

Foothills Presbytery Committee on Ministry Manual of Operations



*Caring, Empowering and Celebrating
the churches in Foothills Presbytery*

January 2022

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Committee on Ministry General Information

Composition: 22 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery. *Ex-officio*: the Stated Clerk and the Associate Stated Clerk.

The Committee on Ministry is Foothills Presbytery's committee to "develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators of the presbytery; to facilitate relations between presbytery and its congregations, teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient." (G-3.0307)

Responsibilities:

1. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding congregational relationships as outlined in G-3.0301 and G-3.0303.
 - a) Visit with each session of the Presbytery at least once every three years.
 - b) Promote the peace and harmony of the churches of the presbytery, especially in regard to matters arising out of the relations between teaching elders and churches, seeking to mediate and reconcile those involved.
 - c) Follow procedures outlined in G-3.0303d(1-3) as it counsels with churches within which there may be difficulties.
 - d) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning the location of new congregations and congregations desiring to move. (G-3.0303b)
 - e) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning congregations which are to be divided, dismissed or dissolved in consultation with their members. (G-30303b).

2. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) regarding pastoral relationships as outlined in G-2.0504.
 - a) On behalf of presbytery, approve all changes in terms of calls for pastors, co-pastors and associate pastors serving in installed pastoral relationships. These changes shall be reported to the presbytery (G-2.0504a)
 - b) On behalf of presbytery, approve the terms of all temporary pastoral relationships. Such temporary pastoral relationships may be full time or part time, and are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery through its Committee on Ministry. A temporary pastor is not installed and is not a member of the Session and therefore has no vote. (G-3.0102)
 - c) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning exceptions allowed in G-2.0504c.

- d) Select Committee on Ministry members to serve on presbytery's Examinations with special attention to parity between Teaching and Ruling Elders.
 - e) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning designated pastor relationships. (See guidelines in appendix).
3. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) regarding relationships between sessions and certified Christian Educators. (GH-2.1103)
 - a) Include interviews with certified Christian Educators in all formal visits and work with congregations, especially in those situations in which the head of staff position has become vacant.
 - b) Encourage educators to seek certification, provide guidance through the Educator Certification advisor, and encourage sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification.
 - c) Provide support to certified Christian Educators through a service of recognition and establishing compensation and benefit standards.
 - d) Serve as pastor and counselor to certified Christian Educators, including support and mediation in conflict situations.
 4. Work with Commissioned Ruling Elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
 - a) Supervise and approve training of ruling elders preparing to be commissioned to pastoral service.
 - b) Approve commissions of Commissioned Ruling Elders and authorize functions that they are to perform in accordance with G-2.10.
 - c) Assign a Teaching Elder as a mentor and supervisor (G-2.1004) and when necessary consult with the Examinations Commission concerning continuing education of Commissioned Ruling Elders.
 5. Work with other presbytery committees and subcommittees as needed.
 6. Continually look for ways to think creatively about the areas of responsibility assigned to the committee and when appropriate recommend and implement such changes within the structure of the Presbytery.
 7. Work as a Commission on Ministry for the following:
 - a) When the Committee on Ministry needs a subcommittee to be a Commission for Special Inquiry to investigate matters of potential ethics violations or personal concerns of Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders that impact their role and function
 - b) The actions of a Commission of Special Inquiry may require referral to the Rules of Discipline but efforts will be made to follow the guidelines of D-1.0103 to avoid formal proceedings under the Rules of Discipline. Usually this

commission would be formed when expedient action is required for the health of the minister or congregation in order that that ministry of Jesus Christ will not be harmed.

- c) Administrative Responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry:
 - 1) To approve and remove teaching elders from Temporary Positions
 - 2) To approve teaching elders serving in Validated Ministries permission to celebrate the sacraments
 - 3) To approve the sermons of Ruling Elders Commissioned to Pastoral Service
- d) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning the appointment of administrative commissions in those situations where it has determined that such action is necessary, as outlined in G-3.0303e.

Other committees/commissions that report to Committee on Ministry:

- Examinations Commission
- Sexual Ethics

The sub-committees of Committee on Ministry are:

- Work in Terms of Call
- Small Worshipping Communities
- Triennial Visits & Pastor, CRE, CCE, and Clerk Support
- Commissioned Ruling Elder Supervisory Team
- Certified Christian Educators

Operating Guidelines for COM Members

1. Everything discussed in COM meetings is strictly confidential.
2. When a COM member is in a congregation that is being discussed, the member will excuse himself/herself from the meeting. (If factual information is needed, not interpretation of feelings, the COM member will be asked to share.)
3. Everyone on the COM is actively engaged in subcommittee work and follows through with his/her assigned responsibilities in a timely and thoughtful way.
4. Members strive to educate themselves more about issues that often underlie conflicts. These may be sexual misconduct, systems theory, etc.
5. The only information shared in COM meetings is that required for good decision making, not for gossip, curiosity, supposition, innuendo.
6. No individual COM member speaks for the group unless authorized to do so.
7. Disagreements among members are seen as positive as long as they are handled in constructive ways and in the spirit of faithful discernment.

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

The following terms have been used in the context of the work of presbytery committees and commission working as pastor, counselor and advisory to teach elders and congregations as well as those dealing with preparation for ministry. Where references are in italics, there is no direct reference, but an allusion may be inferred.

Term/Initials	Explanation	<i>Book of Order Reference</i>
AA/EOE or EEO	Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer or Equal Employment Opportunity. The congregation and each council must follow its policy re AA/EOE during any search process.	F-1.0403 G-3.0110
Accommodation	When a usual requirement for ordination is waived by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery or when a candidate is given permission to meet the standard examinations requirement through an alternate means.	G-2.0610
Associate Pastor/ Associate Minister	A member of the pastoral staff of a congregation, elected by the congregation and called with the approval of presbytery. This is one of the installed ministerial relationships.	G-2.0504a
At-large Member	See "Member-at-large"	
Bi-vocational Pastor	A teaching elder who maintains a job outside of part time pastoral ministry usually to enable the person to serve a congregation that could not provide full time compensation or work. Also called a tentmaker.	
Board of Pensions	The entity of the denomination which administers the benefits plan (pensions and health insurance) for pastors and other church employees whose employers enroll them.	
<i>Book of Confessions</i>	The part of the constitution which includes the historic creeds and confessions adopted by the denomination as containing the essential tenets of the Reformed tradition.	
<i>Book of Order</i>	The part of the constitution which includes The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.	
Boundaries	Geographically, the area encompassed by a presbytery and presbyteries included in a synod. Interpersonally, the limits of personal and professional space. Often referred to in relation to pastor-parishioner and intra-staff relationships.	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Call	Theologically, the understanding that God has chosen one to engage in ministry as a baptized member and/or in ordered ministry. Also the term applied to the covenant between a congregation and pastor wherein a teaching elder responds to the “call” of the congregation to serve as pastor. The term also applies to the specifics of the contract or covenant between the pastor and congregation, including compensation, etc.	
Candidacy	The period of preparation for ministry as a teaching elder when one is enrolled as a candidate.	G-2.0604
Candidate	The status in the preparation for ministry process following inquirer focused on support, guidance, and evaluation of the candidate's fitness and readiness for ministry as a teaching elder. Movement to candidacy requires approval of the session and presbytery of care. "Candidate" also is used to refer to the persons being considered during the search to fill a particular position.	G-2.0601-2.0602, 2.0604
Certification	The process of authorizing a person as qualified for a particular form of service or ready for movement within a process. For example, the certification of Christian Educators. Other organizations certify persons serving in some specialized ministries (Administrative Personnel Association, Presbyterian Association of Musicians [PAM], Presbyterian Church Business Administrators Association, etc.) A presbytery can certify a ruling elder prepared to be commissioned to pastoral service.	G-2.11 G-2.10
Certified Ready for Examination for Ordination	The official action taken by a presbytery that allows a candidate, who has evidenced readiness to begin ordered ministry, to begin seeking a call as a teaching elder.	G-2.0607
Certified Christian Educator	A person serving in educational ministry who has completed the educational and examination requirements specified by the Educator Certification Council for the title Certified Christian Educator.	G-2.1103
Chaplain	A form of specialized ministry usually performed within an institutional setting (hospital, school, military, etc.)	G-3.0306
Church Leadership Connection (CLC)	The internet-based matching and referral system of the PC(USA). https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Clerk of Session	The ruling elder elected to serve as secretary and keeper of records and rolls for a session.	G-3.0104
Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)	An education program to learn pastoral care in an institutional chaplaincy setting. Often candidates engage in CPE to further discern their vocation and gifts for ministry.	
Commission	Established by a council, a commission is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council. Presbyteries often establish commissions to install ministers, ordain teaching elders, and to carry out other administrative functions. A Permanent Judicial Commission is required to prosecute judicial cases brought before the council.	G-3.0109
Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP)	Old term used for Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE). See Commissioned Ruling Elder	
Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE)	A ruling elder commissioned by a presbytery to particular pastoral service.	G-2.10
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly	The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) oversees and supports the ministry of the Office of the General Assembly and partner with OGA in carrying out work assigned by the General Assembly.	
Co-Pastor Co-Minister	A pastor/minister who is called and installed, along with other pastor(s), with equal responsibility for pastoral ministry in a particular church.	G-2.0504
Correspondence, In	The status of formal relationship with and recognition of another denomination and the PC(USA). We are "in correspondence " with the highest council or governing body of a number of denominations. The ordination of minister members of a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA) may be recognized by the PC(USA)	G-5.0201 G-2.0505-2.0506
Council	The generic or collective word for the governing bodies of the PC(USA). Includes sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly. Replaces the previous "governing body."	G-3.0
Covenant Relationship	The relationship established between the presbytery and inquirers and candidates which defines their mutual responsibilities.	G-2.0606

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)	Committee that oversees the students who are in preparation for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.	G-2.06 – G-2.0610
Deacon	The ordered ministry of those ordained to the ministry of compassion, witness, and service.	G-2.02
Designated Pastor or Minister	An installed ministerial position approved by the presbytery for a designated term.	
Directory of Worship	The part of the Book of Order , which provides the guidelines for worship and sacraments within the Reformed tradition, as well as the theological foundation for the ministry of the congregation.	
Dissolution	The process of concluding relationship. A pastor's relationship to a congregation is dissolved when he or she leaves the position. A church is dissolved when it is closed.	G-2.09
Emerita or Emeritus	An honorary status which may be awarded to someone honorably retired from a particular position by election of the congregation.	
Entrance Exam	The process a presbytery uses to determine whether a minister will be accepted for membership in that presbytery.	
Examinations Commission	An approved body who examines candidates and ministers who are seeking membership in the Presbytery, and elders seeking to serve as commissioned ruling elders. They examine for call and fit.	G.2.0607d G-3.0306 G-2.1002
Executive Presbyter	A term used for the chief administrative staff person for a presbytery. (There are many other titles applied to a presbytery's administrative staff.)	
Field Education	The part of the preparation for ministry process in which candidates serve as a student in ministry under the supervision of a pastor or other staff leader and ordinarily as part of their seminary education. This is sometimes called Supervised Practice of Ministry or Contextual Studies. The placement of students in field positions is normally the responsibility of the seminary but should be done in consultation with the candidate's presbytery and, where appropriate, the presbytery where the placement will occur.	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Final Assessment	The examination of a candidate during the final year of theological education or when all other requirements for preparation are completed to determine the person's readiness to begin ministry. A successful final assessment results in the presbytery certifying a candidate "ready for examination for ordination, pending a call."	G-2.0607
Form of Government	The part of the Book of Order that defines organization and governance of the denomination and the responsibilities and standards to which the whole church holds each council and congregation accountable.	
Formula of Agreement	The agreement between the PC(USA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the United Church of Christ (UCC), and the Reformed Church in America (RCA) which provides for mutual recognition of ordination of clergy. See also "Full Communion."	Book of Order, Appendix B
Foundations of Presbyterian Polity	The part of the Book of Order that provides the theological and historical foundation for the other sections of the Book of Order .	F-1.01 – F-3.04
Full Communion	An official relationship between the PC(USA) and those churches recognized by the General Assembly. Full communion includes the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of ministers, as defined by ecumenical agreement.	G-5.0202
General Assembly	The council of the whole church, representative of the unity of the synods, presbyteries, sessions, and congregations of the PC(USA). It consists of equal numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders elected by the presbyteries and reflective of the diversity within their bounds.	G-3.05
General Presbyter (GP)	A term used for the chief administrator for a presbytery. (There are many other titles applied to a presbytery's administrative staff.)	
Head of Staff	The pastor of a congregation who is the supervisor of other pastoral/ministerial staff.	
Honorably Retired (HR)	The status which may be granted by a presbytery to a teaching elder because of age or physical or mental disability.	G-2.0503c
Inquirer	A person enrolled in the inquiry phase of preparation for ministry. (See inquiry also.)	G-2.0601 – 2.0603

