

STANDARD OF PROCEDURE

I. THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

- A. Purpose - Subject to the provisions of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Manual of Salem Presbytery, the Commission on Ministry of Salem Presbytery shall conduct its affairs according to this document.
- B. Amendments - This Standard of Procedure may be amended by a majority of those present at a combined meeting of all the neighborhood COM's, provided the proposed amendment was presented in writing and approved at the previous meeting of all of the neighborhood COM's.
- C. Structure – Ordinarily, The Commission on Ministry shall meet monthly in both Plenary and Neighborhood meetings.
- D. Officers –
 - 1. The Combined Commission on Ministry (Plenary) shall have Co-Moderators who shall moderate Combined COM meetings and be responsible for presenting the report of the Commission on Ministry at the meetings of Presbytery.
 - 2. At the choice of the neighborhood Commission on Ministry, the officers either shall be a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, and a Clerk, or two Co-Moderators who will share the duties of the Moderator and the Clerk, with one Co-Moderator serving as Moderator of the meeting and the other Co-Moderator serving as Clerk for the same meeting, or two Co-Moderators sharing the duties and a Clerk.

Duties of Officers: [for neighborhood COM's]

- 1. Moderator [or Co-Moderators] - shall convene and preside at all meetings of the neighborhood COM; shall serve as an *ex-officio* member of all sub-committees of the neighborhood COM; and be responsible with neighborhood Presbyter for producing the agendas and minutes for the neighborhood COM's. When it is necessary, the Moderator [or one of the Co-Moderators] shall sign documents on behalf of the neighborhood COM, confirming the actions of the neighborhood COM.
- 2. Vice-Moderator [if this is the choice of the neighborhood COM] - shall act as Moderator during emergencies when the Moderator is absent or unable to act.

3. Clerk [if this is the choice of the neighborhood COM] – shall see to it that full and accurate minutes are kept of all meetings of the neighborhood COM and that they are submitted to the Presbytery office in a timely manner; shall see to it that, unless otherwise specified, all correspondence generated by the meeting is produced and mailed; shall prepare a tentative agenda at least one week before the regular stated meeting; and shall answer any correspondence that arrives between meetings.
- E. Terms of Office - During a three year period of serving on the COM, the Officers shall be elected for a term of one year and are eligible to be re-elected.
 - F. Meetings - The neighborhood COM's shall determine the time and place of their stated meetings in January of each year.

The Moderator [or Co-Moderators] may call special meetings at any time desired, provided sufficient notice of time and place is given. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. A conference call to include all officers (co-moderators and committee chairs) and staff shall be held two weeks prior to each COM meeting for the purpose of communication and preparing a draft meeting agenda. Ordinarily each regular stated meeting shall begin with a devotional prepared and led by a member of the neighborhood COM, assigned to this task by voluntary sign-up. With the staff, the Moderator [or Co-Moderators] and neighborhood Presbyter shall prepare an agenda for each stated meeting; copies of a preliminary agenda and accompanying reports shall be available to the members of the COM two days before the meeting. A final version will be made available at the meeting.

- G. Quorum - The quorum for all meetings of the neighborhood COM's shall be a majority of the members.
- H. Attendance Policy – Regular attendance at meetings is expected of all members of the COM. Attendance will be reviewed periodically.
- I. Urgent Items – When there are items which the neighborhood COM Moderator [or Co-Moderators] and the neighborhood presbyter deem to be urgent, those items may be dealt with in the following manner: by conference call or email. In all cases, the actions shall be reported and confirmed at the next COM meeting.
- J. Presbytery Reports – The Co-Moderators of the combined COM and Presbytery staff shall be responsible for producing the Presbytery Reports.

II. SUB-COMMITTEES

- A. In order to accomplish its work more effectively, the Combined COM shall, from time to time, create sub-committees that function Presbytery-wide.
- B. Current Presbytery-Wide Sub-Committees: Care, Development and Retirement of Church Professionals; Commissioned Ruling Elder Oversight; Compensation and Relationships; Transitional Ministry Liaison.
- C. Membership – The membership shall ordinarily be members of the neighborhood COM's. The Combined COM shall set the number of members of each sub-committee. The Moderator of the sub-committee shall be a member of the neighborhood COM's. From time to time, the sub-committee may enlist those who are not COM members to serve on the sub-committee, with the consent of COM.
- D. Presbytery-Wide Sub-Committee Responsibilities and Tasks:
 - 1. **Care, Development and Retirement of Church Professionals shall:**
 - a. Provide for and/or coordinate education opportunities for Church Professionals (pastors, educators, CRE's)
 - b. Coordinate additional training and support opportunities for new pastors
 - c. With Presbytery Staff facilitate process of retirement for church professionals including recognition
 - d. Oversee the care of Retired church professionals
 - e. Oversee the care of Members at Large
 - f. Oversee mentoring and colleague programs
 - g. Serve as point of contact for Certified Educators
 - h. Provide on-going support to church Personnel Committees
 - i. Promote congregational care of church professionals
 - j. Promote adoption of sabbatical leave policies by congregations
 - k. Offer care and development teachings at presbytery meetings as appropriate
 - l. Provide resources for Healthy Congregations or similar programs
 - m. Assist the EQUIP Presbyter in the Christian Educator Certification process.
 - 2. **Commissioned Ruling Elder Oversight shall:**
 - a. Oversee the training and certification of new CRE's
 - b. Organize an on-going Continuing Education program for CRE's

