

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY HANDBOOK

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1. **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY: LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION**

- A. **Chair.** The Committee on Ministry (COM) Chair is elected annually by the Presbytery (PGR) for a three-year term and may serve up to six consecutive years. The Chair is a full member of the COM, and, as such, is entitled to vote at committee meetings. The Chair has the following duties and responsibilities:
1. Have the COM elect a Vice-Chair at the first meeting of the calendar year
 2. Consult with the EP in the development of lists of candidates for a designated pastor position, or designate a member of the COM to consult and act for the COM, when required, for a timely submission of the list.
 3. Present the COM report at meetings of the PGR.
 4. Call special meetings of the COM and cancel regular meetings when necessary.
 5. Prepare the docket for COM meetings.
 6. Determine the proper disposition of business arising between the COM meeting and the PGR meeting.
 7. Serve as a member of the PGR Council.
 8. Develop the preliminary budget for the COM, in consultation with appropriate section chairs
 9. Along with the chairs, the COM chair will jointly track the COM expenses and present additional funding requests to the Council.
 10. Develop a working relationship with the EP, the PGR office and the Stated Clerk regarding the handling of correspondence, files, reports, and records relating to all aspects of the business of the COM.
 11. Consult with the Stated Clerk about official correspondence of the COM.
 12. Receive resignations of COM members and ensure that the EP, Stated Clerk and Chair of the Nominating Committee of PGR are informed.
 13. Approve Church Information Forms online for churches seeking pastors.
 14. Serve as a reference for pastors in the PGR seeking other calls.
- B. **COM Vice Chair.** The COM Vice Chair acts for the Chair in the absence of the Chair, but only in those matters that, in the opinion of the Vice Chair, cannot wait for the action of the Chair. The Vice Chair does not automatically succeed the Chair if the Chair is no longer a member of the committee, but acts for the Chair until a new Chair is elected by the PGR.
- C. **Stated Clerk.** The Stated Clerk Serves as the Clerk of the Committee.
1. Keep the roll of each meeting, and contact members who have a number of unexcused absences.
 2. Send official correspondence of the COM at the direction of the chair.
 3. Maintain confidentiality of COM minutes and records.

4. Be responsible for the records of the COM. These records include the following permanent files:
 - a. Ministers' files (to be kept during pastor's ministry in PGR and those marked with an * should be kept after the minister leaves PGR. If there is a problem, all files should be kept.):
 - Most recent five-part GA form. (Minister on Role of Presbytery)*
 - Ordination form and worship bulletin, if ordained in PGR.
 - Installation form and worship bulletin.
 - Dismissal form from dismissing presbytery.
 - Call form or agreement (with copy in church file).*
 - Reference check form.
 - Report of COM examination/interview.
 - Receipt of Dismissal/Transfer by dismissing presbytery.
 - Any correspondence from dismissing presbytery.
 - Most recent PIF.
 - Dissolution form when a pastor leaves a church (with copy in church file).
 - Any correspondence regarding dissolution and new call.
 - Dismissal form and receipt from another presbytery when the pastor leaves.*
 - Signed misconduct form.
 - Any correspondence regarding the pastor's ministry or misconduct.*
 - Reports on Triennial Visits (with copy in church file).
 - Report on the six-month review of a new pastor (with copy in church file).
 - Exit Interview with pastor and session (with copy in church file).
 - b. Commissioned Lay Pastors' files:
 - Agreement form for type of service.
 - Reference check form.
 - Report of COM examination/interview.
 - Most recent resume.
 - Signed misconduct form.
 - Annual reports of mentors/supervisors.
 - Any correspondence regarding the lay pastor's ministry or misconduct.
 - Exit Interviews with CLP and session (with copy in church file).
 - c. Churches' files:
 - Most recent CIF.
 - GA computer information input form.
 - Reports noted as required in minister and lay pastor files.
 - COM reports on the church.
 - Most recent bylaws.
 - Administrative Commission reports.
- D. Executive Presbyter. The Executive Presbyter (EP) is an ex-officio member and provides staff support to COM. The following responsibilities are assigned to the EP:
 1. Receive the preliminary budget from COM and, jointly with the COM Chair, track expenses. Jointly assist the COM Chair in presenting additional funding needs to the Council.
 2. Consult with the COM Chair to assist pastors with Shared Grants from the Board of Pensions and other concerns.

