral relationships in the Book of Order shall also apply to congregations in a temporary pastoral covenant with a minister from another Christian denomination.

In order for a minister of another Christian denomination to become a Temporary Member of the presbytery, the following conditions must be met:

- The session has been in conversation with the congregation's COM liaison and/or the General Presbyter regarding the temporary pastoral relationship and requests that the presbytery approve a minister from another Christian denomination to serve their congregation;
- The minister has been invited by the session of a particular congregation to serve in a temporary pastoral relationship and a covenant has been agreed to by both the minister and session;
- The minister has a degree from an accredited seminary and a minimum of ten (10) years of ministry service in his/her particular denomination;
- The minister from the other denomination has met with the Examinations and Validations sub-committee of the COM and been examined as to their fitness for the particular call;
- The Examination and Validations sub-committee is satisfied with the minister's qualifications and has recommended to the COM that he/she be enrolled as a temporary member;
- The COM has approved the recommendation of the Examination and Validations sub-committee;
- The minister has successfully passed a background check by the COM and a reference check by the General Presbyter with his/her current denomination to determine if they are in good standing, if they have been disciplined, if they have had charges filed against them, or if there are any allegations of misconduct.

If the above conditions are met, the Committee on Ministry shall examine the minister for Temporary Membership in the presbytery and recommend validation of the minister for temporary pastoral service by the presbytery. Final approval shall be by vote of the presbytery.

Upon validation by the presbytery, the Committee on Ministry may authorize a Temporary Member of the Presbytery of East Tennessee to serve a particular congregation, as well as to moderate the session and/or administer the sacraments.

To be authorized to moderate the session, a guided conversation on Presbyterian Polity shall be conducted by a member of the Committee on Ministry and the General Presbyter or the Stated Clerk. Upon satisfactory completion of this guided conversation, the COM may authorize a Temporary Member to moderate meetings of the session. If authorized to moderate the session, the COM shall appoint a Minister Member of the Presbytery of East Tennessee as a mentor to moderate the session meetings, with the Temporary Member present as an observer, for the first three months. The Temporary Member may then moderate the session meetings, with the Minister Member present as an observer, for the next three months. After this period, the Temporary Member may moderate the session meetings without the Minister Member present, but the Minister Member shall be available for consultation prior to the meetings. The Minister Member assigned as the mentor shall provide annual officer training.

To be authorized to celebrate the sacraments, a guided conversation on the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and the Directory for Worship shall be conducted by a member of the Committee on Ministry and the General Presbyter or the Stated Clerk. The purpose of this guided conversation shall be to determine the Temporary Minister's understanding of and willingness to uphold the Presbyterian observance of the sacraments. Upon satisfactory completion of this guided conversation, the COM may authorize a Temporary Member to celebrate the sacraments in the particular congregation with which the Temporary Member has a covenant.

The guided conversations described above may be undertaken concurrently. Once a particular minister has been authorized to administer the sacraments and/or moderate a session in a particular congregation of the presbytery, he/she may be approved to do the same in any subsequent congregation of the presbytery to which he/she is called to serve without repeating the above requirements.

Temporary Members are subject to the Rules of Discipline of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and shall be granted voice but no vote at presbytery meetings. A Temporary Member of the Presbytery shall attend at least two presbytery meetings each year. They are also encouraged to attend a peer group with other Presbyterian pastors and shall meet face-to-face with their mentor at least quarterly.

Temporary membership status shall be reviewed annually and reported to the Temporary Member's denominational authority.

Service by individuals who are minister members of denominations in full communion or correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by the Book of Order, not this policy.

Appendix E: Guidelines for Establishing Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning Commissions

The Presbytery of East Tennessee has given authority to the Committee on Ministry to approve commissions for the Ordination and/or Installation of Installed Pastors and the commissioning of Ruling Elders as Commissioned Lay Pastors. The Church (or pastor) must furnish to the COM the following for approval at a Meeting of the COM no later than 3 months after being received as a member of the Presbytery of East Tennessee:

Ordination __yes __no Installation __yes __no Commissioning __yes __no

Date: _____ Time: _____

Place: _____

A commission shall be composed of a minimum of 2 Teaching Elders and 2 Ruling Elders, plus a fifth person who may be a Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder. These individuals should represent other congregations in the presbytery. There may be more than five. Guests of the commission may be invited as corresponding members. It is appropriate to invite the Moderator of the Presbytery to serve as Commission Moderator. If the Presbytery Moderator is unavailable, another moderator may be designated. If needed, all current members of the Committee on Ministry may fill in for a duly elected commission member if a commission member's absence brings the number of members participating to less than 5.

Please list the names of the commission members and guests, along with their ordination status and the name of the congregation they represent:

Guests of the Commission

The pastor to be ordained and/or installed, the PNC (or the Ruling Elder to be commissioned and Session) and the Commission Moderator will work cooperatively to plan the worship service. It is customary, but not required, that the worship service takes place in the afternoon to afford minister members of the Presbytery the opportunity to attend. There are occasions when the Ruling Elder may be commissioned at a Presbytery meeting at the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry.

Please return to the moderator of the Committee on Ministry.

Appendix F: Mentor Guidelines for CLPs and Teaching Elders

FOR TEACHING ELDERS

An experienced teaching elder will be appointed by the Committee on Ministry as a mentor for each teaching elder in a new call in the Presbytery of East Tennessee. The mentor will serve for a period of no less than one year as a friend in ministry and counselor to the newly installed pastor to assist in facilitating a smooth transition in the new ministry. The pastors will meet regularly as they so choose. The mentor will report periodically to the Committee on Ministry through its Care of Church Professionals Committee.

FOR COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS

MENTOR QUALIFICATIONS

1. The Mentor shall be a minister member of the Presbytery with previous parish experience or a CLP who has been serving in the Presbytery of East Tennessee for 5 years.
2. Selection shall be made by mutual agreement between the CLP and the CLP Committee.
3. Generally, a Mentor should serve just one CLP at a time.
4. It will, generally, be advisable that a minister other than the CLP's own pastor serve as Mentor.
5. The Mentor's term shall be one year and shall be renewed at the desire of the CLP and Mentor, and with the approval of the CLP Committee.

MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Meet at least quarterly with the CLP.
2. Provide counsel, coaching and encouragement.
3. Identify opportunities for growth in leadership.
4. If the Mentor perceives difficulties with the CLP's performance, they are to refer this to the CLP Committee for any necessary action.
5. At the end of the one-year mentoring cycle, the Mentor shall file a written report with the CLP Committee.

Appendix G: Requirements for CLPs

REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMISSIONING OF RULING ELDERS IN PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE IN THE PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE

The purpose of these policies and guidelines is to establish minimum requirements for commissioning ruling elders to particular pastoral service, henceforth referred to as Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP), and the continuing education and supervision of commissioned ruling elders serving in the bounds of the Presbytery of East Tennessee (PET).

STRUCTURE:

The CLP Sub-committee of the PET shall administer the CLP training program and its work under the oversight of the Committee on Ministry (COM). The CLP Sub-committee shall be composed of at least six (6) persons. The committee shall contain a liaison member to the COM, and there shall be at least one Teaching Elder/Minister of the Word and Sacrament on the committee.