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Inquiry	The initial phase of preparation for ministry. The purpose of which is to provide an opportunity for the church and for those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as teaching elders to explore that call together and determine the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry.	G-2.0603
Installation	The act of the council which completed the call of a person to service in the church. Ruling elders and deacons are installed by the congregation. Teaching elders are installed by the presbytery. A call is not complete until the person is installed.	W-4.04 G-2.0403 G-2.0805
Installed Pastoral/ Ministerial Relationship	Installed pastoral/ministerial relationships are pastors/ministers, co-pastors, and associate pastors. A teaching elder may be installed for an indefinite period, while a designated pastor is installed for a specific period as determined by the presbytery.	G-2.0504a
Interim Pastor	See Transitional Minister	
Intern	An inquirer or candidate for ministry may choose to seek placement in a congregation or other ministry setting as an intern. Such positions vary from a few months (e.g., summer intern) to year long. They are ordinarily compensated and are often negotiated or arranged through the seminary. This is an optional component of the preparation process.	
Investigating Committee	The committee, appointed by a council, whose task is to determine whether or not there is justification for a charge to be formally made and a disciplinary procedure to be initiated.	D-10.0200
Joint Congregational Witness	When a PC(USA) congregation partners with one or more congregations of another denomination through federation, union, or some other plan for cooperative witness approved by the presbytery. Sometimes referred to as "Union Church"	G-3.0109b G-5.05
Labor Outside the Bounds	Permission which is granted by a presbytery for a teaching elder to minister (work) outside the bounds of presbytery membership. All validated work of a teaching elder must be authorized by a presbytery.	G-3.0306
Larger Parish	Two or more churches who wish to cooperate in ministry may be established a larger parish. They may call a pastor(s) together, coordinate ministry through a parish council, coordinate finances, etc.	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Liaison	One who connects one group or person with another. Most often used when presbyteries assign a liaison to a pastor nominating committee, to the Session of an inquirer or candidate, or to a particular inquirer or candidate.	
Member at Large	A teaching elder who has previously been an active member of presbytery and who now, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry, is no longer engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria in G-2.0503a and the presbytery's own policies.	G-2.0503b
Mentor	One who teaches or serves as a role model and confidant.	
Minister of Word and Sacrament	A Teaching Elder who is called to serve.	G.2-0501
Ministry Development Centers	Center that provides career counseling services for those serving or seeking to serve in church vocations. https://ministrydevelopment.org/	
Mission Information Form (MIF)	The published information prepared by a congregation seeking a pastor or other church worker. This information is entered in the CLC for potential candidates to learn about the church.	
Mission Study	An in-depth study carried out at times during the life of a congregation to evaluate a congregation's present and assess its future mission and ministry goals. Mission Studies are often conducted as input to a Mission Information Form.	
Negotiation for Service	Approval granted by a presbytery to a candidate under its care to negotiate for positions that will require ordination as a teaching elder. See "Certified Ready for Examination for Ordination."	G-2.0607
Neutral Pulpit	When a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is considering a pastor candidate, they may ask the candidate to preach in a neutral location for the PNC to observe. The location is not the pastor's current church nor the PNC's church.	
Nominating Committee	A church will have a Church Nominating Committee to identify a list of candidates for Ruling Elder and Deacon elections. See also Pastor Nominating Committee.	
Office of the General Assembly (OGA)	The Office of the General Assembly serves as the ecclesiastical arm of the PC(USA). One of the six agencies of the PS(USA), it offers support in the areas of governance and structure. Sometimes referenced as the Stated Clerk's office.	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Ordered Ministry	The term applied to deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders in the PC(USA). Ordered ministries “order” the life of the church “so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish.”	G-2.01
Ordination	Ordination is the act by which the church sets apart persons to ordered ministry as teaching elders, ruling elders, and deacons and is accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands.	G-2.0102 W-4.04
Ordination Exams (Ords)	Standardized examinations required of all candidates as a prerequisite to being examined for final assessment. Currently exams are administered in the areas of Bible Content, Biblical Exegesis, Church Polity, Theological Competence, and Worship and Sacraments under the direction of the PC(USA) Cooperative Committee on Examination for Candidates.	G-2.0607d
Parish	A congregation or group of congregations involved in a cooperative ministry. If an ecumenical parish, see also “Joint Congregational Witness.”	
Parish Associate	A Minister of Word and Sacrament, often retired, who serves a congregation at the request of a Called and Installed Pastor in consultation with the Session to perform certain responsibilities such as additional pastoral care, worship leadership, or other needs to assist the Pastor.	
Parish Council	The coordinating body of a larger or cooperative parish, usually composed of representatives of each congregation in the parish.	
Pastor/Minister	The name given to a teaching elder called to serve a congregation.	G-2.0501
Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)	The term applied to the search committee for a pastor or associate pastor. The PNC is elected by the congregation and reports to the congregation.	
Personal Information Form (PIF)	The resume prepared by the teaching elder or other church worker. This information is entered in the Church Leadership Connection system.	
Polity	Term applied to the governance system of the church.	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Presbytery	The council composed of all congregations and teaching elders within its district.	G-3.03
Presbytery of Call	The presbytery to which a candidate is being called to a first ministry position.	
Presbytery of Care	The presbytery under whose care a particular inquirer or candidate is enrolled.	
Psychological Assessment	Part of the preparation process ordinarily required of all those entering the process during which their psychological fitness for ministry and their sense of vocation is examined by a psychologist or other professional counselor.	
Pulpit Supply	The person who preaches for a congregation that does not have a pastor or whose pastor is away. A presbytery may provide a list of qualified pulpit supply to congregations.	
Readiness	The determination of one's preparedness to proceed to the next step in the preparation for ministry process.	
Reading Group	Persons elected by presbyteries to read and evaluate ordination exams.	
Reformed Tradition	The theological tradition of the Presbyterian and other Reformed churches.	F-1.01 – F-2.05
Release from Ordered Ministry	When a person ordained to ordered ministry (ruling elder, teaching elder, or deacon) is removed from office, either by their request or through disciplinary action of council. If the release has occurred without prejudice, a person may seek to be restored to the office.	G-2.0406 G-2.0507
Renunciation of Jurisdiction	When a person ordained to ordered ministry communicates in writing their intention to renounce the jurisdiction of this church. In other words, when a ordained person leaves the church and refuses to be bound by its authority.	G-2.0407 G-2.0509
Restoration	When a presbytery or congregation takes action to restore one previously released from ordained ministry.	G-2.0406 G-2.0507
Rules of Discipline	The part of the Book of Order which outlines the procedures and processes by which the church responds to individuals and governing bodies who violate constitution.	Beginning D-1.0000
Ruling Elder	The ordered ministry of those ordained for the spiritual oversight and governance of a congregation.	G-2.03
Second Career	A term applied to inquirers and candidates who have pursued one or more careers prior to coming under care (other than being a student).	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Session	The council for the congregation responsible “for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.”	G-3.02
Sexual Misconduct	When a person violates the appropriate professional interpersonal boundaries with a subordinate or parishioner. Definition and disciplinary procedures are delineated in a council’s Sexual Misconduct Policy, which all councils are required to have.	G-3.0106
Solo Pastor/ Minister	A teaching elder serving a congregation without associate pastors.	
Specialized Ministry	See Validated Ministry	
Stated Clerk	One of the two required officers of a council, the clerk is responsible for maintaining minutes, records, and rolls of the council. May also be the clerk of the permanent judicial commission.	G-3.0305
Student Pastor/ Minister	A person under care in the preparation for ministry process who is serving in an approved temporary pastoral position, as an intern, or during field education.	
Synod	The intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its regions. “Synod is responsible for the life and mission of the church throughout its region and for supporting the ministry and mission of its presbyteries. . . .”	G-3.04
Teaching Elder	The ordered ministry of those ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament in the PC(USA). “Teaching elders shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry.”	G2.0501
Temporary Membership	A minister of another Christian church, serving temporarily in a validated ministry of the PC(USA) or in an installed relationship under the provisions of the Formula of Agreement, who is enrolled by a presbytery for a period of service.	G-2.0506
Temporary Pastoral Relationship	A pastor approved by the presbytery to serve in a position that does not carry a formal call or installation. Titles and terms of service are determined by the presbytery but may not exceed twelve months though it can be renewed.	G-2.0504b
Tentmaker	See “Bi-vocational Pastor”	

Term/Initials	Explanation	Book of Order Reference
Terms of Call	The specifics of the pastoral relationship extended by the congregation and approved by the presbytery which includes the nature of the ministry and the terms of compensation. A presbytery must approve any changes in the terms of call and may determine minimum levels of compensation.	G-2.0804
Transfer	The process of moving a ruling elder from one presbytery to another, the membership of a minister of another Christian church into the PC(USA), the care of a candidate or inquirer from one presbytery to another, or a member from one congregation to another.	G-2.0505 G-2.0608 G-1.0303b
Transitional Minister	A Minister of Word and Sacrament who serves for a temporary time such as when a minister leaves a church and before another minister is called and installed.	G-2.0504b
Triennial Visit	This phrase is no longer used in the Book of Order. It refers to the presbytery visit with each congregation every three years. Presbyteries still have responsibility to maintain relationships with their congregations and to be open to communication regarding the life and ministry of congregations.	G-3.0303 G-3.0307
Validated Ministry	A ministry in which a teaching elder is engaged that meets the requirements of the Book of Order and presbytery's criteria to be considered "validated."	G-2.0503a G-3.0306
Vocation	See "Call"	
Yoke	When two or more churches are served by one pastor they are said to be yoked.	

I. CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. Churches in Foothills Presbytery by Location

Anderson

Central Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church
Flat Rock Presbyterian Church
Midway Presbyterian Church
North Anderson Community Church
Roberts Presbyterian Church
Salem Presbyterian Church

Belton

Belton Presbyterian Church

Clemson

Fort Hill Presbyterian Church

Easley

Carmel Presbyterian Church
Easley Presbyterian Church

Fair Play

Fair Play Presbyterian Church

Fountain Inn

Fountain Inn Presbyterian Church

Gaffney

Bethesda Presbyterian Church
Limestone Presbyterian Church

Greenville

Fourth Presbyterian Church
John Knox Presbyterian Church
Mattoon Presbyterian Church
McCarter Presbyterian Church
Nicholtown Presbyterian Church
St. Giles Presbyterian Church
Westminster Presbyterian Church

Greer

First Presbyterian Church

Honea Path

Honea Path Presbyterian Church

Inman

Inman Presbyterian Church

Iva

Good Hope Presbyterian Church
Varenes Presbyterian Church

Landrum

Landrum Presbyterian Church

Liberty

Liberty Presbyterian Church

Mauldin

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church

Moore

Nazareth Presbyterian Church

Tyger River Presbyterian Church

Norris

Rock Hill Presbyterian Church

Pauline

Glenn Springs Presbyterian Church

Pendleton

Pendleton Presbyterian Church

Pickens

Pickens Presbyterian Church

Piedmont

Piedmont Presbyterian Church

Powersville

Providence Presbyterian Church

Reidville

Walker's Chapel

Richland

Richland Presbyterian Church

Sandy Springs

Mt. Zion Presbyterian Church

Seneca

Seneca Presbyterian Church

Simpsonville

Eastminster Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church

Spartanburg

Covenant Presbyterian Church
First Presbyterian Church
Second Presbyterian Church
Unity Presbyterian Church
Westminster (Saxon) Presbyterian Church

Taylors

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

Townville

Townville Presbyterian Church

Travelers Rest

Trinity Presbyterian Church

Walhalla

Bethel Presbyterian Church
Walhalla Presbyterian Church

Wellford

Florence Moore Presbyterian Church

Westminster

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Williamston

Faith Presbyterian Church

Woodruff

First Presbyterian Church

B. Triennial Visits

Book of Order W 1.40001-0002: *“In worship, the church is to remember both its liberty in Christ and the biblical command to do all things in an orderly way. While Christian worship need not follow prescribed forms, careless or disorderly worship is both an offense to God and a stumbling block to the people. Those responsible for worship are to be guided by the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture, the historic experience of the Church universal, the Reformed tradition, The Book of Confessions, the needs and particular circumstances of the worshiping community, as well as the provisions of the Form of Government and this directory. (W-3.1001; W-3.1002)”*

Things That might be Accomplished by this Visit:

(Why should I take time to do it?)

- Improve communication, respect, and understanding between Presbytery and Sessions
- Provide a constructive means for dealing with negative feelings about Presbytery
- Lessen “us” versus “them” images
- Demonstrate that Presbytery really cares about its churches and pastors
- Assist in helping the needs and concerns of local churches by letting them be heard by Presbytery
- Enable Presbytery to be responsive to the needs of its churches and pastors
- Provide opportunity to address issues, concerns, needs, and problems earlier, when more positive options are possible
- Encourage Sessions to take time to reflect on their life and work and their relationship to Presbytery
- Assist in the securing of persons with interests and skills for service on Presbytery committees, etc.

Reasons for Setting Up this Visitation Process:

- We are going because we want to not because we have to.
- We are looking for what’s right with our churches not what’s wrong.
- We are going to listen to the total Session, not just one or two vocal persons.

Keys to Good Listening:

Attention
Awareness
Openness
Use your EYES and EARS
Listen for Feelings and Meanings
Avoid “Why” Questions
Avoid Advice-Giving

Guidelines for Visitation Teams

Book of Order G-3.0101, G-3.0202 d, G-3.0303, G3.0307

How to Set-up a visit:

1. Triennial Visitation Committee identifies churches to be visited each year.
2. Committee Team members confer with each other regarding dates for visits.
3. It is customary to send at least two team members for each visit.
4. The designated Team communicator calls Moderator of Session to set time and date for meal and visits and (1) sends letter of confirmation to Moderator and Clerk along with (2) Questions for Pastors/Moderators (to the Moderator) and (3) Questions that can be Used during visit with Session (to both Moderator and Clerk.)
5. When the date is set for the Team visit, the Team members will arrange their travel plans.
6. Teams inform Presbytery Executive and Chair of Triennial Visitation Committee when visits have been scheduled.

