

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

**PART I – COMMISSION ON MINISTRY, TEAM DESCRIPTIONS, PASTORAL
RELATIONSHIPS**

Approved by the PTCA

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SECTION I - COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

(Supporting Congregations/Equipping Leaders)

I.1 VISION: (WHY WOULD WE DO THIS?)

To nurture and support the covenant community of the Presbytery, including its Ministers of Word and Sacrament, its Commissioned Ruling Elders, and its congregations in the ministries to which each has been called; and to provide the structures and support – through its own actions and those of its Ministry Teams – so that these ministries can be lived out with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

I.2 IDENTITY: (WHO IS THIS COMMISSION?)

The Commission on Ministry (COM) will have eight teaching and Ruling Elders in equal numbers. Membership will include at least one person from each of the three COM teams, plus five additional at-large people nominated by the Nominating and Developing Leader Committee and will reflect as near as possible the Presbytery's diverse makeup. Terms will be for three years, renewable once.

I.3 RESPONSIBILITIES: (WHAT WILL THE COMMISSION PROVIDE TO CONGREGATIONS *or congregational leaders*?)

1. Provide coordination and promote collaboration among the three Ministry Teams.
2. Encourage, through its actions and oversight, the church as the body of Christ and as a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. (F-1.0301).
3. Develop and maintain mechanisms and processes so that the Presbytery serves as pastor and counselor to minister members, commissioned Ruling Elders and certified Christian educators.
4. Develop policies and practices that will promote healthy ministries and enable Teaching Elders and commissioned Ruling Elders to fulfill their call in service to God and to the church, by carrying out all membership functions as mandated in the Book of Order or described in the COM manual.
5. Oversee and promote the full participation of all Teaching Elders, commissioned Ruling Elders, and certified Christian educators in boundary training, as prescribed by Presbytery policy.

6. Administer the operating budget allocated by the Presbytery to COM and its Ministry Teams.

I.4 ACCOUNTABILITY: (TO WHOM WOULD THIS COMMISSION REPORT?)

The COM is accountable in its work to the Presbytery and to the Book of Order. It shall report its work at stated meetings of the Presbytery.

I.5 AUTHORITY: (WHAT DECISIONS CAN THE COMMISSION MAKE, AND WHAT *decisions must another body make?*)

1. Delegated Authority

The COM, in consultation with the appropriate working team where applicable, has delegated authority from Presbytery to take the following actions and shall report these actions to the Presbytery:

- a. Approve, change, and dissolve pastoral relationships, including approval of a congregation's call to a Teaching Elder to serve as Pastor or Associate Pastor, and approval or termination of all pastoral relationships (G-2.0504b).
- b. Approve new, renewed, or adjusted terms of call or terms of contract for called and installed ministers, interim/transitional ministers, designated ministers, stated supply ministers, or Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE).
- c. Approve certain membership actions on behalf of Presbytery:
 - (1) examine Teaching Elders who seek membership in the Presbytery and accept/receive them as members (G-3.0306).
 - (2) determine whether ministers from other denominations may be enrolled as temporary members (G-2.0506).
 - (3) validate ministries of members (G-3.0306; G-2.0503a).
 - (4) annually review the work of all ministers in a validated ministry (G-2.0503).
 - (5) annually review the status of members-at-large (G-2.0503b).
 - (6) designate members as retired upon their request, or because of age or physical or mental disability (G-2.0503c).
 - (7) determine if a minister has failed to engage in a validated ministry (G-2.0508).
 - (8) dismiss Teaching Elders to other presbyteries; and
 - (9) consult with minister members who persist in work not approved by the Presbytery.
- d. Appoint and, at an appropriate time, dissolve administrative commissions to ordain or install Teaching Elders who have received a properly approved call. (G-3.03c).
- e. Appoint and, at an appropriate time, dissolve administrative commissions to Commissioned Ruling Elders for limited pastoral service.