- ***shared grant application approval by PGR should follow thorough review of all receipts, invoices, statements of benefits, etc. by PGR representative for verification of eligibility;***
 - ***Synod approval of shared grant funding should only follow, and be contingent upon, BOP approval;***
 - ***Shared grant requests by staff should be endorsed by the Personnel Committee prior to submission to Committee on Ministry.***
3. Cooperate with Liaisons to each church seeking a pastor in all aspects of the search process.
 4. Consult with Liaisons as needed regarding any part of the search process.
 5. Maintain and provide a list of appropriate interim pastors.
 6. Consult with COM regarding the selection of Interim Pastors, Stated Supply, Temporary Supply, and Commissioned Lay Pastors.
 7. Develop a working relationship with the COM Chair in all aspects of their joint and several responsibilities.
 8. Consult with the COM chair or his/her designee in the development of lists of candidates for a designated pastor position.

E. Reports of the Committee

1. The COM will report the following items regularly:
 - All recommendations to presbytery.
 - All actions taken on behalf of the presbytery, except when not reporting such actions is authorized by presbytery to preserve confidentiality.
 - All information which the Chair determines not to be confidential and of sufficient substance to merit reporting.
2. The COM will report the following items annually:
 - Clergy who are working in validated ministries inside/outside the bounds of PGR and who are members of PGR by category with recommendations for any required PGR action in accordance with BOO G 11.0403.
 - Pastoral compensation, with recommendations that PGR approve (or otherwise act upon) changes in terms of call. To be presented in the PGR papers in summary form with detailed data to be available to those wanting it.

2. COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

- A. Installed Pastors. The Guide for Churches Seeking Pastors Appendix A, online at www.greatriverspby.org contains a detailed list of the procedures for calling pastors. The following is a list of actions required by COM and presbyteries:
- B. Pastors, Associate Pastors, Co-Pastors
1. The COM chair, upon being informed that a pastoral relationship is to be dissolved or that a church will seek a pastor, will:
 - Add the name of the congregation to the list of churches seeking a pastor on each COM agenda.
 - Send to the Clerk of Session a copy of Guide for Churches Seeking Pastors Appendix A (www.greatriverspby.org).
 - Send the departing pastor Statement of Ethics, found in the *Guide for Churches Seeking Pastors Appendix A* (www.greatriverspby.org) to be read from the pulpit at the congregational meeting.
 - Assign a COM member to the church.
 2. The COM will:
 - Review the status of the church at each meeting.
 - Appoint a moderator of the session, consulting when possible with the session and/or its clerk prior to appointing the moderator.
 - Approve decision for pastoral leadership.
 - Ensure the pastor, as head of staff, is advised and consulted throughout the selections process of an associate pastor.
 - Approve the pastor's job description.
 3. The COM has the authority to act on behalf of PGR to:
 - Approve the dissolution of pastoral relationship.
 - Approve the call of a pastor, with its effective date thus completing the three part agreement between congregation, minister and PGR.
 - Approve terms of call.
 - Approve transfer of membership to the PGR.
 - Approve installation (ordination) administrative commission. (PGR office will send a Manual of Operations which includes the handbook for the installation/ordination service, or it is available at www.greatriverspby.org, see the *Handbook for an Administrative Commission and Church for the Installation and/or Ordination of a Called Pastor Appendix C*.)
 - Authorize specific elders in specific circumstances to administer the Lord's Supper in accordance with BOO G-11.0103z.
 - Receive and dismiss members in good standing.
- C. Ministers of Other Denominations. See BOO G-11.0404 a-f. COM, in consultation with CPM, may make a recommendation about accepting a minister of other denominations to the PGR Assembly.
- D. Ministers of Denominations in Correspondence. See BOO G-11.0405 a-b.
- E. Designated Pastors. See BOO G-14.0520
1. Upon PGR's approval of the establishment of designated pastor position:
 - The EP and the chair of COM or their designee will review PIFs to recommend candidates.