After the Visit:

1. As soon as possible after the visit, the team should write their report. (See **A Suggested Guide for Triennial Visitation Teams to Reflect and Report on their Visits with Sessions and Moderators.**)
2. Team members will report at regular Committee on Ministry meetings on visits completed since the previous meeting. These will be recorded in the Committee on Ministry's minutes and the written report filed in that church's file in the Presbytery Office.
Note: If special messages or referrals need to be made following a visit (i.e., suggestion/criticism to any person or entity of Presbytery) these should be communicated to the Presbytery Executive as soon as possible.
3. A letter of thanks should be sent to the Clerk of Session by the Visitation Team, sharing appreciation for the visit and informing the Session that the report has been filed with the Presbytery Office and that appropriate referrals have been made.

Triennial Visits – Sample Questions

1. As a church, what are your strengths?
What do you do best?
What has worked well for you here that other churches should know about?
2. What changes are taking place in the life of your church and community that impacts your ministry?
How is your church responding?
3. What is the area of greatest concern to you as a Session?
4. When is the last time the Session did the Presbyterian Foundation Financial Health Assessment? (<http://assessment.presbyterianfoundation.org/>)

5. How can the Presbytery, as your partner in Christ's mission, support the ministry of your church?
6. What programs of mission activities do you want to see Foothills Presbytery carry out on behalf of all the churches, recognizing that some ministries are beyond the scope of individual congregations?
7. Are there ways the Presbytery could help your congregation feel more enthusiastic about and a part of the Presbyterian Church USA?
8. List persons in your church with special gifts and skills that could be helpful to Presbytery or other churches in your vicinity.
9. Is there anything else you would like to tell Presbytery at this time?

How To Access Five (5) Years of History of PC (USA) Congregations

1. Go to: <https://www.pcusa.org/search/congregations/>
2. Enter the City, State or Zipcode
3. Click on the Name of the Church.
4. Click on “**View Details**”
5. On the right side under “**Five Years at a Glance,**” click on “**Overview.**”
6. This gives you the reported view of several key statistics.

A Suggested Guide for Triennial Visitation Teams to Reflect and Report on their Visits with Sessions and Moderators

After your visit has been completed, it would be advisable to meet immediately to reflect on the visit. One member of the Team should be designated to prepare a written report to be sent to the Chair of the Triennial Committee and to the COM.

The reflection and subsequent report should be clear and explicit if recommendations are included. The report should include, but not be limited to, the following questions:

1. What are the unique characteristics of this congregation?
2. What positive elements in the life of this congregation are cause for rejoicing and encouragement?
3. What negative elements are cause for concern and assistance?
4. What are the strengths and joys of the moderator; what are the concerns and sadnesses?
5. What are the strengths and joys of the Session; what are the concerns and sadnesses?
6. What strengths does the Session see in this congregation? What weaknesses?
7. What strengths does the Moderator see in this congregation? What weaknesses?
8. How do the Moderator, Session, and Congregation interact with Presbytery and what needs are present that Presbytery could meet?
9. Any other information you feel would be helpful to the Committee on Ministry.

These questions are intended for guidance only. A report in narrative form would be preferable.

C. Pastor, Commissioned Ruling Elder, Certified Christian Educator, and Clerk of Sessions Connections

The Triennial Subcommittee also serves as the organizer of the connections with our Church Leaders. Usually, quarterly the subcommittee asks COM members to contact their assigned church leaders as a check point.

D. Pastoral Transitions

When a Minister leaves a church, the Presbytery Staff will meet with representatives of the church to help them plan for new leadership. Information on engaging with Pulpit Supply Pastors and Temporary Pastors will be shared. Churches who will call a new installed pastor will be given information about forming a Pastor Nominating Committee.

E. Pastor Nominating Committees and Associate Pastor Nominating Committees

When a congregation votes to form a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC), the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk and/or the Associate Stated will provide training for the PNC/APNC. PNC Training Materials have been created and will be shared with the team. These materials are also available on the Foothills Presbytery website at <https://foothillspresbytery.org/presbytery-leadership-and-committees/committee-on-ministry/pastor-nominating-committee-materials/>

F. Pastor Nominating Committee Liaisons

The Committee on Ministry supports churches during their search for a new installed pastor. Once the congregation has elected a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC), COM will assign a PNC liaison. The PNC Liaison is a communicator between the PNC and COM. He/she will assist the PNC with navigating the process to call a new installed minister. Each month during the COM meetings, he/she will provide a brief update on the current status of the PNC.

A few helpful suggestions to the PNC Liaison.

1. Training is provided to the PNC by the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk and/or the Associate Stated Clerk. It is helpful for the PNC Liaison to attend the training to hear the same information.
2. The PNC Liaison will want to meet regularly with the PNC as they begin their work, and usually less often as the PNC begins to review Pastor Information Forms (PIFs).
3. When the PNC is writing the Mission Information Form (MIF), the PNC Liaison can be an objective person to read the narratives for the MIF and to provide feedback to the PNC.
4. Once the MIF is ready for approval, the PNC Liaison is one of the approvers, along with the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk and/or the Associate Stated Clerk prior to

the MIF being entered in the denomination database called Church Leadership Connection (CLC).

5. It is helpful for the PNC to copy the PNC Liaison on all emails. This allows the PNC Liaison to stay informed about the status and any questions that the PNC has.
6. The PNC Liaison is supported by the Committee on Ministry and by the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk or to the Associate Stated Clerk for support.

Two great resources for you and for the PNC are ***On Calling a Pastor, A Manual for Churches Seeking Pastors*** and Foothills Presbytery's Pastor Nominating Committee Training and Reference Materials. Here's a link to the ***On Calling a Pastor***: <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/calling-pastor/>. The Foothills materials may be found on our website at <https://foothillspresbytery.org/presbytery-leadership-and-committees/committee-on-ministry/pastor-nominating-committee-materials/>.

G. Temporary Leadership/Stated Supply

The Committee on Ministry reviews and approves all agreements between Pastors, Commissioned Ruing Elders, and other temporary pastoral relationships and churches. The purpose of the review is to ensure that the agreement meets the guidelines and salary minimums as established by Foothills Presbytery.

When a church is searching for temporary pastoral leadership, the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk and/or the Associate Stated Clerk may meet with representatives from the church to share information on the types of temporary pastoral relationships, salary expectations, and other helpful information about searching for a temporary pastor.

H. Gracious Dismissal Policy

COM initially developed the Gracious Dismissal Policy and approved it in December 2011. The initial policy was approved at the February 2012 Stated Presbytery Meeting. A revision to the policy and the current version was approved by Presbytery at the August 17, 2013. The full policy is in Appendix A.

II. MINISTERIAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. Ministerial Definitions

To assist congregations and leaders within the Foothills Presbytery, the Committee on Ministry (COM) documented the following ministerial roles and processes. We have defined ministerial roles within four classifications: Installed, Temporary, Commissioned Ruling Elder, and Other.

Installed

From the **Book of Order** G-2.0504, Pastoral Relationships:

When ministers of the Word and Sacrament are called as pastor, copastor, or associate pastor of a congregation, they are to be responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commends the gospel to all persons and that communicates its joy and justice. They are responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for celebrating Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and for praying with and for the congregation. With the ruling elders, they are to encourage people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision-making life of the congregation, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole. With the deacons they are to share in the ministries of compassion, witness, and service. In addition to these pastoral duties, they are responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in councils higher than the session and in ecumenical relationships.

a. Installed Pastoral Relationships The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A minister of the Word and Sacrament may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the call. When a congregation determines that its strategy for mission under the Word so requires, the congregation may call additional pastors. Such additional pastors shall be called co-pastors or associate pastors, and the duties of each pastor and the relationship between the pastors of the congregation shall be determined by the session with the approval of the presbytery. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor. The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent

upon that of a pastor. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation.

Called: A Minister of Word and Sacrament who goes through the PCUSA call process via the Church Leadership Connection (CLC), wherein a congregation elects a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) that conducts a thorough search for a pastor or associate or co-pastor using the process outlined in G-2.08.

After selecting the Pastor Nominee, the PNC works with the Presbytery and the Examinations Commission to determine if the candidate is a good fit. Upon approval by the Examinations Commission and/or the Presbytery, the candidate shall plan and schedule a service of installation using the Foothills Presbytery Ordination/Installation Worksheet.

- **Compensation:** The salary package is determined by the Session and approved by the Congregation, the Minister, and the Presbytery. This position requires participation in the Board of Pensions for the Pastor Plan.
- **Who Invites?** The Pastor Nominating Committee elected by the congregation is responsible for discerning who God is calling to their church and recommending a Minister of Word and Sacrament to their congregation.

Designated: A Minister of Word and Sacrament who submits a Personal Information Form (PIF) through the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) and is approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM) to be elected for a *designated* term of not less than two years nor more than four years by vote of the congregation to serve as pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor. The *designated* relationship shall be established by the presbytery. Such a pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor shall be nominated by the congregation's Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) from a *designated* list approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM). With the COM's guidance the congregation and the minister both must agree to be considered for a *designated* term relationship.

The sections on calling and installing a pastor shall apply (G-2.08) and affirm that the *designated* relationship shall be established by the presbytery.

After selecting the Designated Pastor Nominee, the PNC works with the Presbytery and the Examinations Commission to determine if the candidate is a good fit. Upon approval by the Examinations Commission and/or the Presbytery, the candidate shall schedule a service of installation using the Foothills Presbytery Ordination/Installation Worksheet.

In the future, if the following conditions are met, then a congregational meeting may be held to call the Designated Pastor to the current position as pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor):

- a. completion of a minimum of two years of the *designated* pastoral relationship;

- b. the concurrence of the Committee on Ministry, the Designated Pastor, and the Session, acting in place of the Pastor Nominating Committee for the single purpose of calling the Designated Pastor as pastor, associate pastor or co-pastor.
- **Compensation:** The salary package is determined by the Session and approved by the Congregation, the Minister, and the Presbytery. This position requires participation in the Board of Pensions for the Pastor Plan.
- **Who Invites?** The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) nominates to the congregation the Designated Pastor from a list approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM).

Temporary

From the **Book of Order** G-2.0504, Pastoral Relationships:

b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery, may obtain the services of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place. Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, copastor, or associate pastor.

Transitional Minister (previously called Interim): A Minister of Word and Sacrament who serves for a temporary time such as when a minister leaves a church and before another minister is called and installed. Transitional Ministers are not ordinarily eligible to be called and installed as the next pastor for the position. Depending on circumstances within the congregation, the Committee on Ministry may recommend that the Transitional Minister have specific training for leadership during transitions.

- **Compensation:** A contract negotiated among the Minister, the Session, and the Committee on Ministry. These packages are often determined by considering the salary of the previous pastor.
- **Who Invites?** The Session or a committee appointed by the Session along with the Committee on Ministry.

Stated Supply: This position is usually part-time. Stated Supply Ministers of Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Ruling Elders serve congregations that are not forming a PNC to call an Ordained/Installed Pastor at this time. Typically, a Stated Supply position is for a church that does not anticipate being able to afford a called and installed pastor in the near term.

- **Compensation:** A contract negotiated among the Session, the Minister, and the Committee on Ministry. Stated Supply contracts work within Foothills Presbytery's recommended minimum terms. The contract may also include Board of Pensions retirement and/or insurance.
- **Who invites?** The Session or a committee appointed by the Session along with the Committee on Ministry.

Parish Associate: A Parish Associate is a Minister of Word and Sacrament, often retired, who serves a congregation at the request of a Called and Installed Pastor in consultation with the Session to perform certain responsibilities such as additional pastoral care, worship leadership, or other needs to assist the Pastor. The Pastor is responsible for defining these responsibilities in consultation with the Session.

- **Compensation:** A covenant or contract is negotiated among the Pastor, Session, and the Parish Associate. This position may or may not receive financial compensation depending on the extent of the responsibilities.
- **Who invites?** The Pastor with the concurrence of the Session. When the Pastor leaves that particular call, the Parish Associate position is also ended since their responsibilities are connected.

Commissioned Ruling Elder

From the **Book of Order** G-2.10, Commissioning Ruling Elders to Particular Pastor Service:

*G-2.1001 **Functions** When the presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. A ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery. Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by state law. This commission shall also specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery shall review the commission at least annually.*

*G-2.1002 **Training, Examination and Commissioning** A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such*

preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by presbytery. 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 G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.

*G-2.1003 **Commissioning Service** When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a ruling elder to serve a congregation providing the services described above, it shall commission the ruling elder to pastoral service as designated by the presbytery, employing the questions contained in W-4.04.*

*G-2.1004 **Supervision** The ruling elder commissioned under the terms of G-2.1001 shall work under the supervision of the presbytery. The presbytery may at any time withdraw the commission for reasons it deems good and sufficient. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor.*

Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE): A Ruling Elder who wishes to serve God beyond Ruling Elder responsibilities, such as providing pastoral care, officiating at special services, serving communion, working in validated ministry, etc. A CRE may also serve as a Moderator of Session when approved by COM. The CRE will have a mentor who is a Minister of Word and Sacrament.

- **Compensation:** A contract negotiated among the Session, the CRE, and the Committee on Ministry.
- **Who invites?** The Session or a committee appointed by the Session along with the Committee on Ministry.

Other Helpful Definitions

There are two additional roles that we thought would be helpful to define: Pulpit Supply and Moderator of Session.

Pulpit Supply: A Minister of Word and Sacrament or Ruling Elder on the approved Foothills Presbytery Pulpit Supply List who preaches and leads worship on an as-needed basis.

- **Recommended compensation:** At least \$175 per Sunday
- **Who invites?** Session or its appointee, often chairperson of the Worship Committee, contacts individuals from the Committee on Ministry's approved

pulpit supply list or with permission from the Committee on Ministry for someone not currently on the list.