- f. Appoint a moderator of a session, where the pulpit is vacant due to the resignation, departure, temporary absence, or disability of the installed Teaching Elder or commissioned Ruling Elder.
 - g. Maintain a list of persons approved to provide pulpit supply for congregations.
 - h. Maintain a list of Ruling Elders who have fulfilled the Presbytery's requirements for commissioning. (G-2.1002).
 - i. Maintain a list of persons within the bounds of the Presbytery who have been certified as Christian Educators and associate Christian Educators.
 - j. Authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Presbytery meetings at least once each year.
 - k. Authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper for fellowship groups and other non-congregational entities (New Church Developments and 1001 New Worshiping Communities, for example).
 - l. Commission Ruling Elders for limited pastoral service (G-3.03c).
 - m. Supervise the work of Commissioned Ruling Elders by assigning a minister member as a mentor/supervisor of each Commissioned Ruling Elder (G-2.1004).
2. Recommending Authority
- The COM, in consultation with the appropriate Ministry Team(s), can make recommendations to the Presbytery regarding the following, subject to final Presbytery action:
- a. Examine and certify a candidate's readiness for ordination.
 - b. Examine ministers from other denominations who seek membership in the Presbytery and receive them as members.
 - c. Determine if a minister member has failed to meet the criteria for membership-at-large and remove the minister from the roll of membership.
 - d. Dissolve a congregation.
 - e. Adopt changes to the COM Manual of Operations.
 - f. Release a person from the exercise of ordered ministry of Minister of the Word and Sacrament.
 - g. Restore a person to the exercise of ordered ministry as a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
 - h. Set minimum salary and compensation guidelines annually for pastors, Commissioned Ruling Elders, certified Christian Educators, and certified associate Christian Educators; and
 - i. Concur with COM's recommendations regarding other actions as required or enumerated in the *Book of Order*.

I.6 STAFFING: (WHO WILL STAFF THIS COMMITTEE?)

The Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk each will have significant roles in the COM's work, and each will provide staff support for COM as follows:

1. The Stated Clerk carries primary responsibility for communicating membership status issues between the Presbytery and its members and between the Presbytery and the General Assembly. The Stated Clerk serves as the secretary of the COM. The Stated Clerk maintains records of Ministers in Validated Positions, Members At Large, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and Boundary Training compliance.
2. The Executive Presbyter carries responsibility for coordinating the work of COM with its three Ministry Teams and carries primary responsibility for staffing the Pastoral Positions Team and Early Intervention and Mediation Team.
3. The Administrative Assistant carries responsibility to assist the work of the COM.

SECTION II – TEAM DESCRIPTIONS

II.1. PASTORAL POSITIONS TEAM

PURPOSE

The members of the Pastoral Positions Team (PPT) assist congregations that are experiencing a transition in pastoral leadership, including orienting, resourcing and guiding Pastor Nominating Committees in their search process; assisting sessions and/or personnel committees to secure transitional (interim) leadership; and assisting congregations with other transitional positions including Designated Pastors and Stated Supply Pastors. If a congregation is not sure of their future pastoral needs, PPT will suggest consultation with the Congregational Discernment Team.

II.1.1 VISION: (WHY WOULD WE DO THIS?)

To accompany all congregations without, or anticipating a loss of, pastoral leadership, guiding them through the process from the dissolution of a previous call to the approval by the congregation and Presbytery of new pastoral leadership, whether installed or by contract, both Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders; and to maintain regular relationship with congregations with temporary forms of pastoral leadership.

II.1.2 IDENTITY: (WHO IS THIS TEAM?)

The Pastoral Positions Team will have five to eight Teaching and Ruling Elders with experience in the call and transitional processes and passion for supporting congregations during periods of pastoral transition. The PPT will collaborate with the Nominating and Leader Development Committee with respect to nomination of persons to serve on the PPT for replacements, and PPT membership will reflect as much as possible the Presbytery's diversity. The terms will be for three years, renewable once.

II.1.3 RESPONSIBILITIES: (WHAT WILL THE TEAM PROVIDE TO CONGREGATIONS *and congregational leaders?*)

1. Provide a direct, consistent liaison for all congregations in pastoral transition or temporary pastoral relationships.
2. Maintain and propose policies and practices by which the Presbytery will work with sessions, Pastor Nominating Committees (PNCs), and congregations during times of pastoral transition.
3. Counsel sessions about the processes for dissolving calls and contracts and seeking new pastoral leadership, and then counsel PNCs (once named) on the process for seeking and calling a new pastor.
4. Assists with the search process, including:
 - a. Preparation, completion, and approval of congregational mission studies.
 - b. Preparation, completion, and posting of congregational MDPs.

- c. Evaluating and approving requests to form PNCs.
- d. Facilitating interviews with potential candidates, giving feedback to PNCs and to the Commission on Ministry (COM) (which retains approval of any congregational call), and collaborates with the Executive Presbyter to complete appropriate background checks.
- e. Evaluates all terms of call or stated supply contracts before forwarding to COM, ensuring they fall within Presbytery guidelines.
- 5. Oversee a designated pastor process with the Presbytery if requested by a congregation and evaluated and approved by this team.
- 6. Maintain an approved list of transitional pastors who can serve in the Presbytery and make that list available to congregations, consistent with the team's own policies. (Stated Clerk keeps the list)
- 7. Evaluate contract terms for transitional pastors, and revise contract terms if needed.
- 8. Provide periodic support for transitional pastors, in collaboration with the Pastoral Leader Care Team.
- 9. Conduct exit interviews with all called and installed and transitional pastors and give a copy of the exit interview to the Stated Clerk for retention. (Note: guidelines and questions for exit interviews are in the procedures section of the COM Manual.)