- COM approves list of candidates prior to presentation to congregation.
 - COM chair acts on behalf of COM in approving or amending list of candidates when necessary to accomplish a timely presentation to the congregation.
2. Such calls should be in accordance with requirements in BOO G-14.0501.
 3. An annual review should be done in consultation with COM.
 4. A review can lead to:
 - Recommendation to congregation to nominate designated pastor to be pastor.
 - Decision to allow contract to expire, made at least a full year before the contract expires.
- F. Temporary Pastoral Positions.
1. Stated Supply: See BOO G-14.0550.
 - COM will appoint stated supplies in consultation with the session for no more than one year.
 - COM will review the effectiveness of the stated supply before they are reappointed.
 2. Interim Pastors & Interim Associate Pastors: See BOO g-14.0550.
 - An Interim Pastor is used in PGR more specifically than in BOO to designate those pastors who have received training and have experience in handling the issues a church faces in the transition from one installed pastor to another.
 - COM will work with session in deciding to seek and in finding an interim.
 - COM approves invitation of session to a minister to be interim pastor, interim associate pastor, or interim co-pastor.
 - COM will ensure the PGR's guidelines for compensation are honored, recognizing that the interim period is not a time to cut back on clergy support. (See *Appendix B, Handbook on Compensation*, at (www.greatriverspby.org)). The compensation will be commensurate with the pastor's experience while keeping in mind the terms of call of the pastor whom he/she succeeds. COM will:
 - Help session clarify what moving expenses (if any) will be covered at the beginning and ending of the interim period; moving expenses are not mandated.
 - Ensure that the contract provides for a severance package if the contract is terminated before it expires. (See *Contract for Interim Ministry, Appendix B, Compensation Handbook*.)
 - Mileage for the interim pastor's commute may be reimbursed or the interim may claim unreimbursed mileage as an income tax deduction. The church may set a limit on the reimbursement in the contract.
 3. Temporary Supply: See BOO G-14.0550. Usually this term will be used in regards to pastors without interim experience and/or training as well as CLPs and in emergency cases, elders.
 4. Ministers of Other Christian Denominations: See BOO G-14.00405c.
 5. Positions Which Could Be Clergy or Lay persons:
 - COM has the same responsibilities and authority as in calling pastors except it must agree to establish the position of associate pastor if a clergy is called, but it will not move to establish it until it is determined whether the position will be filled by a clergy or layperson.

- COM has same responsibilities and authority if a church seeking to fill a professional lay position is willing to consider a clergy and is willing to change the position to make it a clergy position. COM agrees to establish the position, but it will not move to establish it until a clergy or a layperson fills the position.
- COM is responsible for ensuring that a church, which has sought a layperson for a position and therefore did not establish a PNC, establishes a PNC and conducts an open search if it wishes to select a clergy.

6. Commissioned Lay Pastors. The use of lay pastors in our presbytery reflects the priority of providing quality pastoral leadership to congregations who do not have a full-time ordained pastor and in chaplaincy situations, while also being good stewards of the human resources, both trained lay pastors and elders, within our congregations.
 - The Commissioned Lay Pastor program is under the direction of the COM.
 - COM is designated with the authority to commission lay pastors, and to authorize them to perform functions as found in BOO G-14.0562.

G. Special Pastoral Positions

1. Validated Ministries are of two types:
 - Parish Ministry consists of pastors, co-pastors, associate pastors, designated pastors, stated supplies, temporary supplies, interim pastors, or interim associates as provided in BOO G-11.0409, BOO G-6.0202 and BOO G-14.0550.
 - Non-Parish Ministry includes other service to the PC(USA) (See BOO G-11.0410) and service beyond the jurisdiction of the PC(USA) (See BOO G-11.6.0600, G-6.0203, and the PGR's COM Specialized Clergy policy).
 - COM grants approval of validated ministry in service beyond the church for: educator, chaplain, pastoral counselor, campus minister, missionary, partner in mission, evangelist, administrator, social worker, and consultant. Others may be granted according to guidelines in BOO G-11.0403.
2. Honorably Retired. COM designates an active minister as honorably retired according to stipulations in BOO G-11.0412. COM will provide for recognition of pastors becoming honorably retired.
3. Military Chaplains. COM reviews requests for endorsement of anyone desiring to enter the military chaplaincy.
4. Parish Associate. COM upon nomination by the pastor and approval of the session and the pastor is responsible by following guidelines in BOO G-14.0570 for approving all such relationships.
5. Pastor Emeritus. COM consults with a congregation concerning the wisdom of the relationship. The congregations' election of a pastor emeritus or emeriti is subject to the approval of PGR. (See GOO G-14.0620).
6. Member-at-large. COM makes recommendations to PGR to confer status of member-at-large, and annually reviews the status of a member at large. (See BOO G-11.0406b, G-11.0413).
7. Inactive Member. (G-11.0406c, G-11.0413) COM designates as inactive any member who does not qualify under any other categories or one who is now voluntarily engaged in an occupation that does not comply with all criteria in BOO G-11.0403. (See also BOO G-11.0406c, G-11.0413)

8. Presbytery Staff.
 - COM ensures that for clergy positions PGR follows procedures as for pastor positions but the PGR elects a Search Committee with the Synod of Lincoln Trails as support.
 - COM relates to the PGR Search Committee just as any other except the final recommendation will be a joint one of COM and the Search Committee.
 - COM ensures that for program staff positions, which could be filled by either clergy or laypersons, the PGR elects a Search Committee and completes an open search for a clergy as well as a lay person.