Moderator of Session: A Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Commissioned Ruling Elder who is not on staff at this particular church comes to moderate Session meetings with the approval of the Committee on Ministry. This person may moderate congregational meetings and along with the ruling elders ordain officers.

- **Compensation:** \$75 per meeting
- **Who invites?** The Committee on Ministry appoints a Moderator for the Session when there is no installed pastor, stated supply, or transition minister in the church.

Pastoral Relationship Exceptions

From the **Book of Order** G-2.0504, Pastoral Relationships:

c. Exceptions A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a minister of the Word and Sacrament currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or copastor, or a minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Presbyteries that permit this eligibility shall establish such relationships only by a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present and voting.

Churches that seek an exception should contact the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk or the Chair of COM.

Note: These definitions become effective as of January 1, 2021 and will affect only new positions moving forward. Any existing positions remain labeled as they are.

Approved by Committee on Ministry on December 3, 2020.

B. Annual Terms of Call Report

Every year congregations are asked to review the terms of call for their installed pastors. Any changes to the Terms of Call must be approved by the congregation during a Congregational Meeting. We collect Terms of Call information from each Pastor or Church Treasure at the beginning of each new year. This information should be submitted to Foothills Presbytery via the Foothills Presbytery website, Resources tab, then Forms, then Annual Terms of Call. COM reviews an analysis of the Terms of Call for our Installed Pastors and Associate Pastors.

C. Minimum Terms of Call for Solo and Associate Pastors

The Committee on Ministry reviews PCUSA Minister salary information from the Board of Pensions *Living by the Gospel* and other sources. Based on the information, COM will set minimum terms of call for Solo Pastors, Associate Pastors, and Certified Christian Educators. The Minimum Terms of Call worksheets may be found on the Foothills Presbytery website under the Resources tab, under Forms.
(<https://foothillspresbytery.org/forms/>)

Please see Appendix B for Minimum Terms of Call for Pastors, Appendix C for Minimum Terms of Call for Associate Pastors, and Appendix D for Minimum Terms of Call for Certified Christian Educators.

D. Annual Work of the Minister (Validated Ministry)

Each year ministers who have previously had their work approved as Validated Ministry are asked to complete the Annual Work of the Minister form to update the Committee on Ministry on their service. The form for the Annual Work of Minister are maintained on the Foothills Presbytery website, under the Resources tab, then under Forms.
(<https://foothillspresbytery.org/forms/>)

E. Validated 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

(Updated October 2020)

See Appendix E for the Validated Ministries Application Form or the Foothills Presbytery website (<https://foothillspresbytery.org/forms/>)

F. Indebtedness Policy

Foothills Presbytery supports the PCUSA Seminary Debt Assistance Program. Please see our policy in Appendix F.

G. Ministerial Ethics for Pastors and Commissioned Ruling Elders

Introduction: The ties that bind pastor and people are often deep and profound and may lead to difficulties when the pastor retires or moves to another church, particularly when the former pastor continues to reside relatively close to the place of former

service. Certain “unwritten” ethical standards have been established through the years that have governed the relationship between a pastor and his/her successor and the relationship between a pastor and his/her former congregation. When these standards are observed, the relationships can be rewarding and satisfying to all parties concerned. When they are violated, embarrassment and animosity are almost sure to arise, and the peace, purity, and unity of the church may be threatened.

Because of the sensitive nature of these relationships, Foothills Presbytery establishes the following standards to guide pastors and CREs and congregations when a pastoral relationship is dissolved. This move from “unwritten” to “written” standards is an effort to bring some uniformity and clarity to a sensitive issue.

The Former Pastor or Former CRE: When pastoral relationships with congregations are dissolved, pastors or CREs shall:

1. Announce publicly that he/she is no longer available for pastoral services (including, but not limited to funerals, weddings, baptisms, pastoral counseling, visitation), except at the invitation of his/her successor or the Session.
2. Refer all requests for pastoral services to the current pastor and/or Clerk of Session.
3. Discourage members of the former congregation from “following” him/her to the next pastorate.
4. Exercise great care to have no further influence on the former congregation.
5. Refuse to criticize the work of his/her successor and refuse to listen to criticisms from members of the former congregation. Instead, the former pastor shall encourage active support of the new pastor.

The Congregation: When pastoral relationships are dissolved, the congregation is encouraged to:

1. Remember that the former pastor/CRE is no longer their pastor, and refrain from calling him/her to perform any pastoral services.
2. Cherish the friendships they had with their pastor/CRE, and continue those friendships, but do not confuse friendship with pastoral relationship.
3. Resist comparing the new pastor with his/her predecessor, immediate or otherwise.

The New Pastor or New CRE: The new pastor or CRE also has role to play in preventing conflict in the presence of the former pastor. The new pastor/CRE should:

1. Remember that the ties that bind the members of a congregation to its former pastor(s) have been forged through the unique experience of the pastorate. A congregation that loves its former pastor(s) reveals a capacity to love its new pastor.
2. Refrain from criticizing the former pastor.
3. Be aware that the former pastor has a body of knowledge and “hindsight” that may be useful at times.

4. Consider including the former pastor in significant moments in the life of the church that may provide an occasion for celebrating the past and its connection with the present and future.

Recommendation for Use:

- This policy statement shall be given to every pastor who leaves a pastorate and to every pastor beginning a new pastorate within the bounds of Foothills Presbytery.
- The policy statement shall be sent to the Clerk of Session of a vacant church immediately after the departure of the former pastor.
- The policy should be shared with the Pastor Nominating Committee as they begin their work.

H. Sabbath Leave

Foothills Presbytery adopted a Sabbath Leave Policy for Ministers and Educators. The full policy may be found in Appendix H.

I. Exit Interviews

When a Minister is leaving Foothills Presbytery, a representative from COM will schedule an interview with him/her. The COM representative may conduct the Exit Interview over a lunch or dinner and expense the meal with through Foothills Presbytery. If an Exit Interview is conducted with the Session, the interview should be scheduled after the Minister has left the church.

Below is a list of suggested interview questions. You may adapt the questions as needed. Please take notes to help you prepare an Exit Interview Report for COM.

List of suggested interview questions:

- Describe your greatest satisfaction.
- Describe the strengths of the Congregation and Ruling Elders.
- Describe your greatest disappointment.
- Describe the problems you feel hinder the congregation.
- Make suggestions for change in mission and program.
- Make suggestions for change in staffing.
- What plans do you have for ending significant relationships?
- What unfinished projects for successors?
- Remind the minister of the ethics related to leaving a congregation. Ask how they plan to honor it. Provide a copy of the Ministerial Ethics document to the Minister.
- Do you have any advice or location of information you are leaving for successor?
- Is there a manse? What is the condition of the Manse?
- What is the condition of the Church Rolls and Minutes?
- Is there a suggested focus for Transitional Pastor?

Report on Exit Interview to COM

The COM representative who conducts the Exit Interview will provide a written report sharing the date the interview was conducted and key highlights of the discuss. The report should be submitted to the Presbytery Leader/Stated Clerk or to the Associate Stated Clerk for inclusion in the next COM packet.

III. COMMISSIONED RULING ELDERS

From the **Book of Order** G-2.10 Commissioning Ruling Elders:

When the presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery. A ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery. Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by state law. This commission shall also specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery shall review the commission at least annually.

Policy

To enter into the study to be a Commissioned Ruling Elder in Foothills Presbytery, one must be an active member of a Foothills congregation and an ordained Ruling Elder, who has completed at least one full, active 3-year term in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

Procedures

This document outlines the training and other procedures required to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) in Foothills Presbytery.

Steps to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder:

1. Meet with the Minister of Word and Sacrament and the Session of your home congregation to ask for their support and approval to enter the track to become a CRE. It may be helpful to review Book of Order G-2.10 together. You will also want to have a discussion with them about possible financial support during this process, especially for the Ministry Development Services (MDS) Assessment.
2. Have the Clerk of Session complete the CRE Endorsement Form and the SC Lay School Endorsement Form and submit them to the Presbytery Office or to the Chair of the CRE Supervisory Committee. (The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)
3. Complete the CRE Application Form for entry into the program and submit it to the Presbytery Office or to the Chair of the CRE Supervisory Committee. (The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership &

Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)

4. Complete the appropriate forms with the Presbytery Office for a background check to be performed. Contact LeAnne White to obtain the form at lwhite@foothillspresbytery.org.
5. The applicant must meet with the Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) Supervisory Committee or its representatives to be approved pending acceptable results of the background checks and psychological testing.
6. Once approved by the CRE Supervisory Committee, you will begin your training. See the details in the Training section of this document.
7. We recommend that you complete at least 2, but not more than 4, of the courses prior to taking the psychological assessment.
8. Register for and take the psychological assessment through the agency currently approved by Foothills Presbytery. Please note this assessment will cost > \$1,000. You may want to request financial assistance from your home church. (The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)
9. The psychology assessment can take several weeks. The report will be reviewed by the CRE Supervisory Committee.
10. While you are in the program, the CRE Supervisory Committee will assign a covenant partner/mentor to you. You should have at least quarterly contact with your mentor for prayer and support. He/she will help you navigate the program.
11. Once a year you should have an Annual Consultation with the CRE Supervisory Committee to review your progress and to discuss any support that you need in the program. You may invite your mentor to join you.
12. When you have completed the 8 required courses, you will meet with the CRE Supervisory Committee. You will give a 5-minute homily. At this meeting, the CRE Supervisory Committee will determine your readiness for a commission. If they approve your readiness, it will be reported to COM. You also may be considered for Pulpit Supply list.
13. The COM will share your name with churches which have a need and may benefit from the services of a CRE.
14. A church seeking the services of a CRE will contact you to discuss the needs and to determine if you are a good fit for them.
15. You will meet with the church Session to develop a covenant agreement. See the Covenant Agreement section below. (Forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)
16. Once you and the church agree on a covenant relationship, you will need to meet with the Examinations Commission of Foothills Presbytery. They will review your bio, your personal faith statement, and your training. You will give a 5-minute homily. This committee will determine if you are ready to be commissioned.
17. You will work with the Examinations Commission and COM to determine what your commission will include. A Commission Authorization Form will be

completed. (The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)

18. Once approved by Examinations and COM, you will need to be presented to the Presbytery for approval. The Examinations Commission will introduce you to be examined from the floor.
19. Once approved by the Presbytery, COM will assign a mentor who is a minister of Word and Sacrament. This minister will provide mentoring and be available to answer questions about polity, theology, and church life.
20. After you begin your commission, COM will monitor the covenant relationship between you and the congregation.

Training

From the **Book of Order** G-2.1002 *Training, Examination and Commissioning*
A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by presbytery. 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 G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.

Foothills Presbytery requires Ruling Elders who are seeking a commission to complete 8 core courses. The courses are listed below. A CRE candidate may choose where he/she completes the courses provided the other requirements are met.

1. No more than 5 of the courses may be taken online. Any exception must be approved by the CRE Supervisory Committee.
2. Courses from certain institutions will need to be pre-approved by the CRE Supervisory Committee. Details below.
3. Some courses taken in seminary may be applicable. Details below.

Required Courses

Foothills Presbytery requires 8 Reformed core courses for training to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder. Foothills Presbytery has specified the following courses as required.

1. Old Testament
2. New Testament
3. Reformed Theology
4. Presbyterian Polity
5. Preaching
6. Leading Worship and Administering the Sacraments
7. Pastoral Care
8. Church History

Once commissioned, Foothills Presbytery strongly encourages CRE's to take at least one continuing education course per year.

Training Options

As mentioned in **Book of Order** G-2.1002, the presbytery has oversight of the selection and training of the elder who seeks to become a commissioned ruling elder. Foothills Presbytery has approved the following training options.

Option 1—South Carolina Lay School of Theology has been in existence for many years and is managed by the five SC presbyteries. The Lay School is held one weekend in March or April and one weekend in October or November of each year. You may take only one course on each weekend; each weekend averages ten hours with a follow up paper sent to the instructor for grading to complete the course. Instructors report grades to the Lay School registrar who in turn sends reports to Foothills Presbytery two times a year to update your credits.

The SC Lay School awards a certificate to persons who complete their "core" courses in the CRE Track. To earn credit in the CRE Track, you must have endorsement from your Session and the CRE Supervisory Committee. Please note that this endorsement is a separate endorsement for the SC Lay School.

There are 8 core courses to be taken at the SC Lay School to receive a certificate from the Lay School. Foothills Presbytery posts the SC Lay School schedule on our website each semester.

You are not required to take courses from the SC Lay School, although this program is recommended by Foothills Presbytery.

SC Lay School regularly offers courses on this schedule:

Fall Core Classes

New Testament Survey
Reformed Theology
Pastoral Care
Church History

Spring Core Classes

Old Testament Survey
Presbyterian Polity
Worship and Sacraments
Preaching

Option 2: Union Seminary Pathways Online Courses is an online program of nine courses offered over a two-year period to provide educational preparation toward leading a congregation as a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE). The cost per class is \$125 and each class carries 3 CEUs. Union also offers a self-directed New Testament course. Here's a link to their program information: <https://www.upsem.edu/leadership-institute/pathways-learning-leadership-2/>

Please have the Registrar at Union Seminary send Foothills Presbytery verification that you have completed the course and passed all requirements to receive credit.

Option 3: Dubuque Theological Seminary Online Courses which have been approved by Foothills Presbytery for credit toward commissioned ruling elder certification. When signing up for an online course, you must request that the seminary send notification to Foothills Presbytery to receive the appropriate credit. This is an additional fee. To apply for a course, follow this link: <https://moodle.dbq.edu/mod/page/view.php?id=301860>

Most Dubuque online courses run for 12-weeks and equate to a 1.5 to 2 credit hour college coursework. On average the online student reads 300-500 pages, writes 7-10 pages of assignments, and spends 3-4 hours per week of class participation and preparation time. (Courses do not carry seminary or university credit.) You can pay extra to earn CEUs for the online courses. Maximum suggested number of courses to take at the same time is two. Dubuque offers many courses online, both core courses and electives such as the list below.

