

A. GUIDELINES FOR VALIDATING MINISTRIES

From the **Book of Order**, G-3.0306, *Membership of Presbytery*

Each presbytery determines the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are its members and validates the ministries in which they are to be engaged. It shall be guided in this determination by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds (G-2.0503a).

The presbytery shall examine each minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church.

The presbytery may designate ministers of the Word and Sacrament to work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacraments at times and places authorized by the presbytery.

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides. The presbytery may grant a minister permission to engage in work validated ministry that is outside its geographic bounds or which is not under its jurisdiction, but no presbytery shall permit a minister to engage in work that is within the geographic bounds of another presbytery and which is properly within the responsibility of another presbytery without consent of that presbytery. Such permission shall be obtained from both presbyteries and shall be reviewed and renewed annually.

A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is serving in a church outside the United States may, with the approval of the presbytery, accept membership in that church for the period of such service without affecting his or her membership in a presbytery of this church.

GUIDELINES FOR VALIDATION:

From the **Book of Order**, G-2.0503a, *Engaged in a Validated Ministry*

A validated ministry shall:

- (1) demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, **The Book of Confessions**, and the **Book of Order** of this church;*
- (2) serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others;*
- (3) give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;*

- (4) *be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served; and*
- (5) *include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA) (G-5.0201).*

When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the boards and agencies of those councils.

The presbytery shall review annually the work of all teaching elders engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.

PROCESS:

- 1) When a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or a Commissioned Ruling Elder desires to have his/her work validated for ministry, the requestor will complete the Validated Ministry Application Form and accompanying documentation.
- 2) The requestor will submit the Validated Ministry Application form and associated documentation to the Foothill Presbytery Stated Clerk or Associate Stated Clerk for review by the Committee on Ministry (COM). This documentation must be received at least two weeks prior to the next scheduled COM meeting.
- 3) Foothills Presbytery staff will add the request to the next COM agenda, invite the requestor to meet with COM, and distribute the requestors packet.
- 4) The minister seeking validation meets with the COM at a stated meeting for the hearing.
- 5) If the COM validates his/her ministry, the COM will report its action at a stated meeting of Foothills Presbytery.
- 6) Ministers in validated ministries shall ordinarily be members of Foothills Presbytery. Ministers and candidates seeking membership in Foothills Presbytery shall be examined and received in accordance with the Presbytery's process for examination and ordination.
- 7) If the COM declines validation, specific reasons must be given citing guidelines which have not been met.

If the minister desires another meeting with the COM, the minister must be provided an opportunity to be heard and a consideration of his/her positions considered without prejudice.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTER FOLLOWING VALIDATION:

Shall include, but not be limited to, attendance at Presbytery meetings, completion of the yearly report, Annual Terms of Call, requested by the COM, service on Presbytery committees, participation in the life of a particular church, and keeping his/her applicable professional certification current. Following validation, it is the responsibility of the ministry to promptly notify the COM of any change in the minister's validated work. COM shall determine whether the work still meets the criteria set forth.

“BEST PRACTICES” FOR COM (ideas for supporting person in specialized ministries):

- Recognize person in specialized ministries at Presbytery Meetings and in Presbytery minutes
- Provide an annual review of ministry
- Visit location of the specialized ministry by a member of COM
- Encourage persons with pastoral gifts to serve on Presbytery committees
- Encourage specialized ministers to serve as parish associates in local congregations and as interims and stated supplies
- Provide friendship/support/peer group for persons in specialized ministries
- Provide retreats and educational events for persons in specialized ministries