BOOK OF ORDER REQUIREMENTS:

The Book of Order establishes criteria for the equipping of CLPs and their ongoing accountability to the PET. The PET, in order to facilitate its responsibilities to our CLP program, highlights these particular requirements:

1. CLPs are ruling elders of the PC(USA) who are commissioned to lead worship and to preach the gospel, watch over the people and provide for their nurture and service.
2. In addition, CLPs may be able to carry out some or all of the following functions, contingent upon the recommendation of the CLP Sub-committee that the functions are needed to further the mission of a particular church.
 - A. Administer the Lord's Supper.
 - B. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism.
 - C. Moderate the session of the congregation to which the CLP is commissioned.
 - D. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.

CLPs also have these privileges, according to the PET Manual:

- A. Have a voice in meetings of the PET.
 - B. Have a vote in meetings of the PET (such vote to be counted as an elder commissioner for purposes of parity).
3. The PET shall be responsible for the commissioning of all CLPs.
 4. The PET, through its CLP Sub-committee, shall train and equip candidates for the work of CLP in Particular Pastoral Service. Candidates who wish to apply through their churches' sessions to receive training in another way, such as through a seminary-sponsored program, may offer to the CLP Sub-committee all information about that program, including a syllabus of each course and grading procedures. Candidates wishing to pursue this option will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The coursework and the required hours must, at the least, fulfill the minimum requirements set forth under preparation requirements.
 5. Elders commissioned in another presbytery who wish to pursue a commissioning in the PET must submit to the CLP Sub-committee the following information and may be requested to submit further documentation at the discretion of the CLP Sub-committee:
 - A. A CLP application form
 - B. A letter detailing the required coursework and grading requirements of the program in which they were trained.
 - C. A letter of good standing from their home presbytery.
 - D. A statement offering their reasons for seeking a commissioning in the PET.
 - E. If established, a letter from the session of their new home church within the bounds of the PET.
 6. The PET, through its COM, shall provide for the examination of those who have satisfactorily completed the course work to be CLPs. Candidates for commissioning shall be examined by the COM regarding:
 - A. Their personal faith.
 - B. Their motives for seeking the commission.
 - C. The areas of instruction referred to in preparation requirements.

This examination at the completion of training, if successful, will acknowledge the ruling elder as “eligible to be commissioned.”

At such time as the ruling elder “eligible to be commissioned” is called to be commissioned to a specific function in a congregation or other validated ministry, the ruling elder and the calling entity shall follow the guidelines of the Committee on Ministry, who will have responsibility to recommend (or not) the commissioning of the ruling elder to a specific function and will approve a commissioning service.

7. Candidates for CLP shall sign the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the PET each time they are commissioned to a particular “call.” All CLPs in active service must complete Misconduct Prevention training annually. This seminar is sponsored by the PET each year.
8. A CLP serving in an ongoing relationship in a church shall be supervised by the PET through its CLP Sub-committee, which will appoint a teaching elder in the Presbytery as a mentor/supervisor. CLPs will be given an opportunity to request a mentor/supervisor if they have one with whom they would like to work.
9. One or more continuing education events shall be required per year, encompassing no fewer than six (6) contact hours. The CLP Sub-committee shall offer or recommend one or more education events each year that will fulfill this requirement and keep accurate records of attendance. All CLPs are encouraged and expected to participate in the event(s). Other courses, conferences, workshops, or events may be substituted for the scheduled continuing education event with prior approval of the CLP Sub-committee.

PROCESS FOR COMMISSIONING:

An individual wishing to be a CLP shall make application through their respective session to the CLP Sub-committee of the PET. The form for this application shall be provided by the PET. The CLP Sub-committee, having satisfied itself regarding the validity of the request, shall supervise the preparation of the candidate.

Upon successful completion of the required preparation, the CLP Sub-committee, shall present the candidate to the COM for examination, and upon successful completion of that examination, the COM shall certify the candidate as eligible to receive a commission and shall present the candidate to be recognized by the PET.

When an opportunity for service is found, which the COM deems appropriate for commissioning, the COM shall present the candidate to the PET for examination and commissioning as outlined in the Book of Order.

A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions specified in the Book of Order until commissioned again to a congregation or validated ministry by the PET.

WHO MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE TRAINING PROGRAM:

The PET will accept applications to become a CLP from ruling elders who have completed at least three years of active service in the churches in the PET and who have been recommended by their sessions and pastors. Ruling elders from another presbytery who make application through their sessions and pastors, and with the approval of the appropriate body of their home presbytery and the approval of the CLP Sub-committee of the PET, may participate in the program with the goal of commissioning in their home presbytery.

Ruling elders who have completed at least three years of active service in a PC(USA) church located in another presbytery and are now active members of a church in the PET may make application to the program through the recommendation of their new session and pastor. The CLP Sub-committee will consider each application on an individual basis and has the prerogative to require recommendations from the elder's previous home church.

PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS:

Coursework for becoming a CLP is a two-year process. Each class (2 in the fall and 2 in the spring) generally takes place over a 2-month period, usually in the following order, though scheduling may dictate adjustments:

- Orientation (8 hours) – required before final acceptance to the program
- Bible Survey (16 hours)
- Reformed Theology (16 hours)
- Biblical Exegesis (16 hours)
- Preaching (16 hours)
- Worship & Sacraments (16 hours)
- Polity & Church Leadership (16 hours)
- Pastoral care (16 hours)
- Evaluation (8 hours)

Four additional hours are included per course for preparation outside of class, which totals 20 hours per course (16 contact hours; 4 hours preparation outside of class). Exceptions are orientation and evaluation, which are 8 hours each.

The total number of hours for the program is 156.

Each session shall be held in a location most convenient to the participants and the instructor. If a class is missed, course work will be made up to the instructor's satisfaction.

If participants cannot take a class when offered, they'll have to wait for the next cycle.

Required 3-month internship – either after first year of study or completion of all classes

Student course fee: \$150 each (8 courses total, with orientation and evaluation combined)

Required continuing education:

Stewardship and mission (3 hours)

Leadership (3 hours)

Small church ministry (3 hours)

Each class shall be led by qualified, regularly ordained seminary graduate members in good standing with the PET or by other qualified teachers at the discretion of the CLP Sub-committee and the approval of the PET.

Successful completion of each course requires the following:

1. Attendance and participation by the candidate of three-fourths of the class sessions. Missed classwork must be made up with and to the satisfaction of the course instructor.
2. The candidate's written (or oral, if necessary) answers to representative questions concerning the course work. These answers shall be evaluated and approved by the instructor at the end of the course period. The instructor will provide the CLP Sub-committee with a list of those candidates receiving credit for the subject area, along with the questions and answers used in the evaluation. These questions and answers can be used in the examination by the COM prior to commissioning by the PET.