Core Courses and approximate start Dates:

1. Introduction to Old Testament (January & June)
2. Introduction to New Testament (April & September)
3. Pastoral Care (March & August)
4. Presbyterian Polity (February & July)
5. Reformed Theology (April & September)
6. Introduction to Preaching (June & December)
7. Foundations of Christian Education (January & June)
8. Reformed Worship and Sacraments (March & August)

Please have the Registrar at Dubuque send Foothills Presbytery verification that you have completed the course and passed all requirements to receive credit.

Option 4: Other PC(USA) Seminaries – Course work through another PC(USA) seminary must be approved in advance. Each will be evaluated on a case by case basis. You will be required to submit course catalog information and/or course syllabus for the CRE Supervisory committee to review.

When signing up for an online course, you must request that the seminary send notification to Foothills Presbytery to receive the appropriate credit.

Option 5: Credit for seminary courses previously taken. If you have previously taken courses at an accredited theological institution, some of your classes may apply towards the CRE training requirements. You will need to submit an official transcript from the institution, course catalog information, and/or course syllabus for the CRE Supervisory Committee to evaluate.

During periodic checkpoints or your Annual Consultation with the CRE Supervisory Committee, you will need to provide a status of your training. (The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)

Covenant Agreement for Commission (Annual Contract)

A written covenant or agreement between the Session, COM, and CRE shall be agreed upon by all parties prior to an elder being examined by the Examinations Commission and prior to a commission being approved by Foothills Presbytery. The covenant shall include the following:

- Annual contract beginning and ending dates of the commission. (G-2.1001)
- Functions which the CRE is authorized to fulfill (G-2.1001)
- Details of the relationship to the congregation, new church development or validated ministry, including the list of duties
- Specify oversight for the CRE
 - A CRE in a congregation shall have oversight by a Session.
 - A CRE serving in a new church development shall have oversight by a commission of the presbytery.
 - A CRE in a validated ministry of the presbytery shall have oversight by a presbytery committee or team sponsoring that validated ministry.
- Specify relationship with the COM
 - COM shall assign a Minister of Word and Sacrament as a mentor and supervisor.
 - CRE shall make periodic reports of the commission as requested by COM.
 - COM shall hold an annual review of covenant for commission.
- Details of compensation, if applicable.

(The forms are available on the Foothills Presbytery Website, in the Leadership & Committees tab, in Committee on Ministry, on the Commissioned Ruling Elder page.)

Other CRE Responsibilities

Once you have been validated as a Commissioned Ruling Elder, you will have the following responsibilities:

- attend Presbytery meetings
- complete a yearly report on the life of the congregation you are serving for the Committee on Ministry (COM)
- serve on Presbytery committees for the greater work of the Presbytery
- participate in the life of a particular church
- maintain applicable professional certifications and/or commissions

Changes to Current Assignment

You have the responsibility to notify the COM of any change in the work of the ministry to which you have been commissioned. COM will determine if the work still meets the criteria set forth or if any adjustments need to be made to the commission.

Completion or Termination of Assignment

A member of COM will contact you to conduct an Exit Interview when your commission expires or when you transition out of this commission. This will help us know how to support you with future assignments and how to serve the church in the future. Additionally, CRE's will be reminded of the boundary ethics connected to the end of a commission.

CREs Transferring from another Presbytery

If a CRE from another Presbytery moves into the boundaries of Foothills and wishes to seek a Commission as a Ruling Elder, the following steps must be completed.

1. Contact Foothills Presbytery to arrange a meeting with the Commissioned Ruling Elder Supervisory Committee.
2. Provide CRE documents from the Presbytery previously served and/or trained.
3. Provide the CRE Supervisory Committee with contact information on the transferring Presbytery CRE governing/oversight committee.
4. All requirements for Foothills CRE must be completed and approved by Foothills Presbytery COM. Any exceptions must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the CRE Supervisory Committee.

Role of the CRE Mentor

Every Commissioned Ruling Elder will be assigned a mentor who is a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. Your role as a mentor is to check in occasionally with the CRE to determine if he/she needs any support. You will answer questions related to polity, theology, and church life. As a mentor, you provide the CRE with someone to turn to when he/she needs support.

Approved by COM November 5, 2020

IV. CERTIFIED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS

The COM has the responsibility to supervise those who are seeking to become either a Certified Christian Educator or Christian Education Associate.

What is a Christian Educator?

Christian Educators are persons called by God to a ministry of education who demonstrate their faith and love in Jesus Christ, are dedicated to the life of faith and serious in purpose, honest in character and joyful in service. It is expected that Christian educators be persons with skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, human faith and development, religious education theory and practice, and the polity, programs and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

A. Certified Christian Educator (CCE)

- Are members of the PC(USA)
- Are employed in educational ministry in a PCUSA congregation, governing body or agency or have confirmed volunteer status of at least ten hours/week of volunteer service and have completed one year full-time (or its equivalent) work experience
- Have completed a bachelor's degree (or master's degree) or CE Associate level
- Have requested and received an application and information for certification along with a listing of Certification Advisors appointed by the presbytery or a neighboring presbytery and have asked one of these Advisors to serve as the resource and support system as they go through the process
- Have completed the application, including current employment/service, work experience, and previous coursework with attached transcripts
- Have completed the required course credits (3 credits or 30 contact hours) in Biblical Interpretation, Reformed Theology, Religious Education Theory and Practice, Human Growth and Faith Development, Worship and Have completed the required course credits (1.5 credits or 15 contact hours) in Presbyterian Polity and Presbyterian Program and Mission
- Have completed the certification exam process with a **Reference Group** containing colleagues, staff, and the Certification Advisor

Educator Certification Course Requirements

The Educator Certification process of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) requires educational components that equal 180 contact hours (18 graduate level credit hours) for the Certified Christian Educator. This includes the following courses:

1. Biblical Interpretation 30 hours
2. Reformed Theology 30 hours
3. Religious Education Theory and Practice 30 hours
4. Human Growth and Faith Development 30 hours
5. Presbyterian Polity 15 hours
6. Presbyterian Program and Mission 15 hours
7. Worship and Sacraments 30 hours

B. Christian Education Associate (CEA)

The process for Christian Education Associate (CEA) is designed to recognize the role and status of the Educator with or without formal academic training. The Educator Certification Committee (ECC) recognizes that many of those who are serving in educational ministries in churches and presbyteries have responded to a need and/or a call, even though they had little training or preparation for the ministry. The goal of the CEA endorsement process is to introduce the educator to basic knowledge and skills related to Christian Education.

Requirements for Christian Education Associates (CEA)

Persons seeking endorsement as Christian Education Associates (CEA) must complete the following requirements:

- Membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- Active in educational ministry within a PC(USA) congregation, council, or agency.
- Completion of an online application.
- Completion of an online initial assessment for each content area. Results of the initial assessments will determine where further study is needed.
 - Content areas for the CEA are *Biblical Interpretation, Reformed Theology, Religious Education Theory and Practice, Human Growth and Faith Development, Worship and Sacraments, and Presbyterian Polity, Program, and Mission.*
- The educator will be directed to develop a plan of study with their Advisor using a variety of resources to deepen understanding in the content area.
- Successful completion of the online final assessment for each content area.

Steps in the Christian Education Associate Process

There are five main steps in the process to become a Christian Education Associate.

- A. Application
- B. Online Initial Assessment
- C. Plan of Study
- D. Final Assessment
- E. Endorsement

Additional information and documents may be found at this location:

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/christianeducators/certification-educators/>

C. Ethics: Christian Educators, Youth Directors, and non-ordained Church Program Staff

The relationship between a Christian Educator/Youth Director and members of the congregation are deep and quite often profound. It can make transitioning out of that role or leaving for another job difficult for everyone. It is particularly challenging when the former Educator/Youth Director continues to reside in relatively close proximity to his/her place of former service or remains a member of the congregation. Certain informal ethical standards have been established through the years, standards that have governed the relationship between a past Educator/Youth Director and his/her successor and the relationship between the Educator/Youth Director and his/her congregation. When these standards are observed, the relationships can be rewarding and satisfying to all parties concerned.

The Former Christian Educator, Youth Director, or Program Staff:

When relationships with congregations are dissolved, the past employee shall:

1. Announce to session, committees and congregation that he/she is no longer available for duties and responsibilities, which fell under his/her previous job description.
2. Exercise great care to **have no further influence on the former congregation**,
3. Do not criticize the work of his/her successor and refuse to listen to criticisms about his/her successor from members of the congregation. Instead, the former employee shall encourage active support of the new employee.

The Congregation:

When relationships are dissolved, the congregation is encouraged to:

1. Remember that the former Educator, Youth Director or Program staff is no longer performing those duties for the church, and refrain from calling upon him/her to perform any such service.
2. Cherish the friendships they had and continue those friendships, but do not confuse friendship with a professional (pastoral type) relationship.

The New Educator, Youth Director or Program Staff:

The new Educator or Youth Director also has a role to play in preventing conflict in the presence of the former educator, youth director or program staff. The new employee should:

1. Remember that the ties that bind the members of a congregation to its former leader(s) have been forged through the unique experience of that call. A congregation that loves its former leadership reveals a capacity to love its new Educator, Youth Director, or Program Staff.
2. When suggesting changes or making improvements, refrain from criticizing the former Educator, Youth Director, or Program staff.

(Ministerial Ethics Policy was updated by COM in 2016.)

V. Sexual Ethics and Misconduct

We partner with the Sexual Ethics Committee and the Committee on Shared Ministry to ensure that all ministers, educators, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and church professionals are educated and aware of the Presbytery's Sexual Ethics and Misconduct Policy and its Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Policy.

Ethics and Boundaries Subcommittee

The Ethics and Boundaries Subcommittee of Committee on Ministry works with the Sexual Ethics Committee. Ethics and Boundaries has the responsibility for training members of the Presbytery and committee members on the Foothills Presbytery Sexual Ethics and Misconduct Policy. Every three years the Ethics and Boundaries Subcommittee will review the Ministerial Ethics policy and determine if any modifications are warranted.

VI. APPENDIX

The following documents include Foothills Presbytery Committee on Ministry Policies and Forms.

Appendix A – Gracious Dismissal Policy

Appendix B – Minimum Terms of Call for Pastors

Appendix C – Minimum Terms of Call for Associate Pastors

Appendix D – Minimum Terms of Call for Certified Christian Educators

Appendix E – Validated Ministries Application Form

Appendix F – Indebtedness Policy

Appendix G – Sexual Ethics and Misconduct Policy

Appendix H – Sabbath Leave Policy

Appendix A: Gracious Dismissal Policy

Overview

Foothills Presbytery acknowledges with regret that churches within our Presbytery have concerns about the denomination which lead them to consider requesting to be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to another Reformed body. When the COM or the Presbytery staff becomes aware of an action or decision taken by the session of a congregation that might lead to such a request, it shall initiate the process spelled out in this policy.

The Constitution of the PC (USA) affirms that “God alone is Lord of the conscience” as well as the right of “corporate judgment . . . to declare the terms of admission into its communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed.” Thus, as a congregation is admitted by corporate action of the Presbytery, so also it cannot be dismissed except by the corporate action of the Presbytery. The dismissal of a congregation is **not** a matter decided by a majority within the congregation. It is a **Presbytery decision** that can only be decided at a full meeting of the Presbytery.

In addressing the issue responsibly and in accord with the Constitution of the PC (USA), Foothills Presbytery must do its due diligence in order to understand and, if possible, to address issues leading to the request so as to seek reconciliation or to recommend a fair and gracious dismissal.

The response of the Presbytery will be conducted by the Committee on Ministry (COM). Prior to making its recommendation on the dismissal of a congregation to another reformed body, COM will ordinarily appoint a task force to investigate and make written recommendations in a timely fashion. COM will review the task force recommendations and report to Presbytery at its next full meeting. The report will include COM’s recommendations about whether the church should be dismissed to another Reformed body, and if so, what steps are necessary in regard to staff, designated accounts and trusts, members and staff who wish to remain loyal to the PC (USA), and the PC (USA) institutions which the congregation has supported.

Each situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis with no “one-size fits-all” solution offered or expected. The solution should minimize as much as possible the harm done to the cause of Christ.

It is the hope and prayer of Foothills Presbytery that we will be able to minimize conflict over church property and avoid civil litigation. In compliance with the ruling of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the GA, in every case the value of the property and all trusts, assets, and liabilities of the congregation will be determined and taken into account. As stated in the policy that follows, we affirm the “Trust Clause” (G. 4-0203) as a valid and important expression of our mutuality in ministry in the PC (USA).

Mutual cooperation and respect are necessary at every step in the process so as to work out the details of dismissal in a way that honors Jesus Christ and enables the ministry of the Presbytery, the loyal portion of the congregation (if large enough to sustain a viable ministry), and the congregation of those departing to go forward.

An Approach for Dealing with Churches within Foothills Presbytery that request to be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Introduction

The mission of Foothills Presbytery, as a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA), “is to connect the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations of Upstate South Carolina in Christian service to God and humanity.”¹ In seeking to fulfill that mission Foothills Presbytery strives to serve God faithfully by developing, encouraging, and supporting the congregations that have covenanted together to be Foothills Presbytery, and by celebrating the ministry we share in common.