3. MINISTERS' STUDY LEAVE

- A. Ministers and CLP's. Ministers and commissioned lay pastors (CLPs) shall continue their education through regular study leaves included annually in their employment contract.
 1. Eligibility. Any minister or CLP serving a church in any capacity, or serving the PGR, shall be eligible.
 2. Implementation. All calls or contracts with an ordained minister or CLP must include study leave. The only exception is if the minister or lay pastor requests an exemption that must be approved by COM.
 3. Accumulation of Leave. In addition to vacation, a minister or CLP shall be eligible for two weeks of study leave each year after one full year of service. No more than six (6) weeks of leave may be accumulated except by mutual agreement of the local governing body and minister or lay pastor. Accumulated study leave shall not be made part of a termination of relationship agreement.
 4. Financial Arrangements. The church or governing body shall assume any costs of Pulpit Supply and continue the minister's or CLP's salary while he/she is on study leave. Churches and governing bodies are encouraged to assume part or all of the study leave costs.
 5. Use of Study Leave
 - Study leave must be used for professional development. The course should be approved by the session or local governing board and shall be used to guide the individual for specific needs of the congregation or him/herself.
 - An evaluation of the study leave will be presented to the session or local governing body by the minister or CLP at the conclusion of the study.
 6. Continuing Education Grants. The PGR has a grant fund used to share the costs of approved programs of professional development with the minister and the participating church. See *Appendix B, Compensation Handbook*, policy and form on line at www.greatriverspby.org.
 - ***Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Lay Pastors may apply for Continuing Education Grants of up to \$500 in one year, but may only receive \$500 every three years.***
 - ***Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree may request a total of \$500 over the course of their entire degree program, but may not receive more than \$250 in a calendar year.***
 - ***Grants are designed to help ministers and lay pastors continue their education in ways that will support their ministry in their current contexts and are designed to assist those who are in the greatest financial need of grants.***
 - ***Continuing Education Grants are a way for the Presbytery of Great Rivers to partner with churches, ministers, and lay pastors in ministry. Those who receive grants can partner with the presbytery to share their knowledge. Those receiving grants shall share their education experience in some way. This***

could be done by giving a brief presentation at an assembly meeting, writing a brief article for the Good News Newsletter, leading a seminar, or in some other creative way.

7. COM recommends that calls address a sabbatical leave. Churches are encouraged to provide for sabbatical leave for a pastor, in the terms of call or a policy statement of the session/congregation (which may be incorporated into the terms of call by reference). A congregation may want to include these provisions:
 - Eligibility. This usually requires five to seven years of service with the church prior to the sabbatical leave and one year of service after completion.
 - Purpose. Sabbatical leave should focus on a particular program of study or growth that cannot be accomplished in normal study leave. Purposes might be work toward an advanced degree, a research project, theological enhancement, spiritual or personal growth, or participation in a mission program.
 - Procedures. A proposed plan should be approved in advance by the session. This proposal should require COM consultation about development of the proposal, that the sabbatical takes the minister away from the home church, that a report be submitted to the session and PGR, and that the knowledge gained will be shared with the church and/or colleagues.
 - Replacement. The session may replace the pastor on sabbatical with a temporary supply or any other appropriate arrangement. Such arrangement, and the financing thereof, must be a part of the sabbatical proposal.
 - Service. The pastor will remain on the field for one year after a sabbatical leave is completed.

- B. Ministers applying directly to a PNC. A PNC receiving PIFs directly from a potential candidate that they are pursuing should provide a copy to the PGR Office.