3. The CLP Sub-committee shall not present a candidate to the COM for examination if all of the requirements are not met in a satisfactory manner. With the guidance of the CLP Sub-committee and/or an appointed mentor, candidates not approved for examination shall be asked to consider prayerfully their place in the program. They shall be asked to perform specific tasks and/or address specific areas of concern that need to be pursued or fulfilled before being examined for commissioning as a CLP.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

CLPs are subject to the following guidelines:

1. CLPs may administer the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism, moderate sessions, and perform marriages when permission for such is requested by the session of a particular church and granted by the COM.
2. CLPs shall be compensated at no less than the current rate approved by the PET when engaged by a session for particular pastoral service.
3. CLPs may enter into a covenant relationship with a particular church upon request of the session and upon the approval of the COM. A covenant agreement between the church, the CLP, and the COM shall be drawn up and should follow the example of the Covenant with a Commissioned Lay Pastor, which may be found on the PET website under Resources. Such an agreement shall include an annual review of the relationship by the COM, the CLP, and the church.
4. The work of CLPs must be reviewed on an annual basis. This review includes:
 - A. The desire of the CLP to continue.
 - B. The submission of an annual report to the COM and the CLP Sub-committee.
 - C. The fulfillment of the continuing education requirement.
 - D. An encouragement to the CLP to stay connected to the life of their home church.
5. A CLP who is commissioned to the church of which they are a member may not be an active member of the session during the time of their commission with the church.

Appendix H: Sabbatical Policy

Sabbatical Leave Policy For Teaching Elders and Certified Educators in the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Sabbatical--Definition

The word "sabbatical" comes from the Hebrew word "Shabbat" (Sabbath), meaning "cease" and "rest," but in the Biblical understanding it means more than just a day off. It is a day consecrated to God, when God's people cease to do ordinary labor, but instead rest, worship, and enjoy God's creation. In academic life, sabbaticals are extended Sabbaths, times apart from ordinary duties for the purpose of further education and research in one's field.

Congregations have discovered that granting periodic sabbatical leave to pastors and other church professionals is a healthy way to fill their spiritual/emotional/ intellectual "bucket" and that they return with renewed energy, creativity, vision and enthusiasm for ministry. Granting sabbaticals is an investment in the quality of ministry, as well as in the length of time a minister will stay in a particular congregation. By committing ourselves to supporting on-going and serious spiritual reflection, learning, and renewal on the part of its professionals, the church takes steps toward its own faithfulness and growth.

Sabbatical--Rationale

Sabbaticals are a positive and healthy way to combat the high rate of burnout among church professionals. Studies identify the ordained ministry as the #1 burnout profession in the country. The primary cause of burnout among church professionals is, according to Roy Oswald, church consultant and Executive Director for Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Skills, "compassion fatigue."

Clergy, and particularly parish clergy, bear the burdens, the anguish, the pain, and the hurt of their parishioners on a 24-hour basis. They are called on to have spiritual reserves around the clock, yet the demands on their time and energy often make it difficult for them to maintain their own spiritual reserves. As a result, many, if not all, experience symptoms of emotional collapse, compassion fatigue, stress-related illnesses, and burnout which adversely affect a minister's personal, family, and parish life.

We believe that the granting of periodic sabbaticals will provide the necessary rest, renewal and refreshment needed to help stem the tide of burnout among our church professionals and encourage them to stay longer in their respective congregations.

This Biblically based tradition of granting sabbaticals is one that has been maintained over the years in the academic world, and a practice that is growing in the business community and in the church. Many universities and colleges throughout the country continue the long-standing tradition, dating back to when the academic world was part of the church, that grants professors an opportunity every seventh year to become students again and refresh their callings.

Sabbatical Leave – Explained

A sabbatical leave is a period of time provided for clergy to disengage from their regular tasks and from the stress of being constantly on call. It has antecedents in the Biblical concept of the Sabbath day and Sabbath year. It is a time of rest, reflection, and recreation; a time for personal spiritual growth; an opportunity for renewed vision and commitment to ministry. It is also an opportunity for the congregation to reflect on the whole nature and meaning of ministry and the place of the congregation in that mission. The Sabbatical Leave, with its emphasis on rest, travel, study, and reflection is different from vacation and from other times away for such pursuits as advanced degree work, continuing education, or career assessment.

Scripture abounds with illustrations of God's leaders (Moses, Elijah, Paul, John, etc.) spending significant time in solitude and reflection in preparation for and continuation of ministry. Exodus 23 and Leviticus 25 speak of Sabbath days and Sabbath land years when the ground is untilled so that it can replenish itself. Our Lord Jesus went away into the wilderness for 40 days and nights to commune with God and prepare himself for ministry. He regularly took time away from his ministry to pray and reflect.

Sabbatical Leave is a time for clergy to do the same. It is a time to refill and replenish the soul, to be refreshed in the Spirit with renewed dedication and vision, to be restored in physical health and energy. This brings benefits not only to the clergy but to the congregation, as well. When a pastor returns renewed, refreshed, and refilled, this results in a more fulfilling and productive ministry among the people.

Sabbatical--Recommendations

The Presbytery of East Tennessee recommends that the sessions of its congregations grant paid sabbatical leave of at least three (3) months to its Teaching Elders and Certified Christian Educators during every 7th consecutive year of service to that congregation, and that time spent on sabbatical leave not be counted against annual vacation leave. Pastors and church professionals may use available vacation time on either side of the sabbatical to extend the sabbatical.

The Presbytery requires that, at the end of every four (4) year cycle of service to the church (ordinarily in years 4, 11, 18, etc.), church professionals and sessions discuss a possible sabbatical leave, taking the needs of the professional and the congregation into consideration. A member of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) will be made available to any session needing education or advice regarding the consideration or planning of a sabbatical leave.

A session-level discussion of a possible sabbatical leave shall begin immediately for any church professional who already has over six (6) consecutive years of service in their congregation if no sabbatical has been granted in that period of service.

Should the session approve a sabbatical leave for its church professional, the Presbytery recommends that the following steps be taken:

1. That the church professional provide to the Session, at least 6 months prior to the sabbatical, a rough draft of their sabbatical leave plan for feedback and approval, including personal goals, benefits for the church professional and the church, travel, activities, anticipated expenses and funding, and provision for leadership of the congregation during the sabbatical leave. Church professionals should work with the session to finalize the sabbatical leave plan together.
2. That the church professional and the session meet soon after the completion of the sabbatical leave, and share together their different experiences during the sabbatical, along with lessons learned and insights gained. Church professionals should also schedule a time to meet with the entire congregation to share their learning experience with the whole congregation.
3. That the church professional continue to serve the same congregation at least one (1) year after the end of the sabbatical leave, unless extenuating circumstances arise, so that the congregation shares fully in all the gain that has come as a result of the sabbatical leave.

Sabbatical—Funding

During a Sabbatical Leave the pastor will continue to receive full salary and benefits. Costs for supply clergy or other expenses incurred by the congregation for pastoral services will be paid by the congregation. We encourage congregations to make budget provisions for a sabbatical fund, contributing a certain amount to the fund each year until there is enough in the fund to finance a sabbatical. Those congregations that would have financial difficulties in providing for the Sabbatical Leave should consult with the Committee on Ministry, who will help congregations explore grants or other sources of funding.

Costs associated with Sabbatical Leave may be assumed by the pastor, the congregation, or shared by both in some combination. Clergy should explore funding options through the Board of Pensions, the Lily Endowment, or other grant programs for pastors on Sabbatical. These programs can be quite competitive and application deadlines may be well before a pastor plans to take a Sabbatical Leave.