Throughout its history the Presbyterian Church has gone through numerous times of turmoil and disagreement. Some conflicts have proved so divisive as to have resulted in lasting divisions in this part of the Body of Christ. Now, once again the Presbyterian Church is going through a time of turmoil that threatens to alienate us from one another.

The 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) approved a commissioner’s resolution “Urging a Gracious, Pastoral Response to Churches Requesting Dismissal from the PC (USA).” The GA encouraged presbyteries to develop a process for dealing with requests for dismissal that would manifest “consistency, pastoral responsibility, accountability, gracious witness, openness, and transparency.”

In response to the request of the General Assembly, the COM of Foothills Presbytery reviewed numerous policies of other presbyteries, some of which were quite detailed in their requirements and procedures. We, however, have chosen to take a different approach, one which we believe more nearly reflects the values and theological commitments of this presbytery.

It is our conviction that the Scriptures, our Reformed confessions, and Presbyterian polity provide important resources for dealing with conflict within and among churches in ways that minimize the harm done to the cause of Christ. Drawing upon this guidance after prayerful consideration Foothills Presbytery has affirmed the following principles for responding on a case-by-case basis to congregations that may request to be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to another Reformed body.

¹ Mission Statement of Foothills Presbytery

Theological Principles to Guide our Process

1. The Church is the gift of God in Jesus Christ.

In a region in which congregational autonomy is the predominate form of church government, one of the distinctive features of Presbyterian polity is the insistence that the church is not ours to order and control as we please. The Church is the gift of God to whom alone we belong in life and death. It is our conviction that it is Christ who “gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline.” (F-1.0203). “He alone rules, calls, teaches, and uses the Church as he wills.” (F-1.0202). We respond to his gracious Lordship by “joyful participation in Christ’s ongoing life and work,” (F-1.0201) as together we seek to bear witness to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

2. In Jesus Christ we belong to one another.

In calling us to himself, Jesus Christ joins us to one another as fellow members of his one Body on earth. “To be one with Christ is to be joined with all those whom Christ calls into relationship with him.” (F-1.0302a)

3. The Unity of the Church

The Church of Jesus Christ, as his body on earth, by its very nature is one. As Christ prayed that his followers would be one (John 17), so we seek to manifest visibly the unity that is ours in Christ. That unity is both a gift of grace and a task of discipleship.

A vital part of our Christian witness comes as we model in the life of our congregations and in this Presbytery the organic spiritual unity that is ours in Christ. That unity finds expression, not in a uniformity in which every member of the Body is alike, but in the rich unity amid diversity that the Apostle Paul depicts in 1 Corinthians 12. Using the image of the human body in which “all the members...though many, are one body,” Paul declares, “...so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body...and made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:12b-13) By the ministry of Christ the church is blessed with many different gifts, all of which are “...necessary for its mission to the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God...” (F-1.0202). “Now you (plural) are the body of Christ and individually members of it.... But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.” (1 Cor. 12:27, 31), the way of reconciling love.

The unity of the Church does not require that all believers articulate their faith in the same terms or agree on all points of doctrine. From the earliest days of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, “mutual forbearance” has been a basic part of our system of church government (F-3.0105)². Thus Foothills Presbytery affirms that freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained, in so far as pastors and church officers adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in *The Book of Confessions* and the “Form of Government” F-2.01 - F-2.05.

² “Historic Principles of Church Order,” from 1788.

4. The Ministry of Reconciliation

Our confessions, especially the Confession of 1967, affirm the importance of the ministry of reconciliation to which we are called in Christ. *“God’s reconciling work in Jesus Christ and the mission of reconciliation to which he has called his church are the heart of the gospel in any age. Our generation stands in peculiar need of reconciliation in Christ.”* (Book of Confessions, 9.06) Indeed it does, as once again deep divisions have opened, not only in the church, but throughout our society and world. How graciously and faithfully we deal with one another in times of conflict reveals how committed we are to the gospel of reconciliation and to participating in Christ’s own ministry of reconciliation among us.

Our Form of Government wisely declares that “The organization rests on the fellowship and is not designed to work without trust and love.” (G-1.0103).

In a time when ties of trust have been deeply strained or are in danger of being severed, Foothills Presbytery is committed to acting pastorally rather than adversarially toward our constituent congregations, and we expect congregations to act toward the Presbytery in a similar manner.

The goal of Foothills Presbytery will always be reconciliation and continued relationship for all congregations within its bounds. Divisions in the body of Christ are a matter for deep sadness and harm the church’s witness to the power of Christ’s reconciling love. The negative consequences of church divisions, especially when litigation is involved, often last for generations. Thus it is incumbent upon us to do all within our power to prevent such divisions where possible, and to minimize their damage, if reconciliation is not possible at this time.

Process

1. The process will begin when the Committee on Ministry (COM) or the Presbytery staff becomes aware of an action or decision taken by the session of a congregation that might lead to a request to be dismissed to another Reformed body.
2. The response of the Presbytery will be conducted by the COM. The COM may appoint representatives to explore the situation and recommend an initial response to the COM. It may also appoint a task force to meet with the session and others, as appropriate, to assess the forces driving a congregation’s desire to be dismissed and to implement a process for reconciliation or for dismissal. An important part of the process should involve opportunity for prayer and Bible study together. A session considering dismissal is urged to make this time available *before any decisions* are reached.
3. Each situation will be considered on a case-by-case basis with “no one-size fits-all” solution offered or expected. The solution should minimize as much as humanly possible the harm done to the cause of Christ.

4. At the request of the COM, its representatives, or task force, the congregation will provide the following documents, as well as such other information as may be specifically requested: a full listing of the current value of the church's property, a current roll of active members, a statement of all current mission giving commitments, a listing of the value of all trusts, assets, and liabilities of the congregation, including all foundations or endowment funds under the control of the church.
5. The task force may convene a forum of the congregation to determine the depth and extent of the sentiment regarding the request to be dismissed. Whatever vote that may be taken is not binding but will be taken into account by the COM in making its recommendation. It is important to note that no congregation can be dismissed to independency or received by another Reformed body before it is formally dismissed by the Presbytery.
6. If reconciliation is not possible, the task force will bring to the COM a specific recommendation regarding allocation of the property in accord with G-4.0207 "Property of a Congregation in Schism." An important part of that decision will involve determining whether "one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is identified by the presbytery as the true church within the Presbyterian Church (USA). This determination does not depend upon which faction received the majority vote within the congregation at the time of the schism." (G-4.0207)

The Book of Order of the PC (USA) states: "All property held by or for a particular church, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (USA), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association...is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (USA). (G-4.0203) This "Trust Clause," as it is commonly called, is a concrete expression of the organic unity of the church in its common mission and ministry as stated in the theological principles above. It is important to recognize that the property of a church has deep spiritual and emotional meaning to its members. It represents tangibly the commitments and generosity of previous generations of God's "saints" in that congregation. Yet, our highest allegiance is never to property. It is to the One in whose name and for whose ministry the property was given. In the Church of Jesus Christ the spiritual needs of people have a higher priority than the preservation of property. Church property fights leave lasting scars in the congregation and community and need to be avoided wherever possible by all parties seeking fair settlement of disputes.

7. The recommendations of the task force to COM will ordinarily be made within 90 days of the receipt of the materials listed above (4.) by the task force. The task force report will be furnished to the session at the same time it is furnished to the COM. The COM will make its recommendations to Presbytery. Final action can only be taken at a full meeting of the Presbytery.

If a congregation goes through this process and is not dismissed, the COM will work with that congregation to help it reconcile and heal.

8. While seeking to deal graciously with congregations that are dismissed to other Reformed bodies, Foothills Presbytery is committed to supporting the members of those congregations who desire to remain loyal to the Presbyterian Church (USA). The specific form that support will take will also be determined on a case-by-case basis. But in every case they will have the full pastoral support of the Presbytery and such support of the congregation as the Presbytery may deem appropriate.
9. Foothills Presbytery through its COM will do all within its power to help clergy and other professional staff members who wish to remain loyal to the PC (USA) but whose churches have left the denomination to find places of remunerated service until they receive a call to a new congregation. The departing congregation may be required to contribute financially to their support during this process. The departing congregation may also be required to agree to specified financial support for a limited time to PC (USA) institutions that have relied on its support.
10. Presbytery will ensure that all endowments and trusts are handled legally and in accord with the wishes of the donors, where such intent can be determined.
11. All parties should promote respect, continuing friendship, and recognition that the tensions that have led to the separation are based on sincere differences of interpretation and experience. It is our continued hope and prayer that our temporary divisions will in time be overcome by the reconciling love of Christ.

Approved by Presbytery February 2012. Revision approved by Presbytery August 2013.

Appendix B: Minimum Terms of Call for Pastors

	SALARY	Foothills Presbytery Requirements	Solo Pastor Example	
1	Annual Cash Salary		\$ 22,447	
2	Housing Allowance (including Utilities, Furnishings)	Required Adequate (must equal at least 30% of Cash Salary)	\$ 24,000	
3	SECA Allowance (in excess on 50% of SECA obligation)	Required (Salary + Housing x 7.65%)	\$ 3,553	
4	Deferred Compensation (employer contributions to 403(b)(9) plans, tax-sheltered annuity plans and equity allowances)	negotiable	\$ -	
5	Manse Equity Allowance	negotiable	\$ -	
6	Other		\$ -	
7	Bonus (for the year in which bonus is paid)	negotiable	\$ -	
8	**Value of Housing provided (30% of lines 1-7. This line to be used by ministers living in manses.	Required in case of manse being provided	\$ -	
9	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY (lines 1-8)		\$ 50,000	
	BENEFITS			
10	Board of Pensions For 2022 37% of effective salary (\$44,000 min. salary)	Required	\$ 18,500	
11	Dental	negotiable	\$ -	
12	SECA (SECA obligation)	Required (Salary + Housing x 7.65%)	\$ 3,553	
13	Sabbatical Installment (church fund setting aside amounts to pay for sabbatical when it arrives years later)	negotiable	\$ -	
14	Other (specify)	negotiable	\$ -	
15	TOTAL BENEFITS		\$ 22,053	

Minimum Terms of Call for Pastors, continued:

REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES			
16	Continuing Education	Required	\$ 1,000
17	Books	negotiable	\$ -
18	Business & Professional Expenses	negotiable	\$ -
19	Travel (IRS employee rate \$.xx/mile)	Required	\$ 3,000
20	Moving Expenses	Required Actual	\$ -
21	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES		\$ 4,000
			Solo Pastor Example
OTHER BENEFITS			
22	Vacation (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 4 weeks	4 weeks
23	Continuing Education Leave (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 2 weeks	2 weeks
24	Sabbath Leave (Structure and Length of Time--Consult Foothills Presbytery Guidelines; Consult church policy)	negotiable	3 months
25	Sick Leave (Consult church personnel policy; ex: 1 day for every month worked, up to 90 days)	negotiable	Church personnel policy
26	Parental Leave (Consult Foothills Presbytery COM; Consult church personnel policy; ex: 6-8 weeks with 100% pay, additional time to be negotiated.)	negotiable	Foothills COM recommendations
27	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY	(add line 9)	\$ 50,000
28	TOTAL BENEFITS	(add line 15)	\$ 22,053
29	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES	(add line 21)	\$ 4,000
30	deduct Value of Housing provided	(subtract line 8)	\$ -
31	TOTAL**	(sum of lines 27 + 28 + 29 - line 8)	\$ 76,053
32	*Subtract out this value when calculating line 36 since the church owns the manse.)		
33	**Do not include *Value of Housing provided in Total.		

Appendix C: Minimum Terms of Call for Associate Pastors

	SALARY	Foothills Presbytery Requirements	Assoc Pastor Example
1	Annual Cash Salary		\$ 17,802
2	Housing Allowance (including Utilities, Furnishings)	Required Adequate (must equal at least 30% of Cash Salary)	\$ 24,000
3	SECA Allowance (in excess on 50% of SECA obligation)	Required (Salary + Housing x 7.65%)	\$ 3,198
4	Deferred Compensation (employer contributions to 403(b)(9) plans, tax-sheltered annuity plans and equity allowances)	negotiable	\$ -
5	Manse Equity Allowance	negotiable	\$ -
6	Other		\$ -
7	Bonus (for the year in which bonus is paid)	negotiable	\$ -
8	**Value of Housing provided (30% of lines 1-7. This line to be used by ministers living in manses.	Required in case of manse being provided	\$ -
9	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY (lines 1-8)		\$ 45,000
	BENEFITS		
10	Baord of Pensions For 2022 37% of effective salary (\$44,000 min. salary)	Required (Total Effective Salary x 36.5%)	\$ 16,650
11	Dental	negotiable	\$ -
12	SECA (SECA obligation)	Required (Salary + Housing x 7.65%)	\$ 3,198
13	Sabbatical Installment (church fund setting aside amounts to pay for sabbatical when it arrives years later)	negotiable	\$ -
14	Other (specify)	negotiable	\$ -
15	TOTAL BENEFITS		\$ 19,848

Minimum Terms of Call for Associate Pastors, continued:

REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES			
16	Continuing Education	Required	\$ 1,000
17	Books	negotiable	\$ -
18	Business & Professional Expenses	negotiable	\$ -
19	Travel (IRS employee rate \$.xx/mile)	Required	\$ 3,000
20	Moving Expenses	Required Actual	\$ -
21	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES		\$ 4,000
			Assoc Pastor Example
OTHER BENEFITS			
22	Vacation (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 4 weeks	4 weeks
23	Continuing Education Leave (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 2 weeks	2 weeks
24	Sabbath Leave (Structure and Length of Time--Consult Foothills Presbytery Guidelines; Consult church policy)	negotiable	3 months
25	Sick Leave (Consult church personnel policy; ex: 1 day for every month worked, up to 90 days)	negotiable	Church personnel policy
26	Parental Leave (Consult Foothills Presbytery COM; Consult church personnel policy; ex: 6-8 weeks with 100% pay, additional time to be negotiated.)	negotiable	Foothills COM recommendations
27	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY	(add line 9)	\$ 45,000
28	TOTAL BENEFITS	(add line 15)	\$ 19,848
29	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES	(add line 21)	\$ 4,000
30	deduct Value of Housing provided	(subtract line 8)	\$ -
31	TOTAL **	(sum of lines 27 + 28 + 29 - line 8)	\$ 68,848
32	*Subtract out this value when calculating line 36 since the church owns the manse.)		
33	**Do not include *Value of Housing provided in Total.		