II.1.4 ACCOUNTABILITY: (TO WHOM WOULD THIS TEAM REPORT?)

- 1. The team will report to and work cooperatively with the COM.
- 2. A member of the PPT designated by the PPT will attend monthly meetings of the COM.
- 3. The PPT may provide periodic reports to the Presbytery to share its learnings and insights.

II.1.5 AUTHORITY: (WHAT DECISIONS CAN IT MAKE, AND WHAT DECISIONS MUST *another body* make?)

1. Delegated Authority

The PPT has delegated authority from the COM to take the following actions and shall report these actions to the COM:

- a. Requests from a congregation to seek a transitional pastor.
- b. Approve and receive completed congregational mission studies.
- c. Requests from a session to form a PNC; and
- d. Approve Ministry Discernment Profiles
- e. Approve Teaching Elders who desire to serve as Transitional Pastors and maintain a list of Transitional Pastors.

2. Recommending Authority

The PPT can make recommendations to the COM regarding the following, subject to COM final action:

- a. New, renewed, or adjusted terms of call or terms of contract for called and installed ministers, interim/transitional ministers, designated ministers, or stated supply ministers.
- b. Job Descriptions for Transitional Pastors.
- c. PNC decisions and terms of recommended calls.

II.1.6 STAFFING: (WHO WILL STAFF THIS TEAM?)

The Executive Presbyter will staff this team.

II.2. PASTORAL LEADER CARE TEAM

(Supporting Congregations / Equipping Leaders)

PURPOSE:

To nourish the spiritual and emotional care of the pastoral leaders of the Presbytery—including Teaching Elder members of Presbytery, both those in congregational settings and those serving in wider settings, Commissioned Ruling Elders and Certified Christian Educators, during the time they are enrolled as members of the Presbytery—through accompaniment and pastoral care.

II.2.1 VISION: (WHY WOULD WE DO THIS?)

To nourish the spiritual and emotional care of the pastoral leaders of the Presbytery—including Teaching Elder members of Presbytery, both those in congregational settings and those serving in wider settings, Commissioned Ruling Elders and certified Christian educators, during the time they are enrolled as members of the Presbytery—through accompaniment and pastoral care.

II.2.2 IDENTITY: (WHO IS THIS TEAM?)

The Pastoral Leader Care Team (PLCT) will have eight to twelve Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders with experience and/or training in pastoral care and/or personal well-being and with a commitment to support pastoral leaders in their ministries and to promote their personal well-being. The PLCT will collaborate with the Nominating and Leader Development Committee with respect to nomination of persons to serve on the PLCT, and PLCT membership will reflect as nearly as possible the Presbytery's diversity. Terms will be for three years, renewable once.

II.2.3 RESPONSIBILITIES: (WHAT WILL THE TEAM PROVIDE TO CONGREGATIONS *or congregational leaders*?)

Serve as pastor and counselor to minister members, Commissioned Ruling Elders, and certified Christian educators through these actions:

1. Recruit, train and oversee PTCA Teaching Elders to serve as Peer Support Persons (PSP) to clergy members of the presbytery who are not retired.
2. Organize training program for new PSP.
3. Receive requests from PTCA pastors for support and assigns PSP to contact a specific pastor and provide direct support.
4. Respond to known events in pastors' lives by requesting that a PSP reach out to a specific pastor.
5. Provide ongoing support and continuing training opportunities for PSPs.

6. Host and/or support group events for pastors to provide opportunities for clergy to deepen spiritually and help them feel connected to and supported by each other and the presbytery.
7. Provide designated professional referral sources to PSPs for use if a pastor's needs for support exceed the responsibility and capability of the PSP.
8. Articulate and maintain covenants of accountability, confidentiality and support with PSPs.
9. Maintain ongoing relationship and communication with COM member serving as liaison with the team.
10. Report to COM, through the liaison or staff, with data on the volume of support provided to pastors through the team and PSPs. To uphold confidentiality, no personal or situational information will be included in this report.

II.2.4 ACCOUNTABILITY: (TO WHOM WOULD THIS TEAM REPORT?)