Congregations may wish to receive a “love offering” to help its pastor defray expenses for travel or study or the Session may make provisions for defraying such expenses through the budget or a designated fund. If a designated fund is created to which members can contribute, the money in the fund belongs to the congregation and not the pastor. Should the pastor leave prior to a sabbatical being taken, the Session shall decide whether to repurpose such funds or save them for the next pastor. In no case will a pastor who leaves prior to taking a Sabbatical Leave be able to take Sabbatical Leave funds with them.

Sabbatical--Staffing

Many retired pastors, CLPs, and other lay leaders in the area, or in the local congregation, are available to serve congregations on a short-term basis during a three-month sabbatical. A congregation’s COM liaison can be of assistance in obtaining the services of such individuals.

Approved by the Presbytery of East Tennessee

November 2023

Appendix I: Family Leave Policy

Family Leave Guidelines for the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Introduction: In accordance with the action of the 225th General Assembly and subsequent ratification by a majority of Presbyteries, the Presbytery of East Tennessee has adopted the following Family Leave Policy.

All Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving a PC(USA) entity are entitled to a minimum of 12 weeks paid family medical leave. Family leave is defined as including, but not limited to, the following:

- Leave to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child;
- Leave to provide care to an ill or disabled family member;
- Leave to heal following a loss or tragic event.

Leave Parameters

- Up to 12 weeks (total, regardless of precipitating event or circumstance) of paid leave per year, with as much advance notice as possible. Paid Leave may be used – in accordance with need – consecutively or intermittently.
- During Paid Leave, the pastor will continue to receive all benefits in their terms of call, including dues paid to and benefits provided by the Board of Pensions.
- Use of vacation time is not required but may be used to extend leave time at the discretion of the pastor.

Following the period of paid leave, the pastor shall be entitled to return to the same position with the same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description.

Types of Leave

- **Parental Leave:** Within one year of birth or adoption, a pastor may take up to twelve consecutive or intermittent weeks bonding time.
- **Caregiver/Family Leave:** In times when a family member requires care due to an illness or disability, a pastor may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the nature of illness and need.
- **Personal Loss:** In the event of the death of a loved one or a tragic event, a pastor may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the nature of event and need.

Support

- While the individual congregation/entity is responsible for the funding and administration of Paid Family Leave, state-provided disability and paid leave benefits and Board of Pensions financial protection programs may be considered in order to help offset income continuation costs.
- Where possible, communication of mutual needs and planning is vital to minimize disruption for the entity served by the pastor. Pastors are encouraged to anticipate leave with sensitivity around the needs of the congregation/entity/body, including but not limited to temporary replacement and fulfillment of duties.
- Paid Family Leave is not intended to be a burden but rather a source of joy as congregations/entities encourage pastors to take time for the good of their families. Sessions are encouraged to work with the Presbytery if assistance in funding Paid Family Leave is needed in order best to serve the Kingdom of God.

Appendix J: Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training Policy

All Pastors, CLPs, and Certified Christian Educators have a duty and responsibility to abide by the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy. This includes completing the annual sexual misconduct prevention training provided by the Presbytery. The Committee on Ministry, being responsible for oversight and accountability of pastors, CLPs, and Christian educators who are members of the Presbytery, have adopted the following policy for those church professionals who do not complete the annual training in a timely manner.

Any church professional who does not complete the annual sexual misconduct prevention training by the deadline set by the Presbytery will be subject to the following:

- The PET office will provide a list of those who are in noncompliance to the Committee on Ministry prior to each meeting following the deadline for completion;
- Those who are in noncompliance will be contacted by the General Presbyter and given a specific date for completion;
- Each person will be notified that if the training is not completed by the new deadline, the session of the congregation that person serves will be informed of their noncompliance via a letter or email to the Clerk of Session;
- If the training is not completed by the new deadline, the Clerk of Session will be informed, as noted above;
- Additionally, those church professionals who do not complete the training by the new deadline will be required to meet with the Committee on Ministry and explain the circumstances of the noncompliance.

Appendix K: Separation Policy

SEPARATION POLICY

For Departing Ministers* and Their Former Congregations
Presbytery of East Tennessee

Pastors have privileged, precious and confidential relationships with congregations and their members. When a pastor's professional service to a congregation concludes, those privileged relationships, of necessity, must end.

Bonds of affection and friendship will remain between the minister and their family with church members. Friendship of a social nature may continue, but integrity to the ministry of the church and ongoing health of the community of the church requires that any pastoral relationship and service do not.

Pastoral concern for the congregation requires that, as a member accountable to the presbytery, the departing member and session are responsible for ensuring these separation policies are met. Failure to separate as described in this policy may be considered renunciation of jurisdiction resulting in loss of ordination status.

In order to provide that new and effective pastoral relationships may be called and established, the Presbytery affirms the following minimum standards of conduct:

- Former pastors will agree not to preach, lead worship, or provide pastoral functions such as presiding at sacraments, weddings and funerals.
- Any conversation including electronic communication with members regarding internal congregational matters, decisions or personalities is inappropriate.
- Keys to church property should be returned to the clerk of session and the minister should remain away from the property.
- Beware of social media participation and content, in which confidentiality cannot be assured.

The presbytery understands that separation from a congregation is a difficult transition for the people and may be especially stressful for the pastor and their spouse and family. For the pastor's family, physical separation is preferable, but in rare, select, controlled circumstances an ongoing association as a member may be useful to both the family and congregation. The Committee on Ministry shall determine when and if such circumstances are applicable.

Ordained teaching elders are reminded that the presbytery continues to be their congregation and pastoral community. Honorably retiring pastors and spouses may contribute richly to the life of other congregations and are encouraged to do so as they remain active participants in presbytery and the larger church.

After a new pastor is installed in a congregation, and at least a year has passed, a former pastor may on special occasions accept the invitation of the new pastor and session to co-officiate in ordinances and services of the church. At such time and in consultation with and concurrence of the installed pastor, further participation in the ordinary life of the congregation is permissible.

Presbytery through its Committee on Ministry reserves the power to advise and/or discipline pastors regarding their contacts with former congregations.

**References to ministers and pastors in this document include associate pastors, parish associates, interim pastors, commissioned lay pastors, stated supplies, and all professionals in service to a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).*

Appendix L: Exit Interview Policy

Presbytery of East Tennessee Committee on Ministry Exit Interview Policy

Interviewers:

The Committee on Ministry shall designate a person or persons on the COM to conduct Exit Interviews with both the departing pastor and the Session of the related congregation.

The Exit Interview process shall consist of two COM members, one of whom should be the congregation's COM liaison. If this is not possible, then one COM member may conduct the interviews. The General Presbyter may also be invited, at the discretion of the COM moderator.

Process:

The Exit Interview shall be conducted with the departing pastor as soon as possible after the announcement of the pastor's concluding date.

The interview with the Session shall be scheduled as soon as possible after the pastor has departed.

Copies of the Exit Interview reports shall be submitted to the Presbytery Office and to the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry.

Following the interviews, the COM will provide a copy of these reports for the Liaison.

Forms for interviews may be found in the Committee on Ministry Handbook Appendix N.