Appendix D: Minimum Terms of Call for Certified Christian Educators

	SALARY	Foothills Presbytery Requirements	Certified Christian Educator	
1	Annual Cash Salary		\$	45,000
2	Deferred Compensation (employer contributions to 403(b)(9) plans, tax-sheltered annuity plans and equity allowances)	negotiable	\$	-
3			\$	-
4	Other		\$	-
4	Bonus (for the year in which bonus is paid)	negotiable	\$	-
6	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY (lines 1-8)		\$	45,000
	BENEFITS			
7	Medical Coverage For 2022 Employee only \$9,241, Employee & Spouse \$18,784, Employee & Children \$14,336, Employee & Family \$25,588	Required	\$	9,241
8	Pension 11%, Death and Disability 1%	Required	\$	4,275
9	Dental	negotiable	\$	-
10	FICA (FICA obligation)	Required (Salary + Housing x 7.65%)	\$	3,443
11	Other (specify)	negotiable	\$	-
12	TOTAL BENEFITS		\$	16,959
	REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES			
13	Continuing Education	Required	\$	2,000
14	Books	negotiable	\$	-
15	Business & Professional Expenses	negotiable	\$	-
16	Travel (IRS employee rate \$.xx/mile)	negotiable	\$	-
17	Moving Expenses	negotiable	\$	-
18	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES		\$	2,000

Minimum Terms of Call for Certified Christian Educators, continued:

			Certified Christian Educator	
	OTHER BENEFITS			
19	Vacation (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 4 weeks	4 weeks	
20	Continuing Education Leave (Specify # of days, including # of Sundays)	Required Minimum of 2 weeks	2 weeks	
21	Sick Leave (Consult church personnel policy; ex: 1 day for every month worked, up to 90 days)	negotiable	Church personnel policy	
22	Parental Leave (Consult Foothills Presbytery COM; Consult church personnel policy; ex: 6-8 weeks with 100% pay, additional time to be negotiated.)	negotiable	Foothills COM recommendations	
23	TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY	(add line 6)	\$ 45,000	
24	TOTAL BENEFITS	(add line 12)	\$ 16,959	
25	TOTAL REIMBURSABLE PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES	(add line 18)	\$ 2,000	
26	TOTAL **	(sum of lines 23 + 24 + 25)	\$ 63,959	

Appendix E: Validated Ministries Application Form
Foothills Presbytery
Committee on Ministry
Application for Validation of Ministry

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Telephone #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Name of Organization/Ministry: _____

Telephone #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Current Presbytery Membership: _____

Effective Start Date of Ministry: _____

Refer to **Book of Order**, G-2.0503a, Engaged in a Validated Ministry. Briefly describe how your new position reflects the criteria for Validated Ministry.

Please provide a document to describe the position you are asking to have approved as a Validated Ministry. Briefly describe the position, your sense of call to this ministry, and anything else you think is important to share about yourself/this position.

Please let us know how the Committee on Ministry and the Presbytery can support you in this ministry.

(Updated September 2021)

Appendix F: Indebtedness Policy

Persons under care or who are serving a first call and applying for financial assistance under the **PC(USA)** Seminary Debt Assistance Program shall meet the following requirements:

When Foothills is the Presbytery of Care

1. Inquirers are required to complete all financial forms included in the inquiry application and to discuss with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) their plans to minimize seminary debt.
2. Inquirers are strongly encouraged to participate in a "Fiscal Fitness" workshop being sponsored by the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA) during their Inquiry phase. If this workshop is not offered at the Inquirer's seminary, the Inquirer is eligible to apply to the CPM for financial assistance for travel and accommodations. Because this workshop is required of all Seminary Debt Assistance Program PC(USA) applicants, the CPM encourages Inquirers to attend this workshop as soon as possible to avoid delays in processing any future seminary debt assistance application the Inquirer might make. The CPM requires all candidates under care to complete a financial planning workshop prior to Final Assessment.
3. The Presbytery will encourage each potential Inquirer to seek assistance in sharing the cost of their Career and Personal Counseling Service with their home congregation. Need-based grants will be available from the Presbytery based upon the CPM's judgment.
4. On behalf of the Presbytery, the CPM will inform all Inquirers of the prospective salary that can be expected based on the current median income for the denomination reported by the Board of Pensions, and based on the minimum effective salary established by the Presbytery and will caution all Inquirers to minimize their level of indebtedness accordingly.
5. The CPM will encourage each Inquirer and Candidate to pay particular attention to incurring additional debt that would create financial stress/burden. (i.e. Explore use of available assets.)
6. The CPM will make available on an annual basis to each Candidate or Inquirer a list of possible options for pursuing grants and interest-free loans and funding that may be available through the Financial Aid for Studies Office of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Synod of the South- Atlantic, and PC(USA) seminaries.
7. The CPM will be an advocate with the congregation of which the

Candidate or Inquirer is a member and with other congregations of the presbytery as appropriate in order to generate financial support for the Candidate or Inquirer in the form of grants. The CPM shall encourage the congregation of which the Inquirer or Candidate is a member to provide financial assistance or help with indebtedness for their Inquirer/Candidate member.

When Foothills is the Presbytery of Call

1. In order to apply for financial assistance under the Seminary Debt Assistance Program, any minister 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 the Fiscal Fitness workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions or other financial planning workshop. If the minister has not attended such a workshop, he/she shall be required to do so within twelve months of start-up, the cost of registration fee, accommodation, and travel for such a workshop to be considered legitimate reimbursable expense from 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.

Appendix G: Sexual Ethics and Misconduct Policy

A new policy will be approved in early 2022.

Appendix H: Sabbath Leave Policy

Sabbath Leave for Ministers and Educators in Foothills Presbytery

Foothills Presbytery strongly recommends to churches, institutions, and agencies within its bounds that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Christian Educators be granted compensated Sabbath Leave.

Rationale

Ministers and educators perform tasks for God's people that require full and broad training in pastoral, theological, ecclesiastical, psychological and managerial skills. They are called upon to be spiritual leaders around the clock, yet the expectations placed upon them often make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to have time for their own spiritual renewal. As a result, many experiences to one degree or another symptoms of emotional fatigue, stress-related illness and burnout which adversely affect the minister's or educator's personal, family and parish life, greatly diminishing effectiveness and personal wellbeing.

Often, ministers or educators move to another call to gain a fresh start and spiritual replenishing, leading to shorter-term ministries. For too long this situation has been accepted, even tolerated, as being an inevitable part of the job. The concept of Sabbath Leave has its solution rooted in Scripture and in church tradition.

Sabbath Leave is **not**:

- An extended vacation or a substitute for a vacation. Vacations are time apart for the whole family. Sabbath Leave involves only the minister or educator.
- An extended continuing education. Continuing education is an annual time of professional development.

Sabbath Leave **is** to enrich, to gain new insights, and to serve as a "change of pace" time that can provide relaxation and renewal.

Sabbath Leave **will** enable the minister or educator to be renewed through the vital pursuit of intentional study, extended time spent in spiritual formation, and fresh mentoring by respected teachers. Sabbath Leave enables a minister or educator to return to the responsibilities of the congregation or institution or agency with new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness by renewal through rest and reflection.

"Sabbath keeping and sabbatical leave are part of a rhythm of life intended to refresh and renew all of creation so that all of creation will continue to reflect the face and will of God. Hence Sabbath keeping becomes a way of living. Ceasing, resting, embracing, and feasting is more than the weekly rhythm of work and rest. It is also the rhythm of life. Without this rhythm, the work of ministry certainly loses its joy, focus, and meaning."i (See Appendix 1 for further insights.)

Theological Background

Sabbath Leave is a period of time provided for the minister or educator to disengage from their regular tasks and from the stress of being constantly on call; ministering to the sick, troubled and dying; meeting, leading, supporting; and dealing with many other stressful situations.

- It has its antecedents in the Biblical concept of the Sabbath day and Sabbath year.
- It is a time for 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, institution, or agency to reflect on the whole nature and meaning of ministry and the place of God's people in that mission.
- Sabbath Leave with its emphasis on rest, travel, study, and reflection is different from other times away for such pursuits as advanced degree work, terminal leave, or career assessment.

Sabbath Leave is rooted in scripture with many examples in both the Old and New Testaments. (See Appendix 2.) The Holy Spirit led our Lord Jesus away into the wilderness for 40 days and nights to commune with God and prepare for ministry. Jesus took time by himself on the mountain and out in the boat. Jesus provides an example, a model for an experience whose time has come.

Foothills Presbytery strongly recommends a written covenant for Sabbath Leave between the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Christian Educator and the church, institution, or agency.

Covenant Partner (1) – Minister or Educator

Sabbath Leave is recommended for all ministers and educators serving churches, institutions, and agencies within the bounds of Foothills Presbytery. The Committee on Ministry and the Inspiration and Support Team recommend that Sabbath Leave be built into the initial call process for ministers and educators.

Covenant Partner (2) – Congregation or Institution or Agency

Sabbath Leave is recommended for all congregations, institutions, and agencies to create healthy long-term relationships with their minister or educator. This could effectively be accomplished through a change in the annual review of terms of the present call. Other benefits to the congregation, institution, or agency include:

- Recognizing the roles of persons serving in pastoral or educational ministry as spiritual leaders who need to follow biblical models of spiritual leaders, spending significant time in prayer and study for sustained faithful ministry among God's people.
- Valuing the professional development as well as personal and spiritual nurture of the minister or educator.

- Preventing burnout in the minister or educator before one's ministry faces decline after seven years of service in the same place, and calling forth renewed commitment from the congregation, institution, or agency as partners in ministry.
- Caring for the minister or educator as a partner in ministry allowing for self-care from overextending and opening to new ways of leading and challenging God's people.
- Exhibiting a healthy balance between the minister's or educator's leadership and lay leadership promoting congregational, institutional, or agency self-sufficiency for several months at a time. ii

Congregations, institutions, and agencies are to review and covenant in practice with their minister or educator one of the Sabbath Leave models suggested by Foothills Presbytery. (See Appendix 3.)

Minister or Educator Responsibilities

1. Conversation with Session or Board at least two years prior to Sabbath Leave should lead to bringing a written Sabbath Leave proposal before the Session or Board - at least in outline form - a minimum of twelve (12) months before the intended commencement of the Sabbath Leave.
2. Secure the approval of the Session or Board for the Sabbath Leave proposal and work out the necessary coverage of pastoral, pulpit, educational, and administrative responsibilities through the development of a written covenant.
3. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the Session or Board before departing on Sabbath Leave.
4. Before the Sabbath Leave, and working with the Session or Board, inform the congregation, institution, or agency about the leave period. This should include an explanation of the Sabbath Leave Rationale and Theological Background as well as the proposed plans for the leave period. Particular attention to the needs of the minister's or educator's family should be mentioned as they continue to be involved in the life of the church. The benefits of the leave for the minister or educator and the calling body will depend on the communication and cooperation of all.
5. Submit to the Inspiration and Support Team in writing the Sabbath Leave covenant and timetable outlining plans.
6. Fulfill the Sabbath Leave plans as developed in the written covenant, maintaining a healthy distance from pastoral, educational, and administrative responsibilities in the church, institution, or agency.
7. Upon re-entry, present a written report to the Session or Board sharing the details of the Sabbath Leave as well as reflections on its value and benefit and on its challenges or concerns. This report includes the benefits of the leave

period but is not intended to be a justification for the leave or evidence of intense productivity by the minister or educator. The re-entry process provides a great opportunity to reflect upon the benefits and challenges that resulted from the Sabbath Leave. Such expected benefits may include:

- Discovering the strength of lay leadership heretofore under-utilized.
- New understandings of the concept of mission as shared mission between the minister or educator and congregation, institution, or agency.
- Reaffirmation of call to ministry on part of the minister or educator as well as the congregation, institution, or agency with both covenant partners being reinvigorated and rededicated to the work of Christ's mission in the world.
- Challenges that may arise include:
 - Disassociation from the church or agency for an extended period.
 - Unhappiness, resentment or frustration expressed by church members or co-workers.
- Send the Sabbath Leave written report to the Committee on Ministry and the Inspiration and Support Team immediately following the Session or Board meeting when it is presented.

Session or Board Responsibilities

1. Begin conversation with minister or educator at least two years prior to Sabbath Leave.
2. Receive "for approval" the minister's or educator's written proposal for a Sabbath Leave, at least twelve (12) months in advance of the intended commencement of the leave.
3. Present Sabbath Leave to the congregation for approval.
4. Consult with the minister or educator and determine all pending responsibilities to be up to date prior to the Sabbath Leave.
5. Verify the coverage of pastoral, pulpit, educational, and administrative responsibilities during the Sabbath Leave through the development of a written covenant.
6. Communicate to the congregation, institution, or agency the importance and values to the church of a Sabbath Leave; what it is, how long it will last, who will fulfill the regular responsibilities in the minister's or educator's absence, etc. Interpret the need for sensitivity to the minister's or educator's family and their continued participation in the life of the church. The ideal perspective is that the congregation, institution, or agency would understand the period of the Sabbath Leave as a time for reflection and renewal for themselves as well as for the minister or educator.
7. Utilize symbols and rituals to signify the beginning of the Sabbath Leave. These may take place during worship to hold the minister or educator in prayer during this time of renewal and reflection. iii
8. Continue terms of call commitments to the minister or educator during Sabbath Leave.