- c. Assist Neighborhood COM's in the placement of CRE's in churches
- d. Oversee the work of CRE's and monitor required attendance
- e. Facilitate Neighborhood COM's in review and renewal of contracts
- f. Oversee mentoring program
- g. Recommend Policy concerning CRE's and update the CRE manual

3. Compensation and Relationships shall:

- a. Review new and changed calls and contracts that will be presented to COM for approval
- b. Implement Board of Pensions educational programs
- c. Coordinate BOP contact with Presbytery
- d. Recommend to Presbytery changes in Presbytery minimum compensation annually (Pastors, Associate Pastors, Certified Educators, CRE)
- e. Maintain correctness of call and contract forms
- f. Request and review validated ministry annual reports
- g. Consult with churches in arrears with benefits or vacancy dues
- h. Consult with PNC's and/or liaisons to develop terms of call
- i. Provide for Healthy Boundaries training
- j. Annually review status of Members-at-Large in coordination with Presbytery Clerk
- k. Oversee implementation of and compliance with policies concerning relationships (i.e. Pastors and former congregations, Pastors and congregations where they worship, Family members as staff, etc.)

4. Transitional Ministry Liaison shall:

- a. Be liaison for COM to Transitional Ministry Network as it supports and encourages pastors actively engaged in or seeking a call as a Transitional minister. The Network shall focus on
 - i. Professional development
 - ii. Communication
 - iii. And fellowship
- b. Keep record of attendance at transitional minister gatherings and report to Neighborhood COM's
- c. Orient Transitional Ministers in new positions to the expectations of Salem Presbytery and its processes

- E. Other Work – The other work assigned to the Commission on Ministry, either by the *Book of Order* or the Presbyter, shall ordinarily be done by the neighborhood COM's in a manner which each neighborhood shall decide.

II. NEIGHBORHOOD COM TASKS AND/OR SUB-COMMITTEES

In order to accomplish its work more effectively, the Neighborhood COM's shall have the following tasks which they may, at their own choice, either accomplish by functioning as a committee of the whole, or appoint sub-committees to function for them.

- 1. Calls and Vacancies:** This responsibility includes oversight of the churches that are without pastoral leadership, churches involved in the search process for pastoral leadership, and churches in need of session moderators. The fulfillment of these duties requires reporting and/or making recommendations to the neighborhood COM for action as follows:

- a. Recruit, recommend and appoint moderators for sessions without regular pastoral leadership
- b. Appoint Transition responders and Search Process Liaisons to churches as needed and monitor the ongoing progress of each search
- c. Review Mission Study report
- d. Grant permission to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee
- e. Review for recommended approval Ministry Information Forms submitted by Pastor Nominating Committees
- f. Oversee Temporary Relationships including reports, timely renewal of contracts, exits interview and attendance at required gatherings.
- g. Review proposed contracts for Temporary Relationships(including transitional pastors and stated supply)
- h. Maintain an up-to-date list of churches without installed pastors, noting session moderators and sources of pastoral support
- i. Conduct "fitness" interviews with PNC (or Transition Team for Transitional ministers) and candidates
- j. Maintain pulpit supply list

2. Conciliation:

- a. Offer human and media resources
- b. Address conflicts in church
- c. Facilitate proper communication of concerns
- d. Provide preemptive measures of consultation and training
- e. Promote healthy pastor/parish relationships

3. Parish Relationships:

- a. Develop a neighborhood plan to foster relationships to include:
 - i. regular congregational visits
 - ii. regular contact with pastors
- b. Assist communication by updating Clerk and/or church contact information
- c. Refer and follow up on issues arising out of relationships
- d. Monitor and encourage presbytery meeting attendance
- e. Encourage participation in the greater life of Presbytery

III. TASKS OF STAFF

- A. Arrange for meeting space
- B. Provide draft and then final agendas and distribute
- C. Manage the paperwork that accompanies the movement of ministers/DCE/CRE into and out of positions
- D. Maintain the "Vacant Church List"
- E. Function as Transition Responder
- F. Conduct Presbytery-to-Presbytery reference checks
- G. Provide for Background checks
- H. Serve as ex-officio member of all sub committees
- I. Keep website data related to COM up-to-date
- J. Maintain the COM Handbook when revised
- K. Maintain a list of resource persons who are skilled in assisting congregations and pastors in communication conflict resolution, systems theory, and psychology