Appendix M: Social Media Guidelines

As pastors and church professionals we know that relationships with each other, congregation members, and colleagues in the presbytery and beyond matter. We know that healthy relationships come from good communication and care. In years past the avenues for communication were fewer and the modes much slower than today. With the advent of social media, the modes of communication have greatly changed. Social media affords us great opportunities for positive communication, yet inherent in it are the possibility of great pitfalls as well. To encourage the use of social media among pastors and church professionals to build positive relationships in their churches and larger church community, the Presbytery of East Tennessee adopts this social media policy.

- Social media is to be used responsibly and with care.
 - It is not a venue to vent frustrations about church happenings or church members.
 - It should never replace face to face communication.
 - Postings of a personal nature are to be positive and encouraging, not such things that would call one's character into question.

- Social media – with all its options – has the potential to enslave us. Be mindful of the time spent on social media so that it does not consume one's time such that authentic pastoral care and leadership suffer.

- Social media and the end of a pastoral relationship
 - Great care should be given in whether to remain social media “friends” with former parishioners. If the choice is to remain friends, then:
 - Do not engage in conversations regarding the happenings of the congregation;
 - Do not offer pastoral care in ways that seek to reinforce your pastoral relationship with the congregation;
 - Honor the relationship developing between the interim and/or the newly -installed pastor.
 - Should you choose to no longer remain media “friends” with former parishioners communicate that choice lovingly and pastorally prior to leaving.

The Committee on Ministry will adjudicate complaints about abuses of the letter and spirit of this social media policy.

Appendix N: Debt Assistance Policy

Presbytery of East Tennessee COM Seminary Debt Assistance Policy

Introduction:

The Board of Pensions has established a Seminary Debt Assistance Program to reduce the financial pressures on new teaching elders serving small churches. Helping teaching elders repay their seminary educational debt makes it easier for them to accept positions at small churches and effectively minister to their congregations. Under this program teaching elders who are serving in a full time, called pastoral position can receive a grant of up to \$1,500.00 per year, for up to four years, to repay educational debt incurred while seeking a Master of Divinity. A teaching elder may receive up to \$6,000.00 over the course of four years.

To qualify as a prospective candidate, you must

- be a teaching elder in your first seven years of ministry
- be serving in a called pastoral position, full time, for a PC(USA) church that has 150 or fewer members and an annual budget of \$250,000.00 or less;
- attend a one-day financial planning seminar (Getting in Shape Fiscally), offered by the Board of Pensions at your seminary or presbytery;
- make application through and receive permission from your presbytery.

Presbyteries that submit applications are required to have a policy on student/clergy indebtedness.

When the Presbytery is the Presbytery of Call:

- 1) Any teaching elder serving a first call following graduation from seminary, who comes with any educational indebtedness, shall be required to show evidence of having attended a financial planning workshop such as a Fiscal Fitness workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions, or other financial planning workshop. If the teaching elder has not attended such a workshop, they shall be required to do so within twelve months of start-up. The cost of the registration fee, accommodation and travel for such a workshop is to be considered a legitimate reimbursable expense from a study leave allowance.
- 2) The Committee on Ministry shall encourage calling congregations to utilize further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.

Adopted by COM – October 27, 2015

Appendix O: Covenants and Forms

Terms of Call Form for Teaching Elders (installed position)

Interim Pastor Covenant Form

Covenant for a Temporary Pastoral Relationship Form

CLP Covenant Form

Commission Minutes Form – Teaching Elder

Commission Minutes Form – CLP

Exit Interview Forms for Pastor and Session

Pastoral Call Form

Presbytery of East Tennessee Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The _____ Presbyterian Church of _____ (City, State), being well satisfied with your qualifications 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 _____ (Pastor, Associate Pastor) 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 the Word and Sacrament among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to provide you the following annually:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Annual Cash Salary (\$34,949 minimum) | \$ _____ |
| 2. Housing Allowance (\$10,485 minimum) | \$ _____ |
| 3. Insurance Premiums (beyond BoP Pastor's Participation) | \$ _____ |
| 4. Deferred Income (employer contribution to annuity, savings, etc.) | \$ _____ |
| 5. Other Applicable Income (please explain) | \$ _____ |
| 6. Effective Salary (ES) Minimum \$45,434 | \$ _____ |
| 7. SECA Tax Reimbursement (7.65% of ES) | \$ _____ |
| 8. Board of Pensions Dues (usually 39% of ES) | \$ _____ |

The following expenses of ministry should be reimbursed through an accountable plan:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 9. Mileage Allowance (at current IRS Rate) | \$ _____ |
| 10. Continuing Education Allowance (minimum \$2,000) | \$ _____ |
| 11. Professional Expense Allowance | \$ _____ |
| 12. Total Compensation Package | \$ _____ |
| 13. Moving expenses (paid/reimbursed by church) | \$ _____ |
| 14. Weeks of Paid Vacation Leave (minimum - 4) | _____ |
| 15. Weeks of Paid Continuing Education Leave (minimum - 2) | _____ |
| 16. Weeks of Paid Family Leave (minimum - 12) | _____ |

The Presbytery of East Tennessee recommends that the sessions of its churches grant paid sabbaticals of at least three (3) months to its Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Certified Christian Educators during every 7th consecutive year of service to the congregation, and that time spent on sabbatical not be counted against annual vacation leave.

We promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this _____ day of _____, _____ (Year)

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 rules laid down in the Form of Government, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

(Signed) _____ Moderator of the Congregational Meeting

Certification of Call

A. Action by Presbytery of Call

1. This call has been reviewed by the Committee on Ministry and recommends the Presbytery of East Tennessee approve this call.

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
COM Moderator

2. This call was approved by the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
Stated Clerk

B. Acceptance of the Call

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

Date of action _____ (Signed) _____
Minister

Instructions, Information, and Definitions for Completing this Form:

1. Annual Cash Salary – Cash salary paid to the minister. The PET minimum is \$34,949.
2. Housing Allowance – The PET minimum housing allowance is \$10,485, unless a lesser amount can be justified as adequate, in which case COM may grant an exception. Housing allowance is determined by the Pastor and approved by the Session. This approval should be recorded in Session minutes. ***Pastors should be aware that per tax legislation the housing allowance may not exceed the fair rental value of the home plus furnishings and utilities. This is a change from prior law which allowed housing allowance to equal actual housing expenses.***

It is recommended that congregations providing a manse provide, as part of their pastor's compensation package, a Tax Deferred Home Equity Account of not less than \$500 annually, and that the amount of contribution to this account be reviewed annually. It is recommended that treasurers send the annual dollar amount to a local financial institution or the Board of Pensions Retirement Savings Plan as authorized by the session, to be held in trust until such time as the minister decides to request withdrawal to be applied toward a down payment on the purchase of a house.