- C. Ministers of another denomination seeking to join the PGR. The COM shall recommend to the PGR appropriate action on the application of any minister of another denomination in accordance with BOO G-11-0404. The COM will consult with the CPM in regard to the educational qualifications of the minister, and the recommendation of CPM will be submitted to the PGR along with that of the COM. The usual procedures will be:
 1. The minister makes initial contact with the COM, usually in one of these circumstances:
 - The minister is selected by a PNC within the PGR to be called.
 - The minister is a pastor of a church which seeks to become part of the PGR.
 - The minister seeks to join the PGR on the basis of a validated non-parish ministry. In this case the first action of the COM will be to determine if the ministry is valid.
 2. The COM consults with CPM regarding the educational qualifications of the minister. If there is need for additional education, COM and the CPM will jointly approve an educational program.
 3. When the minister is ready to be presented to the PGR for examination and membership, the Examinations Committee will make a recommendation to the PGR.
 4. If the minister is without a call but seeks the permission of the PGR to circulate a personal information form with the PC(USA), the COM will consult with the CPM regarding the minister's educational qualifications. If or when educational qualifications and other criteria for membership in the PGR are deemed satisfactory, the COM may authorize circulation of PIFs.

- D. Pulpit Supply List. The PGR office will maintain a pulpit supply list of persons available to preach in the churches of the PGR, including Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Elders (BOO G 11.0502f). Persons may be added to or removed from the list by action of the COM. Payment guidelines are provided in *Appendix B, Compensation Handbook* at www.greatriverspby.org.

4. **COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR PROGRAM**

The Commissioned Lay Pastor program is under the direction of the COM. The use of lay pastors in the PGR reflects the priority of providing quality pastoral leadership to congregations who do not have full-time ordained pastors and in chaplaincy situations, while also being good stewards of the human resources, both trained lay pastors and elders, within our congregations. *Guidelines for Compensation for CLPs may be found at www.greatriverspby.org, Appendix B, Compensation Handbook.*

A. Responsibilities:

1. Perform all duties and responsibilities in G-14.0801 regarding CLPs.
 2. Recruit potential Lay Pastor students.
 3. Train Lay Pastor students, including approving training conducted by agencies other than the PGR.
 4. Assess students prior to admission, during training and following training in the CLP program.
 5. Provide mentors for all Lay Pastor students, and a mentor/moderator for all CLPs.
 6. Review and respond to all CLP contracts.
 7. Bring requests for commissioning services of CLPs to particular churches to the COM.
 8. Match CLPs with prospective churches, in consultation with COM.
 9. Make recommendations to the COM regarding placing on the pulpit supply list the names of those trained or being trained as Lay Pastors.
 10. Provide at least one continuing education event per year.
 11. Recommend to COM when ministries should be validated for CLPs outside of congregational ministries.
- B. Process all Commissioning and Decommissioning details and paperwork, including the Professional Conduct Form and statement of ethics.
- C. If a congregation's request for a CLP is approved the COM shall:
1. Assist the congregation to understand the role of the CLP and the process the applicant must follow.
 2. Assist the session to develop a relationship with a CLP, including the negotiating of a contract between the CLP and the particular church.
- D. The agreement between a CLP and a particular church must include:
1. The responsibilities of the CLP for the particular church, including specific functions that are to be authorized by the COM on behalf of the PGR.

2. Hours involved (including travel), financial remuneration, the church's liability for Social Security payments, and other arrangements so that a clear understanding of mutual responsibilities results.
- E. Serving a Church. A CLP may serve a particular church for a period of up to three years at a time, although the responsibilities and the performance of the CLP, as defined in the agreement with the church, will be reviewed annually in a meeting attended by members of the COM, the session and the CLP, and reported to the PGR by the COM.
- F. The specific responsibilities included in the agreement between a CLP and a particular church, are restricted and are to be exercised:
 1. Only in that congregation.
 2. Under the supervision of the moderator of session.
 3. Under the guidance of a mentor appointed by the COM.
- G. The Book of Order permitted functions for a CLP now include:
 1. To celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
 2. To administer the Sacrament of Baptism.
 3. To moderate the session under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the session appointed by PGR.
 4. To have a voice and vote in meetings of PGR.
 5. To perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.
- H. These expanded functions do not permit that a CLP may moderate a congregational meeting. That function belongs to the moderator of the session appointed by or on behalf of PGR.
- I. Since the new regulations are consistent with the concept of a CLP normally being appointed to serve as temporary supply to a particular vacant congregation, the COM will approve only those functions necessary to a particular church and according to the gifts of a particular CLP.