- a. A member of the PLCT designated by the PLCT will attend monthly meetings of the Commission on Ministry (COM).
- b. The PLCT will report to the COM, and work cooperatively with the COM.
- c. The PLCT will have access to additional funding, beyond its budget, from the Strategic Ministries Fund through the Mission, Scholarship, and Grants Committee (MSGC).

II.2.5 AUTHORITY: (WHAT DECISIONS CAN IT MAKE, AND WHAT DECISIONS *must another body make?*)

1. Delegated Authority

The PLCT has delegated authority from the COM and Presbytery to take the following actions and shall report these actions to the COM and Presbytery:

- a. Make direct contacts with pastoral leaders.
- b. Coordinate any scheduling of events with the Presbytery office and other teams.
- c. Allocate its assigned budget in a manner supporting its work; and
- d. Guide pastoral leaders to available funding sources.

2. Recommending Authority

The PLCT can make recommendations to the COM or Presbytery regarding the following, subject to COM or Presbytery final action:

- a. Changes in minimum terms of call or other benefits; and
- b. Any larger-scale initiatives requiring Presbytery Strategic Initiative Funds.

II.2.6 STAFFING: (WHO WILL STAFF THIS COMMITTEE?)

The Executive Presbyter will staff this team.

II.4. EARLY INTERVENTION AND MEDIATION TEAM

VISION: (WHY WOULD WE DO THIS?)

In the PTCA, we strive to be a body of churches and leaders who are united in the common mission of proclaiming Christ, worshiping God, and following the Holy Spirit. We recognize that within that common mission, differences are inevitable, with people feeling strongly about different ideas, understandings, goals, styles, and values, which can lead to conflict between individuals and groups. While conflict is a normal part of life and can lead to helpful growth and change, it can also be hurtful. Conflict that is not managed adequately can threaten the well-being of congregations and their pastors and members. With that understanding, the PTCA has formed the Early Intervention and Mediation Team (EIMT).

To fulfill the Presbytery's mandate to promote "the peace and harmony of congregations and (inquire) into sources of congregational discord." (G3-0301c), it is our vision to provide persons trained and equipped to assist and support congregations and members of Presbytery in conflict situations. Through EIMT member's involvement, we will seek a way forward, out of conflict to restored harmony in ministry.

II.4.2 IDENTITY: (WHO IS THIS TEAM?)

EIMT will have an elected membership of five to seven Teaching and Ruling Elders. One will be elected by PTCA to serve on COM. The team will choose a chair or co-chairs. The members will have experience and/or training in managing conflict and a passion to walk alongside pastors, sessions and congregations in times of conflict, listening with them for the leading of the Holy Spirit. The team will partner with the Nominating and Leader Development Team in selecting members, who will reflect as much as possible the diversity of the Presbytery. The terms will be for three years, renewable once.

In addition to its elected members, the EIMT will recruit PTCA people with specialized training in conflict resolution who agree to do this intentional and sometimes difficult work when needed. When they are working on a conflict situation, these non-voting EIMT members will attend team meetings for consultation.

II.4.3 RESPONSIBILITIES: (WHAT WILL THE TEAM PROVIDE TO CONGREGATIONS *and congregational leaders*?)

1. During times of conflict we will offer personal involvement and resources for Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Sessions, congregations, and congregational committees or groups.

2. When there is an issue or conflict that comes to the attention of PTCA, we will consult with the person who received the first contact about organizing the immediate response.
3. We will help the people in conflict to receive consultation and mediation services, provided by EIMT members or an outside consultant
4. We will coordinate with the Pastoral Positions Team when there are needs for pastoral leadership.
5. We will coordinate with the Pastoral Leader Care Team to provide pastoral accompaniment for pastors in a time of conflict.
6. We will provide periodic training for church leaders in conflict engagement and conflict management.

II.4.4 ACCOUNTABILITY: (TO WHOM WOULD THIS TEAM REPORT?)

The EIMT is a subgroup of the COM, and general information about the EIMT's work will be reported to COM by the EIMT representative. But, since it is essential that the people with whom we work feel free to speak openly about the conflict, the details of the situations in which team members are involved will be kept within the team itself. In its team consultation, record-keeping, reporting to COM, and coordination with other PTCA groups, the EIMT will maintain its pastoral and professional confidentiality with the people with whom we are involved.

1. The EIMT will make recommendations to COM about any issues that require COM or Presbytery approval.
2. If resolution of a conflict cannot be achieved through the efforts of EIMT, we will step aside and ask COM and the conflicted parties to determine next steps.
3. The EIMT will have access to additional funding, beyond its budget, from the Strategic Ministries Fund through the Mission, Scholarship, and Grants Committee.