3. If the church is paying directly for optional benefits from the Board of Pensions (dental, life insurance, vision, etc.) please include the amount. If the Pastor has elected to pay for these benefits as a deduction from salary, DO NOT include the amount.
4. If the church is making an EMPLOYER contribution to an annuity or retirement savings account, indicate the amount. If the Pastor is designating an amount to be withheld from salary as a contribution, DO NOT include the amount.
5. Other forms of applicable income that should be reported: bonuses, gifts, unvouchered allowances (payments to cover gym memberships, cell phones, etc.) that are not reimbursed by receipt.
6. Effective Salary – This is used to calculate Board of Pension dues. The minimum combined housing/manse allowance and cash salary must total \$45,434. When a manse is provided, effective salary will include the fair rental value, but not less than 30% of such compensation.
7. SECA Tax Reimbursement – Ministers are responsible for a social security tax that is calculated at a rate of 15.3% of effective salary. Churches are responsible for paying the minister at least half of this amount (7.65% of their effective salary).

8. Board of Pensions Dues are calculated based upon the total effective salary reported in line 6. (Complete dues information can be found at www.pensions.org) The Board of Pensions dues percentage for 2023 is 39%: 29% for medical, 8.5% for pension, 1% for death and disability, and .5% for temporary disability.
9. Accountable Reimbursement – The PET requires that congregations establish reimbursement accounts for automobile, continuing education, and other professional expenses for the pastor. All payments from this account should be made by voucher or statement for the approved expenses. Expenses paid without such a plan are not fully deductible for Federal Income Tax.
13. Moving Expenses – Churches are expected to pay reasonable moving costs based upon two estimates. If moving expenses are paid by the church, please indicate the amount paid. Note: Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 any moving expenses paid by the church (whether as reimbursement or directly) must be reported as income on the minister's W-2.
14. Paid Vacation – write the number of weeks. Presbytery minimum is 4 weeks, including 4 Sundays. Congregations may consider adding an additional week of vacation for every 15 years a minister has completed in ministry.
15. Continuing Education - write the number of weeks. Presbytery minimum is 2 weeks, including 2 Sundays. Continuing education leave may be accumulated, up to three years.
16. Family Leave – The Book of Order and the PET Family Leave Policy requires a minimum of 12 weeks paid family leave. (For definitions of family leave and the PET Family Leave Policy, see COM Manual, Appendix H.)

Covenant with Interim Pastor

The Presbytery of East Tennessee Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Interim Pastor Contract

The following agreement between the Session of the _____ Church, _____, Tennessee, (*Name of Pastor*) _____, and the *Presbytery of East Tennessee* is for the purpose of providing interim pastoral services to the _____ Church for a period not to exceed 12 months, beginning on _____ and ending on _____.

This covenant is for the _____ (full time) / _____ (part time) services of an Interim Pastor. (If part-time, approximate time expectations are _____ hours per week.)

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Interim Pastor is accountable to the Session and the Presbytery.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE INTERIM PASTOR

1. Will NOT become candidate for the call to installed pastor at the church.
2. Will serve the Presbytery of East Tennessee as requested.
3. Will provide a written report to Presbytery quarterly through COM as the Interim Pastor at _____ Church.
4. Will serve as moderator of Session and will moderate congregational meetings.
5. Will assist in the self study and mission study.
6. Will assist in the preparation of the Ministry Information Form.
7. Relationship with PNC:
 - a. Will have no direct relationship with the PNC after completion of the MIF.
 - b. Will maintain an indirect relationship, for administrative purposes only.
 - c. Will seek to prepare the congregation for the coming of an installed pastor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FULL TIME INTERIM PASTOR

Worship Leadership: Will provide regular preaching and worship leadership, and special worship responsibilities as negotiated. Will officiate at weddings and funerals, and administer Sacraments as agreed with Session.

Pastoral Care: Will provide pastoral care for the congregation including hospital and home visitation in crises, and counseling as negotiated with individuals and families. Will encourage prospective members to unite with the church. Each household on the church roles will receive a home visit.

Administrative Leadership: Will be head of staff. Will provide, with the Session, organizational oversight for the work of the church. Will assist boards and committees in carrying out their assigned tasks. Will work with Session to develop goals and strategies for the interim period. Will arrange for the training of newly elected officers.

IF PART TIME, THE INTERIM PASTOR WILL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- _____ Lead worship and preaching on Sunday
- _____ Administration of the sacraments
- _____ Moderate session and congregational meetings
- _____ Visit the sick and shut-in
- _____ Lead funeral services upon request
- _____ Teach Bible study _____ time(s) per week
- _____ Attend meetings of the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Special Interim Leadership:

1. Help the congregation examine its past history and work through grief/relief process which usually follows the loss of a minister.
2. Enable the congregation to identify current issues it faces and develop ways of resolving them.
3. Encourage the officers and staff of the church in the ongoing process of goal setting; using the results of the Mission Study.
4. Clarify skills needed by the future minister to insure clarity of roles and expectations.
5. Maintain and strengthen denominational linkages with Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.
6. Help prepare the congregation of the arrival of the new minister.

Expectations of the Session

1. Will provide support and collegial consultation in working with the Interim Pastor and the Presbytery to resolve unfinished agendas and to establish goals for the present and future ministry of the church.
2. Will review Interim Pastor's work.
3. Will provide time away to fulfill responsibilities in the larger church.
4. Will review this contract with the Interim Pastor for changes and extension at least sixty (60) days prior to the end of the contract. The contract may be extended as agreed.

Expectations of the Presbytery

1. Will provide support and consultative services to the Interim Pastor through COM.
2. Will provide the Session and Church support during this interim period.

Mutual Expectations

1. Provide spiritual support as members of the family of Christ.
2. To work within the accepted general framework of interim intentions and goals as set forth in denomination and other resources.

Terms of Call

- 1. Annual Cash Salary \$ _____
- 2. Housing Allowance \$ _____
- 3. Other Applicable Income (please explain) \$ _____
- 4. **Effective Salary (ES) Minimum \$45,434 if full-time** \$ _____

- 5. SECA Tax Reimbursement (7.65% of ES) \$ _____
- 6. Board of Pensions Dues (usually 39% of ES) \$ _____

The following expenses of ministry should be reimbursed through an accountable plan:

- 7. Mileage Allowance (at current IRS Rate) \$ _____
- 8. Continuing Education Allowance (minimum \$2,000) \$ _____
- 9. Professional Expense Allowance \$ _____
- 10. **Total Compensation Package** \$ _____

- 11. Moving expenses (paid/reimbursed by church) \$ _____
- 12. Weeks of Paid Vacation Leave (minimum - 4) _____
- 13. Weeks of Paid Continuing Education Leave (minimum - 2) _____
- 14. Weeks of Paid Family Leave (minimum - 12) _____

Termination Provisions/Considerations

1. The expiration date of this agreement may be extended subject to written mutual agreement of the parties prior to sixty days of its expiration. If the Session chooses not to renew or extend this agreement, notice of termination will be assumed to be given. Expiration of the agreement will not result in the payment of any salary or benefits (with the exception of accrued vacation and study leave) beyond the expiration date.
2. This agreement may be terminated at any time by the Session with 60 days' notice. This is to allow the Interim Pastor time to secure new employment. The church shall pay full salary, housing and pension for a maximum for 60 days from the termination of work or until new employment is secured, whichever comes first.

Upon receiving notice as provided herein, the Interim Pastor shall diligently pursue new employment and shall be entitled to such time off as shall reasonably be needed to facilitate this effort, if it does not interfere with their primary duties.