5. **COMPENSATION, PENSIONS AND BENEFITS**

- A. The COM will review the terms of call submitted on the form Presbytery of Great Rivers: Changes in Terms of Call (see *Appendix B, Compensation Handbook, Prompt Instructions*, online at www.greatriverspby.org), of all calls to be approved by the PGR to determine whether they conform to the minimum terms of call of the PGR. Based on the review, the sub-committee makes a recommendation to the COM as to whether the call should be approved.
- B. Each church, through its pastor, clerk of session, treasurer or other agent, annually reports the pastor's changes in terms of call to the PGR (see *Appendix B, Compensation Handbook, Prompt Instructions*, online at www.greatriverspby.org). A letter is sent to pastors and clerks of session annually, advising them of changes in minimum and recommended terms of call for the following year. The report forms are mailed late in the year. The sub-committee receives these reports and presents them to the PGR with recommendations for approval or other action.

- C. The COM will bring changes in terms of call to PGR for approval annually. Those that meet minimum terms of call will be presented for approval of PGR. The names of the churches whose proposed changes in terms of call do not meet minimum terms or are unsatisfactory in some other way will be presented with the request that PGR instruct the COM to investigate the reason(s) that the call does not meet the minimum.
- D. The report may distinguish those calls that do not conform to PGR recommendations for terms of call.
- E. The COM may conduct retirement planning seminars or facilitate those seminars for members of the PGR by making other arrangements, such as invite representatives of the Board of Pensions to be available for questions and information.
- F. The COM acts as liaison for the COM and the PGR with the Board of Pensions and interprets the rules of the Board of Pensions to members of the PGR.
- G. The COM, to the extent practical, keeps abreast of changes in IRS and FICA regulations that affect clergy and advises members of PGR as appropriate. However, members of PGR are cautioned that the sub-committee cannot function as a tax expert and clergy should seek their own professional advice in tax matters.
- H. ***Shared grant application approval by PGR should follow thorough review of all receipts, invoices, statements of benefits, etc. by PGR representative for verification of eligibility; Synod approval of shared grant funding should only follow, and be contingent upon, BOP approval; shared grant requests by staff should be endorsed by the Personnel Committee prior to submission to Committee on Ministry.***

6. **SPECIALIZED CLERGY**

- A. Categories of specialized clergy and provisions of BOO which apply to them are contained in Section III, Special Pastoral Positions.
- B. Call to Validated Ministry
 - 1. A minister (or candidate) must provide a position description, request and receive approval of the COM prior to accepting a call to validated ministry, either in other service of this church or in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church.
 - 2. PGR will ordain candidates only to these validated ministries: chaplain, campus minister, evangelist, and teacher of religion.
 - 3. Clergy must seek approval from COM prior to accepting a call to labor outside the bounds of PGR.
 - The COM will determine whether the position may be validated.
 - The call form of the employing agency will be used when it differs from that of PGR.
 - The COM will appoint an elder or minister to prosecute the call before the PGR.
 - A call which has been presented, found in order and deemed for the good of the Church will be placed in the hands of the minister, who will then be enrolled into membership in the PGR.
 - 4. A list of the clergy serving in validated ministries in other service of this church and in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church will be maintained jointly by the COM and the Stated Clerk. (See BOO G-11.0407)
 - 5. All clergy in special pastoral positions will do the following:
 - Report annually to PGR their correct mailing address, any changes in call or the validated ministry, their willingness to serve on PGR committees, commissions,

