

Continuous Professional Development Guidelines For Clergy/Educator Salem Presbytery PC (USA)

Rationale

Continuous professional development is essential for all clergy**/educators. Professional Development makes this assertion because the practices of church leadership are evolving constantly and rapidly. Continuous is the need to address changing demographics, mission enterprises, financial resources, and theological perspectives in our ministry settings. We believe God is still speaking, and that there is always more to learn about God, God's call on our lives, and God's plan for achieving God's kingdom on earth.

Church leaders learn and grow in faith and leadership skills in many ways, but chief among them are intentional study of our faith traditions, challenging give-and-take with colleagues, and careful examination of how God is directing us to visibly express God's lordship through visions of peace, justice, and spiritual development. While solitary study and prayer are foundational, we know open and stirring engagement with others is essential to learning. Together in covenant with God, clergy/educator colleagues, our own local churches and other ministry sites we discover how God calls forth 'our' gifts to celebrate effective and faithful expressions of discipleship in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Professional Development Sub-Committee of Salem Presbytery's Committee on Ministry presents *Continuous Professional Development Guidelines for Clergy/Educators* to stimulate discussion among clergy/educators about living in and to a culture that consciously and faithfully supports growth in ministry for the up-building of God's Kingdom. These guidelines support growth in leadership and pastoral skills in those whom God and we have called to *validated* ministries in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Characteristics of a “Continuous Professional Development” Plan for Clergy/Educators

It is On-Going.

This connotes intentionality and regular periodic attendance at continuing education events/seminars.

It is Balanced.

This connotes that, over time, attention will be given to:

Practical Learning

Studying new resources for the equipping of one’s responsibilities.

Future Visioning

Envisioning how one’s call is changing in light of evolving trends and developments in all phases of ministry.

Renewing Spiritual Development

Opportunities seized to care for one’s personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the church at large.

Accountability Issues

Determining with whom and how one shares and learns with others to promote health, fitness, and faithfulness in church leadership.

What are “guidelines” for Continuous Professional Development?

Continuously:

Spend time with others. Receive collegial mentoring or supervision for your ministry. Participate in regular meetings with other clergy/educators.

Addendum # 3

Annually:

Take a minimum of "2" weeks intentional time away from daily tasks to focus on Practical Learning, Future Visioning, and Renewing Spiritual Development as outlined in the "characteristics" section on page 2.

Sabbatical:

Take a "Sabbatical" that has been included in your call. If you do not have a Sabbatical as part of your call, then ask the Committee On Ministry to open up a dialogue with your governing body about the prospect of adding it to your call.

Why Does the Professional Development Sub-Committee bring this paper to the Committee On Ministry?

The PC(USA) is well-known for its Book of Order usage of verbs and their meanings. Such verbs used are *shall*, *should*, *is appropriate*, and *may* to name a few. We do not intend by this paper to say that Clergy/Educators *shall* follow this Continuous Professional Development plan. Rather, we would use the verbs, *should* or *is appropriate* when responding to these guidelines. Our prayers for vital congregational life/ministries would seem to compel continuous learning. Our God is too big to end our discoveries about God with graduation from institutions of higher learning. Today's ministry context is continually changing; therefore, we believe a continuous professional development plan is the best way to respond to such change.

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The word *clergy* is meant to include **Commissioned Lay Pastors**.

It is noted that some of the content in this paper will not apply to CLP's and their contracts.

Addendum # 3

(The Professional Development Sub-Committee of Salem Presbytery's Committee On Ministry extends appreciation to the Leadership Development Commission Sub-Committee of the UCC for content and material provided in this paper.)

It is our hope that the Committee On Ministry of Salem Presbytery will see these guidelines as worthy of support and will eventually offer this *draft* as a future paper to the presbytery as a "guideline" to be used by clergy/educators for continuous professional development.

Further, this is a draft for study. We encourage questions, dialogue, and comments as we develop this paper into a tool that can be used for years to come.