The Interim Pastor shall be entitled to accelerate termination once notice has been given, to be available for any new employment as s/he shall choose to accept, and that all compensation shall cease during the notice period upon commencement of new employment.

3. Should a permanent pastor come to the field prior to the termination date, the compensation to the Interim shall, for the balance of the notice period be continued.
4. Vacation and study leave compensation, if accrued, is to be paid in full at the time of termination of work. The clerk of the Session or church treasurer will keep a record of leave used during the term of the contract.
5. The agreement may be terminated by the interim pastor with thirty days' notice, in which case payment (with the exception of accrued vacation and study leave) beyond the thirty-day period is forfeited.
6. If there is a desire of the part of either party to terminate this contract for reasons other than the call of an Installed Pastor, the Committee on Ministry shall participate in any and all discussions.

Pastor's Signature

Date

Committee on Ministry

Date

Clerk of Session

Date

Covenant for a Temporary Pastoral Relationship

NAME OF CHURCH: _____

NAME OF STATED SUPPLY PASTOR: _____

Presbytery of Membership: _____

SERVICE FROM _____ TO _____

Review of this covenant prior to renewal or termination will be by the session, the Stated Supply pastor, and the presbytery's Committee on Ministry.

PROVISION FOR TERMINATION OF COVENANT RELATIONSHIP PRIOR TO EXPIRATION: 30 days' notice by either party.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTOR (check those which apply):

- Lead worship and preach each Sunday
- Administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- Moderate session and congregational meetings
- Visit the sick and shut-in
- Lead funeral services upon request
- Attend meetings of the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Other:

APPROXIMATE TIME EXPECTATIONS: _____ hours per week

COMPENSATION: Cash salary \$ _____ / week, month (circle)

Housing \$ _____ / week, month (circle)

Free use of manse? Yes No

Total Annual Compensation \$ _____

Ministry expenses reimbursed, including travel at IRS approved rate.

Vacation - 1 week per quarter

Continuing Education - 1 week every six months

Supply Pastor _____

Clerk of Session _____

Date of Session Action _____

COM Representative _____

Covenant with a Commissioned Lay Pastor

NAME OF CHURCH: _____

NAME OF COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR: _____

SERVICE FROM _____ TO _____

Review of this covenant prior to renewal or termination will be by the session and the Committee on Ministry.

This relationship may be terminated prior to expiration with _____ days' notice by either party and the concurrence of the Committee on Ministry.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLP (check those that apply to your situation):

- Lead worship and preach _____ times each month
- Administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (presbytery permission must be granted)
- Administer the Sacrament of Baptism (presbytery permission must be granted)
- Moderate session meetings under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery (presbytery permission must be granted)
- Perform marriages (state law must allow and presbytery permission must be granted)
- Other duties: _____

TIME EXPECTATIONS (hours per week) _____

SPECIFIC DAYS IN MINISTRY (if applicable) _____

COMPENSATION as applicable:

Cash salary: \$ _____ / week, month (circle)

Housing: \$ _____ / week, month

Medical coverage \$ _____

Social security withheld \$ _____

Travel reimbursement @ IRS rate, not to exceed \$ _____ per year

Other ministry cost reimbursement (telephone calls, etc.) \$ _____

Continuing education or book allowance \$ _____

Other: _____

Vacation time _____

Continuing education time _____

Commissioned Lay Pastor _____

Clerk of Session _____

Date of Session Action _____

COM Representative _____

2024 Minimum Salary Information for Pastors

**PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
 2024 REQUIRED MINIMUM SALARY & BENEFITS SCHEDULE
 FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister's terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (Book of Order G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly. (Book of Order G-2.0804)

| | WITH MANSE OR HOUSING ALLOWANCE | |
|---|--|--------------------|
| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
| SALARY – minimum cash salary **see note - salary | \$36,347 | \$34,949 |
| MANSE/HOUSING ALLOWANCE Manse allowance is calculated at 30% of salary **see note – Housing/Utility Allowance **see note – Deferred Home Equity Account | 10,905 | 10,485 |
| TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY | <u>47,252</u> | <u>45,434</u> |
| SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE (SECA) To be calculated on Total Effective Salary Allowance at 7.65% | 3,615 | 3,476 |
| PENSION & MEDICAL – 39% of Total Effective Salary **see note – Pension & Medical | 18,428 | 17,719 |
| ACCOUNTABLE AUTOMOBILE REIMBURSEMENT Reimbursable on church business at IRS allowable rate **see note – Professional Expense Accounts | | |
| CONTINUING EDUCATION ALLOWANCE Two weeks education leave is required annually, accumulative for three years **see note – Professional Expense Accounts | 2,000 | 2,000 |

FOUR WEEKS ANNUAL PAID VACATION
MOVING EXPENSES
ANNUAL REVIEW OF CALL

FAMILY LEAVE – minimum of 12 weeks
**see Presbytery Family Leave Policy or Book of Order

SABBATICAL LEAVE
Discussion to commence after 4th year of service

| | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| TOTAL PACKAGE AMOUNT | <u>\$71,295</u> | <u>\$68,629</u> |
| (not including accountable reimbursement) | | |

For occasional supply preaching: A recommended amount of \$150 per Sunday (additional \$100 for second service on the same day) and 2024 IRS allowable amount for travel expenses. For teaching or leading other events, the recommended amount is \$75 plus mileage (unless a virtual class or on the same day as preaching).

**EXPLANATIONS ON 2024 MINIMUM SALARY & BENEFITS SCHEDULE
FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD & SACRAMENT**

SALARY – *The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister’s terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (Book of Order G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery’s minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly. (Book of Order G-2.0804)*

HOUSING & UTILITY ALLOWANCE – The minimum combined housing/manse allowance and salary must total \$47,252. The \$10,905 housing allowance is a minimum, unless a lesser amount can be justified as adequate, in which case the PET may grant an exception. The housing allowance is excludable from gross income for income tax purposes but not for self-employment tax purposes. Housing allowance is defined by the IRS as the lesser of the following amounts:

- the amount officially designated (in advance of payment) as housing allowance;
- the amount actually used to provide or rent a home; or
- the fair market rental value of the home (including furnishings, utilities, garage, etc.).

PENSION & MEDICAL – The Board of Pensions dues percentage is for 2024 is 39% (29% for medical, 8.5% for pension, 1% for death and disability, and .5% for temporary disability). This amount is calculated on the Total Effective Salary.

Total Effective Salary for calculating the dues for the Board of Pensions is defined as cash salary, plus a manse or housing allowance, along with any bonuses, non-reimbursed payments, and/or amount in excess of 50% paid towards SECA. When a manse is provided, effective salary will include the fair rental value, but not less than 30% of such compensation.

The Board of Pensions no longer uses a minimum effective salary level for calculating medical dues. Rather, the Board of Pensions sets an annual median salary level. For 2024, the Board of Pensions median salary level is \$67,100.

Pension and Death and Disability dues are calculated on a minister’s actual effective salary.

The effective salary on the required minimum salary schedule applies to all calls.

PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE ACCOUNTS – The PET requires that congregations establish Professional Expense Reimbursement Accounts for automobile, continuing education, and other professional expenses for a pastor. All payments from these accounts should be made by receipt or statement for the approved expenses. Monies should not be paid in monthly or quarterly installments without vouchers or receipts. NOTE 1: Expenses paid without such a reimbursable account are not fully deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes.

NOTE 2: IRS auto reimbursement rate for 2024 is expected to be between 66-68¢ per mile. The rate is announced prior to January 1st.

DEFERRED HOME EQUITY ACCOUNT – It is recommended that congregations providing a manse also provide, as part of their pastor’s compensation package, a Tax Deferred Home Equity Account of not less than \$500 annually, and that the amount of contribution to this account be reviewed annually. It is recommended that treasurers send the annual dollar amount to a local financial institution or the Board of Pensions’ Retirement Savings Plan as authorized by the session, to be held in trust until such time in the future the minister decides to request withdrawal to be applied toward a down payment on the purchase of a house.

2023 Salary Guidelines for Directors of Christian Education

PRESBYTERY OF EAST TENNESSEE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY 2023 SALARY GUIDELINES FOR DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| BASE SALARY (for full-time) (using Presbytery Minimum Salary for ministers) (Cash & housing) | \$43,271 | \$43,271 |
| ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION: (Only one of the following applies) | | |
| a. If educator has not earned a BA/BS (undergraduate degree) subtract 15% (.15 x base) | - _____ | - _____ |
| b. If educator has BA but has not earned a MA in Christian Education (MACE) or MA in a related field subtract 5% (.05 x base) | - _____ | - _____ |
| c. If educator has MACE or MA in related field, add nothing. | -0- | -0- |
| d. If educator has earned doctorate in related field, add 20% (.20 x base) | + _____ | + _____ |
| CERTIFICATION: (Only one status applies) | | |
| a. If educator is an enrolled educational assistant, add 5% (.05 x base) | + _____ | + _____ |
| b. If educator is Certified Associate, add 10% (.10 x base) | + _____ | + _____ |
| c. If educator is Certified Christian Educator, add 15% (.15 x base) | + _____ | + _____ |
| d. If educator is not in the certification process, add nothing. | -0- | -0- |

EXPERIENCE:

a. Add 1% per year of full-time experience as church educator. (.01 x # yrs. x base) + _____ + _____

TOTAL \$ _____ \$ _____

There are other benefits and payments to which an educator is entitled. These include:

1. **Social Security (FICA):** Unlike clergy, educators are not self-employed and must have social security paid on their behalf.
2. **Health care insurance/Pension:** Educators may be enrolled in the PC(USA) Board of Pensions plan. For eligibility and guidance, refer to materials on Lay employees supplied by the Board of Pensions.
3. **Vacation and sick leave:** Recommended is four (4) weeks of vacation including at least two (2) weekends; plus ten (10) days of sick leave.
4. **Continuing education time and expenses:** Recommended is two (2) weeks paid for continuing education.
5. **Expenses:** Other professional expenses may be reimbursed by voucher, including items such as mileage, books, memberships in professional organizations, etc.

Minutes for Ordination/Installation of a Teaching Elder

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION TO (ORDAIN AND) INSTALL _____
_____ AS TEACHING ELDER OF
_____ PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH _____,
TENNESSEE.

The Commission, according to the appointment of the Presbytery of East Tennessee, met at _____ Presbyterian Church on _____,
_____, at _____ a.m./p.m. The following ministers were present: _____
_____. Elders and the churches they represent present: _____

_____.

A quorum was present. Guest members of the Commission present: _____
_____.

_____. The Commission was convened with prayer by _____.
_____ was elected Clerk. The Order of Worship was reviewed
by _____. The congregation was led in worship by _____
_____, and the sermon was preached by _____
from _____ (scripture) on the subject
“_____.” _____ recited the
proceedings of Presbytery leading up to the service, and propounded the Constitutional
Questions to the minister. Elder _____ propounded the Constitutional
Questions to the congregation. These being answered in the affirmative,
_____ was (ordained with prayer and laying on of hands of the
Presbytery and) installed as teaching elder of _____ Presbyterian Church
agreeably to the Word of God and the Book of Order. The charge to the teaching elder
was delivered by _____ and to the congregation by _____.
The service was concluded with the Benediction pronounced by the newly installed
teaching elder and the congregation welcomed the pastor into their fellowship in the
Ministry of the Word.

The minutes were read and approved and the Commission dismissed with prayer by
_____.

Moderator

Clerk

Minutes to Commission CLP

MINUTES TO COMMISSION _____

AS COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR OF _____

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH _____, TENNESSEE

The Commission, according to the appointment of the Presbytery of East Tennessee, met at _____ Presbyterian Church on _____ at _____ AM/PM. The following ministers were present:

Elders and the churches they represent present:

_____.

A quorum was present. Guest members of the Commission present:

_____.

The Commission was convened with prayer by _____.

_____ was elected Clerk. The Order of Worship was reviewed by _____.

The congregation was led in worship by _____, _____ and the sermon was preached by _____ from _____ (scripture) on the subject “_____.”

_____ recited the proceedings of Presbytery leading up to the service, and propounded the Constitutional Questions to the ruling elder. These being answered in the affirmative, _____ was commissioned as Commissioned Lay Pastor of _____ Presbyterian Church agreeably to the Word of God and the Book of Order. The charge to the CLP was delivered by _____ and to the congregation by _____. The service was concluded with the Benediction pronounced by the new Commissioned Lay Pastor and the congregation welcomed the CLP into their fellowship.

The minutes were read and approved and the Commission dismissed with prayer by _____.

Moderator

Clerk

Pastor Exit Interview

Committee on Ministry Presbytery of East Tennessee

Exit Interview with the Rev. _____

as pastor of _____

Date: _____

Celebrations:

1. What achievements have been the most significant in your ministry with this congregation?

2. What are the strengths of this congregation?

3. What was the most effective program or mission effort of the congregation?

4. What priorities did you have for the congregation?

5. How well did your priorities match those of the congregation?

6. What gifts and personal strengths did you bring to the life and ministry of this congregation?

7. How was your family received and integrated into the life of the congregation?

Challenges:

1. What goals/objectives did the congregation not achieve?

2. What are the greatest challenges you see the congregation facing in the next three years?

3. What were your greatest, perhaps most frustrating challenges as pastor of this congregation?

4. In what ways do you think Presbytery can be of support to this congregation?

Session Exit Interview

Committee on Ministry Presbytery of East Tennessee

Exit Interview with the Session of _____

Date: _____

Celebrations:

1. During the tenure of your most recent pastor, what have been your congregation's most significant achievements?

2. What are the strengths of this congregation?

3. What has been the most effective program or mission effort of your congregation?

4. Were the priorities of the Session and your pastor a good match?

5. What were the gifts and personal strengths your pastor brought to the life and ministry of the congregation?

6. How well was the pastor's family received and integrated into the life of the congregation?

Challenges

1. What goals/objectives has the congregation not achieved?

2. What are the greatest challenges facing the congregation in the next three years?

3. What are the limitations, hurdles, and struggles that the elders of this church are facing?

4. In what ways can Presbytery be of support or assist your congregation?