- councils, etc., their availability for ministry, including temporary ministry and pulpit supply.
- Establish a parish associate position and report dissolution of parish associate position. (Clergy serving outside the bounds of PGR are not required to establish a parish associate relationship.)
6. COM will recommend to PGR, annually and upon reported changes in status, the continued validation of the ministry and continuation in PGR if appropriate.
 7. Clergy serving in validated ministries in other service of this church must request and obtain approval of PGR for their ministry, but no additional report or action is required. (See BOO G-11.0410)
 8. Clergy serving in validated ministries beyond the jurisdiction of the church must provide an annual report confirming continuation in the validated ministry and the existence of a parish associate relationship with a church in the PGR.
 - Approved validated ministries are listed in BOO G-11.0411. Others may be validated provided they meet all of the criteria of BOO G-11.0403.
 - No parish associate relationship is required if the validated ministry is outside the bounds of PGR, but the minister must comply with the requirements for approval to labor outside the bounds of PGR.
 - Members of the PGR who are pastors or other installed clergy of a church which is not a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) are considered clergy serving in validated ministries beyond the jurisdiction of this church.
 9. Member-at-Large (See BOO G-11.0406b, G-11.0413) An already ordained member may be a member-at-large if that minister is not engaged in a validated ministry but has not intentionally abandoned the ministry. Acceptable reasons are family responsibilities, study, illness or disability, temporary unemployment as evidenced by seeking a call.
 - Each member-at-large must request continuation of the status of member-at-large and must report the basis on which the request is justified. The COM will review these requests, and may recommend their approval to the COM, or may request that COM interview the member-at-large regarding the continuation of the status of member-at-large.
 - On the basis of the sub-committee recommendation or the interview, the COM will make a recommendation to PGR regarding the continued status of the member-at-large.
 10. Honorably Retired Minister (See BOO G-11.0412)
 - No further report or action is needed if the minister is not engaged in any ministry.
 - The minister will report to PGR at the beginning of a ministry and then annually about any ministry during retirement.
 - The minister must comply with the requirements for approval of labor outside the bounds of PGR if engaged in any ministry outside the bound of PGR.
 11. Inactive Members of PGR (See BOO G-11.0406c, G-11.0413)
 - Each inactive member of PGR will meet annually with an interview team of the COM to review that minister's status.
 - COM will make a recommendation to PGR on the basis of an interview regarding the continued status of the inactive member, providing that the status of an inactive member may continue for only three years.
 - The minister's name will be deleted from the appropriate roll at the end of three years if the minister has not been restored to another membership status.

12. Military Chaplains

- Persons entering the military chaplaincy who require an endorsement of the PGR will apply through the COM. An interview team will interview all applicants. In the case of unordained persons, CPM will be consulted before any action is taken.
- Reports of members of PGR who are military chaplains will be received by the Stated Clerk and will be considered as correspondence received by the PGR. Reports are required by the chaplaincy and not by PGR.
- Presbyterian military chaplains serving within the Bounds of this PGR will be invited to become members of the PGR or to become consulting corresponding members of the PGR.
- Military chaplains are not required to comply with the requirements for approval to labor outside the bounds of PGR.
- Retired military chaplains may maintain their membership in PGR by requesting to be honorably retired by the PGR, or by qualifying for membership in any other status.

13. Parish Associate. (See BOO G-14.0570)

- All non-parish clergy of the PGR, except those laboring outside the bounds of PGR, are encouraged to establish a parish associate relationship with a particular church of the PGR.
- Pastors in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church, except those laboring outside the bounds of the PGR, are encouraged to be parish associates.
- Staff of the PGR, while encouraged to worship regularly at a church of the PGR, ought not to establish formal parish associate relationships with a particular church.
- The parish associate relationship is established upon nomination by the pastor of a church, and involves a three-party agreement including the parish associate, the session and the PGR.
- Dissolutions of the parish associate relationship requires the action of all three parties to the original agreement.
- The agreement between the session and a parish associate will be dissolved when a pastor leaves a church. The requirement that the minister be a parish associate is waived until six months after the church installs a new pastor if the parish associate wishes to continue the relationship with the same church in order to meet the PGR requirement.
- Only two relationships can exist between a minister and a particular church: one of the offices of the parish clergy and that of parish associate. If any other relationship is established between a church and a minister, that relationship is, in the eyes of the PC(USA) and the PGR, a lay relationship.
- No relationship between a church and a minister other than one of the offices of the parish clergy can be used to justify the continuing membership of the minister in the PGR. This specifically means that being a parish associate is not a validated ministry and cannot be used to justify membership in the PGR, though it may be a condition of membership imposed by the PGR.

14. Pastors laboring outside the bounds of PGR but inside the bounds of another presbytery must proceed as follows (See BOO G-11.0401):

- The minister must inform the COM of the ministry to which a call has been received or is contemplated.
- The COM will advise the minister whether or not it will recommend that the PGR validate the ministry.
- The COM will notify the minister (if the COM will recommend that the PGR validate the ministry) that it is the minister's responsibility to seek permission to labor within the bounds of the presbytery in which the minister has a call.

