

PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCHES

A description of pastoral relationships within the Presbyterian Church (USA) with possible considerations. 2011

In the Presbyterian Church (USA), there are three kinds of pastoral relationships: permanent, designated, and temporary. There is also the provision for commissioned ruling elders. This brochure is an attempt to indicate the differences between pastoral relationships when a church transitions from permanent to temporary or from one temporary form to another.

	Permanent	Designated	Interim	Temporary Supply
Description	<p>Pastor, Associate Pastor Elected by congregation and the relationship established by presbytery. Call has to be approved by presbytery and can only be changed by presbytery. Ordinarily Associate Pastor may not be called to succeed the pastor.</p> <p>Co-Pastor Two ministers called and installed with equal responsibility for pastoral ministry of one congregation.</p>	<p>Designated Pastor, Designated Co-Pastor, Designated Associate Pastor</p> <p>Approved by COM and presbytery to serve a term of 2-4 years by vote of the congregation. Nominated by PNC (which can be the Session; if so, elected by the congregation) from among those candidates designated by presbytery's COM. After two years as Designated Pastor, by vote of congregation a Designated Pastor may become the permanent pastor.</p>	<p>Interim Pastor or Interim Associate Pastor</p> <p>Invited by the Session to fulfill pastoral duties for a period not to exceed 12 months at a time while the church seeks a pastor. Ordinarily may not be the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of a church served as Interim pastor. Interim covenant may be renewed.</p>	<p>Pastor, Associate Pastor</p> <p>Teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder secured by the Session when there is no pastor. (See "Student Supply" below) May be called to be installed pastor or associate pastor of a church served as temporary supply, if approved by 2/3 vote of presbytery.</p>

Advantages	<p>is installed, moderates, and is a member of the session.</p> <p>Pastor and congregation are committed to a relatively permanent relationship</p> <p>PNC can consider any pastor or candidate across the nation and/or around the world</p>	<p>is installed, moderates, and is a member of the session.</p> <p>may be converted into a continuing called and installed relationship</p> <p>may speed up the process to a permanent pastorate.</p>	<p>Interim leadership with specialized training and experience</p> <p>Intentional focus on accomplishment of interim tasks and taking advantage of transitional opportunities</p> <p>Congregation is more likely to learn from the past and call a pastor that fits congregational culture</p> <p>Continuity of leadership and the option for maintenance or transformational growth</p> <p>Called by Session</p>	<p>Pulpit supply may offer variety in worship</p> <p>Session takes more responsibility for the ongoing life of the congregation</p> <p>Can be less expensive</p> <p>Potential increased awareness of communal and congregational leadership resources</p>	
	Limitations	<p>Call process may take up to two years or longer</p> <p>If congregation is facing transformation or possible dissolution in the near future a change in pastoral relationship may be more difficult.</p>	<p>Those eligible to be considered by a congregation are limited to a list of persons approved and commended to them by the presbytery through its COM.</p>	<p>Ordinarily unable to be called as permanent pastor</p> <p>May need additional resources depending on skills, training, and interests of available interim pastors (i.e. Mission study, PNC support, organizational and leadership development, etc.)</p> <p>Time required to get interim leadership in place and added management and cost of ending of interim contract</p>	<p>Possible loss of continuity</p> <p>Transition tasks may not be completed and as a result the interim opportunities are lost</p> <p>Maintaining status quo is more likely</p> <p>Getting quality worship leadership and readily available pastoral services can be difficult</p>
		Costs	<p>Minimum terms of call or greater.</p> <p>Moving costs.</p>	<p>Minimum terms of call or greater. [Generally, the same terms of call as a permanent position.]</p> <p>Moving costs.</p>	<p>Negotiable – minimum terms of call or greater</p> <p>COM requires a 60-day transition agreement that includes full salary and benefits for departing interim pastor</p> <p>Moving costs (for regional and national interim pastors)</p>

Other Temporary Types of Pastoral Leadership

Stated Supply

Appointed by the presbytery, after consultation with the Session, to perform the functions of a pastor in a church ***not seeking an installed minister***. Relationship shall be established only by the presbytery and shall not exceed 12 months at a

time. With presbytery's approval, may serve as Moderator of Session. May be renewed.

Student Supply

Invited by Session, with concurrence of COM, and approval by inquirer or candidate's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). Student may serve as Temporary Supply.

Pulpit Supply

Invited by the session of a church to preach on occasional basis, with no other responsibilities.

Commissioned Ruling Elder (*Book of Order, G-2.10*)

A ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. Commission is valid in one or more specified congregations, new church development, or other validated ministries of the presbytery. Elder is selected by and receives training approved by the presbytery, and is mentored by a minister-member of presbytery. Commission shall be valid for a period up to three years as determined by the presbytery, and may be renewed, by recommendation of COM and vote of presbytery.

Who Can Become What?

- Often the question arises whether a pastor in one relationship with a church can change that relationship to another one.
- Ordinarily an Associate Pastor may not become the next installed Pastor of a church in which he/she has served as Associate Pastor, but the presbytery may make an exception by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present and voting.
- Ordinarily, an Interim Pastor or Interim Associate Pastor may not become the next installed Pastor of a church in which she/he has served as an Interim Pastor or Interim Associate Pastor, but the presbytery may make an exception by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present and voting.
- Stated Supply may not become the next installed pastor of a church unless s/he leaves the church prior to the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee. This provision does not apply for someone who serves as a Stated Supply and then is considered for a position as Commissioned Ruling Elder.
- Designated Pastor may become the "permanent" installed Pastor of a congregation.
- Temporary Supply may become the next installed Pastor of a church without the temporary relationship having been terminated for at least six months, if approved by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the presbytery.