9. Fulfill the Sabbath Leave plans as developed in the written covenant, maintaining a healthy distance from the minister or educator during this time.
10. Fulfill any covenants or contracts made with substitute personnel during the Sabbath Leave.
11. Following re-entry, all partners in the relationship might approach their common calling with new excitement and enthusiasm. Celebrating the reunited ministry of the minister or educator with the congregation, institution, or agency provides a time of re-acquainting with one another.
12. Request a written report of the Sabbath Leave from the minister or educator upon return.
13. Reflect upon the Sabbath Leave, noting benefits and challenges arising from the experience, and communicate their conclusions to the Inspiration and Support Team.

Inspiration and Support Team Responsibilities

1. Promote congregational, institutional, or agency health by interpreting the Rationale and Theological Background of Sabbath Leave.
2. Consult with Sessions or Boards and their minister or educator to provide guidance and serve as a resource in planning the Sabbath Leave.
3. Receive and review the Sabbath Leave written covenant and timetable outlining plans as submitted by the minister or educator after Session's or Board's approval.
4. Inform the Committee on Ministry about those ministers or educators who are planning to participate in a Sabbath Leave.
5. Receive the Sabbath Leave written report from the minister or educator after it has been presented to Session or Board upon re-entry to ministry.
6. Receive any communications on the Sabbath Leave shared by Sessions or Boards.
7. Maintain a list of ministers or educators within the presbytery who are willing to serve in limited roles for one another during Sabbath Leave.
8. Seek funds and resources to assist ministers or educators with Sabbath Leave.
9. Develop criteria for application of funds and resources for Sabbath Leave.

Committee on Ministry Responsibilities

1. Receive for approval the terms of call or changes in the terms of call including Sabbath Leave.
2. Determine and approve who will moderate the Session in a minister's absence.
3. Serve as a mediator in any concerns of the Session, Board, minister, or educator relative to the Sabbath Leave.
4. Receive the Sabbath Leave written report from the minister or educator after it has been presented to Session or Board upon re-entry to ministry.

Stewardship Implications

Ministers, educators, churches, institutions, and agencies are encouraged to prepare in advance by setting aside funds each year so that resources will be available during the time of Sabbath Leave. The minister or educator will continue to receive full salary and benefits during the Sabbath Leave. While calling bodies may choose to receive a "love offering" to assist the minister or educator with the expenses of travel and study, ordinarily these expenses of the Sabbath Leave will be assumed by the minister or educator.

Churches, institutions, and agencies should take into account that they may also incur expenses for substitute pastoral, pulpit, educational, and administrative supply staff and possibly other matters during the Sabbath Leave. In addition, churches who are unable to secure lay leadership within their own congregation might consider using Commissioned Lay Pastors, associate pastors, or seminary students who might be willing to preach or teach one Sunday. Churches that have difficulty in providing for the Sabbath Leave may consult with Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry or the Inspiration and Support Team for ideas on creatively addressing leadership needs.

Suggestions for Transitional Leadership During Sabbath Leave

In churches served by one pastor, and especially for smaller churches, the following are some ideas for how to fill the leadership needs of the church during the three-month period that the minister/educator is on Sabbath Leave:

- a) Be sure that the Sabbath Leave is planned at least a year in advance so that the leadership needs can be planned appropriately.
- b) Many retired ministers live within the bounds of our Presbytery. The Committee on Ministry and/or Presbytery staff can provide names of these persons who live nearby. Finding such a retired person who could work part-time in the minister's absence, i.e., preaching on Sundays and visiting the sick and moderating the Session meetings is a natural way to be the church. The Session and retired minister negotiate an appropriate honorarium for these services.
- c) Several retired educators live within the bounds of our Presbytery. The Committee on Ministry and/or Presbytery staff can provide names of these persons who live nearby. Finding such a retired person who could work part-time in the educator's absence, i.e., teaching on Sundays and coordinating programs is a natural way to be the church. The Session and retired educator negotiate an appropriate honorarium for these services.
- d) The Session might consider asking Elders to take extra leadership responsibility to fulfill the various administrative and ministerial tasks of the minister or educator, including rotating the preaching and teaching.
- e) The Session is encouraged to consider inviting Presbytery staff, other denominational officials, seminary faculty and leaders in church agencies and institutions to preach and teach. The Sabbath Leave can be a time in which the particular congregation becomes better acquainted with the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly and their various missions.

- f) Our denomination now has trained Transitional pastors. Generally churches that are seeking a full-time pastor use the services of these specialists for an extended period of time. Sometimes Transitional pastors might be available to serve during a Sabbath Leave. Most often the Presbytery staff is aware of Transitional pastors and their availability.

Special Considerations

In addition, congregations, institutions, and agencies with multiple ministers or educators on staff may limit Sabbath Leave to one staff person within twenty-four (24) months.

Where married couples serve in ministry to the same congregation, institution, or agency, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the calling body. However, in such situations the maintenance of faithful ministry by all participants should be the primary concern. Incumbent upon the congregation, institution, or agency and the married couple serving in ministry is the attention to detail of responsibilities.

Sabbath Leave Policy Appendix 1

“In her book, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, Marva Dawn describes this way of living first of all as ceasing. *‘We cease not only from work itself, but also from the need to accomplish and be productive, from the worry and tension that accompany our modern criterion of efficiency, from our efforts to be in control of our lives as if we were God, from our possessiveness and our enculturation, and finally, from the humdrum and meaninglessness that result when life is pursued without the Lord at the center of it all.’*

But, Dawn goes on to say, true Sabbath keeping also involves embracing. *‘Sabbath keeping is not just negative ceasing. We choose to embrace time instead of space, and giving instead of requiring. In response to the grace of God we gladly embrace our calling in life, and in the fullness of healing brought by our relationship with God we can embrace the wholeness of God’s shalom. All these Sabbath gifts set us free to embrace the world. These elements of God’s kingdom and his purposes move us beyond the repentance of ceasing and the faith of resting into the application of the Christian lifestyle.’*

Finally Sabbath keeping comes round to feasting. *‘After the ceasing, the resting, and the embracing comes the feasting. Observing the Sabbath includes not only the freedom from, and repentance for, work and worry (ceasing), the renewing of our whole being in grace-based faith (resting), and the intentionality of our choosing and valuing (embracing), but also the fun and festivity of the weekly eschatological party. I use the word eschatological to emphasize our experience of both present joy in our feasting and anticipation of the future, eternal consummation of joy.’”^{iv}*

Sabbath Leave Policy Appendix 2

Sabbath is a concept rooted in scripture which relates to rest from labors for God (Gen 2.3), humans and animals (Ex 34.21), and the land (Ex 23.10-11). Sabbath is also about true worship of God (Isa 58.13-14) as well as God’s love for humanity (Mk 2.27-28). Sabbath in its final sense relates to enjoying God forever (Heb 4.9). In scripture Sabbath is modeled on a series of interrelated times of rest—days, years, and cycles of years. Resting from labors begins in the act of creation when God rested on the seventh day. Again in Exodus 20:10-11 the fourth commandment calls all people to “remember” and “keep holy” the Sabbath. Exodus 23 and Leviticus 25 speak of Sabbath days and years and Sabbath land years when the ground is untilled so that it can be naturally replenished. Sabbath is a time to refill and replenish the soul, to be refreshed in the Spirit with renewed dedication and vision, restored in physical health and energy all of which potentially can bring great benefits in renewed and more fulfilling and productive ministry that glorifies God.

The Hebrew calendar included a Sabbatical Year, sometimes called "the dropping year" or "the year of Sabbatical Desistence." It occurred every seventh year. God spoke to

Moses on Mt. Sinai and directed its establishment. (Ex. 23.10 - 11; Lev. 25.1-7, 20-22; Deut. 15.1-6) The primary purpose was to let the field lie fallow. The Hebrews believed that the land belonged to God, and since it was in constant use during the previous six years, required a year of rest. "The sabbatical year began in the seventh month, and the whole law was then read during the feast of tabernacles; so that holy occupation, not apathetic rest, characterized it, as in the case of the Sabbath day. At the completion of the week of sabbatical years the jubilee crowned the whole. Canaan's conquest took seven years, the allotment of land seven more; then began the law of the sabbatical year."v At one point it included the cancellation of all debts, but after rebuilding of the temple, lending money on interest was forbidden. "...the Sabbatical year bore to the other years precisely the same relationship as the Sabbath bore to the other days."vi It was a time of rest and renewal for the fields.

Scripture abounds with illustrations of God's leaders spending significant time in solitude and reflection in preparation for God's service and continuation of ministry. Moses spent 40 days on Mt. Sinai (Ex 24.18). Elijah stood apart at the cave and listened to God (I Kings 19.13) Esther fasted three days to prepare for her calling to a "time such as this" (Esther 4.14-16). Elizabeth remained in seclusion during part of her pregnancy (Luke 1.24). Mary remained with Elizabeth for three months when she was expectant with the Christ child (Luke 1.56). John the Baptist received the word of God in the wilderness (Luke 3.2). At the Spirit's direction Paul spent days dwelling with various disciples prior to one of his beatings and his imprisonment (Acts 21.4-11). Jesus constantly sought relief from the crowds that followed him by going to the wilderness, a mountain, or by the sea (Matt 4.1, 5.1, 13.1, 13.53, 14.13, 15.29). Jesus called Peter, James and John with him to the mountain for the transfiguration (Matt 17. 1f, Mk 9.2f, Lk 9.28). Jesus took time away for prayer (Jn 18.1f)

Sabbath Leave Policy Appendix 3

Traditional Sabbath Leave Model

- A minister/educator who has served in their present call for six (6) continuous years receive a Sabbath Leave of three (3) months.
- The Sabbath Leave would ordinarily come during the seventh year of ministry in one place.
- Sabbath Leave with full pay would not ordinarily exceed three months.
- Accrued vacation time and annual continuing education may be attached to the Sabbatical Leave.
- Individual churches, institutions, or agencies and the minister or educator could negotiate for a longer period depending upon the nature of the Sabbath Leave experience.
- Additional time without pay could be approved provided the total time away does not exceed four months.

- Upon completion of the Sabbath Leave, the incumbent minister or educator would normally continue serving the same call for a period of at least four times the length of the Sabbath Leave plus accrued vacation time.
- A minister or educator who contemplates seeking another call within the next 12 months should not participate in a Sabbath Leave.

Gradual Sabbath Leave Model

- A minister/educator receives gradual Sabbath Leave after four (4) to twelve (12) years of continuous service of ministry in one place.
- After four (4) years, the minister/educator receives one (1) month of Sabbath Leave.
- After eight (8) years of service, the minister/educator receives two (2) months of Sabbath Leave.
- After twelve (12) years of service, the minister/educator receives three (3) months of Sabbath Leave.
- The Sabbath Leave would ordinarily come during the fifth, ninth, and thirteenth years of ministry in one place.
- Accrued vacation time and annual continuing education may be attached to the Sabbatical Leave. Individual churches, institutions, and agencies and the minister or educator could negotiate for a longer period depending upon the nature of the Sabbath Leave experience.
- Sabbath Leave with full pay would not ordinarily exceed three months.
- Additional time without pay could be approved provided the total time away does not exceed four months.
- Upon completion of the Sabbath Leave, the incumbent minister or educator would normally continue serving the same call for a period of at least four times the length of the Sabbath Leave plus accrued vacation time.
- A minister or educator who contemplates seeking another call within the next 12 months should not participate in a Sabbath Leave.

Sabbath Leave Policy Appendix 4

Internet Resources

A comprehensive list of websites related to Sabbath Leave is listed in the back of *Clergy Renewal The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning*. Below are two of note.

- The Louisville Institute, a Lilly Endowment Program housed at Louisville Seminary, provides study grants for pastoral leaders. Contact Rev. David J. Wood at 1044 Alta Vista Rd., Louisville, KY 40205-1798. Their email address is info@louisville-institute.org.
- Consult Alban's Congregational Resource Guide at www.alban.org for more resources and retreat ideas.

The bibliography in *Clergy Renewal The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning* has a number of other resources listed which are excellent sources for additional information and guidance for Sabbath Leave planning.

Resources

(See Foothills Presbytery Resource Center Bibliography on Sabbath)

NOTES

- i A. Richard Bullock and Richard J. Bruesehoff, *Clergy Renewal - The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2000): pp. 3-4.
- ii Roy M. Oswald, *Why You Should Give Your Pastor a Sabbatical* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2001). Concepts on benefits for the congregation are summarized from the VHS and accompanying Leader Guide.
- iii Use of prayers, candles, or other symbols of staying connected to the minister or educator during the Sabbath Leave mark the power of God's sustaining presence through the Holy Spirit. Multiple resources for sending and returning liturgies are available from the Presbytery Resource Center.
- iv A. Richard Bullock and Richard J. Bruesehoff, *Clergy Renewal - The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2000): pp. 3-4.
- v "Faussett's Bible Dictionary" from *Bibleworks 6*. Dictionary, circa 1888. Electronic edition held by International Bible Translators, Inc., 1998. *Bibleworks* was programmed by Michael S. Bushell and Michale D. Tan, 1993-2003.
- vi (International Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 4, page 142).