- The COM will recommend to PGR that it validate the ministry; give permission to labor outside the bounds of the PGR, and continue the membership of the minister in PGR only when consent from the presbytery in which the minister will labor is received.
 - The same procedures will apply if an Honorably Retired member of the PGR wishes to labor outside the bounds of the PGR. However, if the ministry is not considered by the PGR to be a validated ministry, then the Honorably Retired member will be informed that the PGR considers the position to be a lay position for which permission to labor outside the bounds is not required.
 - It is important that an Honorably Retired minister engaging in ministry outside the bounds of the PGR complete the process of gaining permission to labor outside the bounds of PGR. Only in this way does the church know what ministry is being undertaken in the name of the PC(USA). For that reason, the COM will facilitate as much as possible the procedures for Honorably Retired members of PGR.
 - The COM will annually contact each member of the PGR laboring outside of the bounds of the PGR. The instructions will state that it should be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the presbytery in which the member labors.
 - Members of PGR whose ministry is in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church and is outside the bounds of the PGR must insure that the PGR receives annually the consent to labor within the bounds from the presbytery in whose bounds they labor. Without that consent, the continuation of their membership cannot be recommended to PGR, and after a period of two years BOO requires that they be placed on the inactive roll of the PGR (G-11.0415).
 - Permission to labor outside the bounds of PGR is always granted in terms of a specific call or ministry.
 - Members-at-large by definition, do not “labor” at any ministry. If they do, their membership status needs to be changed to reflect that ministry.
15. Permission to labor within the bounds of the PGR.
- Requests to labor within the bounds of PGR are received through the Stated Clerk, EP, or the COM.
 - The request will be returned if it does not specify what the ministry of the individual laboring within the bounds will be to the individual or PGR.
 - The COM will recommend to PGR that such requests be approved or disapproved. Approval will be forwarded to the individual by the Stated Clerk.
 - The sub-committee will annually compile a list of ministers laboring within the bounds of the PGR and will present it to PGR with a recommendation as to whether the permission should be renewed for each individual. The results of that action will be forwarded (by a form letter and extract from the minutes of PGR) to each individual and the stated clerk of each individual's presbytery.
- C. Background Checks. The Committee on Ministry will provide for criminal and credit background searches for all new calls or contracts for pastoral service to any of the congregations within the bounds of the presbytery before the call or contract begins.

7. **COM LIAISONS FOR CHURCHES SEEKING PASTORS**

A. The Task

Being a COM representative to a church seeking a pastor is one of the most important tasks in the PGR. It is a critical time in the life of a particular church, and a time when errors in judgment and procedures can be very costly in terms of the ministry the church will provide for years to come. It is also a critical moment in the relations between a particular church and the PGR, because at no other point in the relationship is the church so explicitly governed by rule and procedures of the denomination and PGR.

B. Duties of the COM Liaisons in Conjunction with the Task Force on Calls and Dissolutions.

1. Carry out the specific responsibilities listed in the *Guide for Churches Seeking a Pastor, Appendix A*, online at www.greatriverspby.org.
 2. Conduct exit interviews with the departing pastor and session; and with the interim pastor if one is appointed. Meet with the session as needed; assist with the congregation's goal setting and long term plans, and advise the session on other interim tasks. See forms found at www.greatriverspby.org, Appendix D COM Interview Questions.
 3. Meet regularly (but not every meeting) with the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) for the duration of their work. See forms found at www.greatriverspby.org.
 4. Ensure that the procedures of the BOO and PGR are followed, carefully explaining to the session/PNC the reasons for the procedures.
 5. Ensure the executive presbyter meets with the PNC before the CIF goes to the session for approval.
 6. Approves the CIF with a team appointed by the COM chair when it is satisfactorily completed and complies with all requirements (particularly the job description and compensation). The COM chair is notified of the results, and makes final approval online. In the case of doubt, the CIF should be referred to the COM chair, EP, or COM
- C. Guidelines for the COM Liaisons:
1. Work closely with the chair of COM and the EP.
 2. Be pastoral in approach to the session/PNC of the church.
 3. Do not advise on choices of candidates.
 4. Remember that the process of calling a pastor is ultimately the responsibility of the congregation, its session and PNC, and not the PGR. The COM representatives will, therefore, see their primary role as consulting and giving guidance, and only secondarily the enforcement of the specific rules and procedures of the BOO and Manual.
 5. Liaisons are reminded that serving as a consultant is not the same as speaking for COM. In most cases, the PNC cannot be forced to follow advice given in the process of consultation. Asserting authority on behalf of the PGR or COM, when that authority does not exist is likely to result in difficult relations between a church and the PGR.
 6. Matters of conflict will always be referred to and managed by the COM.
 7. See *Appendix B, Compensation Handbook*, www.greatriverspby.org for guidelines on payment of moderators, interims, CLPs, and a called pastor.
- D. Six-Month Review. After a pastor has been in the field six months, an interview team will be assigned by COM chair to meet with the pastor and his/her spouse and the session.