II.4.5 AUTHORITY: (WHAT DECISIONS CAN IT MAKE, AND WHAT DECISIONS MUST *another body* make?)

1. Delegated Authority

The EIMT has delegated authority from COM to take the following actions and report these actions to COM:

- a. Work directly with the leaders of congregations, Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Ruling Elders on Sessions, and others to resolve conflicts.
- b. Initiate collaboration with other PTCA committees and teams to respond to conflict situations.
- c. Retain consultants or others to assist with mediation and negotiation.

2. Recommending Authority

The EIMT can make recommendations to COM to request funds for extra-budget expenses

II.4.6 STAFFING: (WHO WILL STAFF THIS COMMITTEE?)

The Executive Presbyter will be the primary staff person for the EIMT.

The Stated Clerk will advise the EIMT about situations that connect with provisions of the Book of Order.

SECTION III – PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

III.1. INSTALLED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

Called Positions

The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor and associate pastor. A teaching elder may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period of time, after approval of Session, the congregation and the Presbytery. A search process must be conducted by a duly elected Pastoral Nominating Committee with assistance and guidance from the Pastoral Positions Team liaison.

III.2. NON-INSTALLED (TEMPORARY) PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

When there is a vacancy in the pastoral position, or when the pastor is unable to function, the Presbytery and Session have the opportunity to carefully describe a position which meets their very particular needs.

The person filling these positions must be or become a member of this Presbytery (or a temporary member for the length of the term).

No two situations are identical or have the same resources or expectations. The title and work that is most appropriate for the situation can be selected. The titles that have been traditionally used are:

Transitional Pastor

Usually, a teaching elder with special training in leading a congregation through a transitional time in preparation for calling a new installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Secured by the Session, with the approval of the Presbytery. Ordinarily not eligible to be called to the installed position.

Bridge Pastor/Temporary Supply

A teaching elder or CRE secured by the session, with the approval of the COM, for a brief period of time, to serve either between the departure of a Pastor and the readiness to begin a Transitional process, or prior to the call and installation of a new installed pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor. Ordinarily not eligible to be called to the installed position.

Stated Supply

A teaching elder secured by the session, with the approval of the Presbytery, to serve a congregation not in a position to call an installed pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor.

Each of these positions are contractual, for twelve months, renewable with the approval of Session and the Commission on Ministry following review.

Presbytery, as recommended by the COM and PPT, may determine that a teaching elder serving in a non-installed, temporary relationship may be eligible to become the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor, and that such would serve the mission strategy of the Presbytery

and congregation. Such a relationship ordinarily requires a unanimous vote of the COM/PPT and a three-fourths vote of the Presbytery present and voting. (G2.0504c).

III.3 PARISH ASSOCIATE RELATIONSHIP

A parish associate is a teaching elder who serves in some validated ministry other than the local parish, or is a member-at-large, or is retired, but who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church in keeping with ordination to the ministry of teaching elder. The relation shall be established upon nomination by the pastor through the session. The pastor shall ask the session to request that a parish associate relationship be established between the pastor, parish associate, and session. The parish associate shall be responsible to the pastor, on an “as needed, as available” basis and/or the parish associate shall be responsible to the session, on an “as needed, as available” basis, with or without remuneration. It is recommended that this relationship be renewed annually by the session, pastor, and parish associate. When the call to the installed pastor is dissolved, the session and the parish associate shall revisit this relationship and make a new agreement. The Presbytery may dissolve the relationship with the parish associate upon the recommendation of the PPT.

A parish associate may not ordinarily be called to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor of a church served as parish associate, unless at least six months have elapsed since the end of the parish associate relationship.

III.4. PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR EMERITUS, EMERITA

When any pastor or associate pastor retires, and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue as association in an honorary relationship, it may seek to elect him or her as pastor or associate pastor emeritus or emerita. The session shall consult with the PPT concerning the wisdom of this relationship for the peace of the church. After consultation with the PPT, the congregation at a regularly called congregational meeting may elect him or her as pastor or associate pastor emeritus or emerita, with or without honorarium, but with no pastoral authority or duty. This action shall be subject to the approval of the Presbytery, and may take effect upon the formal dissolution of the pastoral or associate pastoral relationship or anytime thereafter.

III.5. RETIRED PASTORS

The care and support of retired pastors falls under the responsibility of the Executive Presbyter in collaboration with retired pastors who wish to remain connected and active. Special care is given to educating retired pastors about Board of Pension and other financial matters.