

Definitions and Guidelines for Exceptions in Pastoral Relationships

PURPOSE: Under the present Book of Order, presbyteries have the opportunity to give definition and specific descriptions to the teaching elders within their bounds. To that end, the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Carlisle sets forth these definitions of pastoral relationships between teaching elders and congregations, along with the specifics as to how each type is characterized.

INSTALLED PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Pastor
- Co-Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Designated Pastor

All installed pastoral relationships require three partners: the teaching elder (hereafter named pastor) being called, the congregation extending the call, and the presbytery approving the call. Generally, an installed pastoral relationship is for an indefinite term and is filled through a full and open search process with a properly constituted Pastor Nominating Committee elected by the congregation. After the Commission on Ministry approves the prospective candidate pastor, the Commission authorizes the Session of the church to call a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of voting on the call of the pastor.

While an installed pastoral relationship is customarily for an indefinite term, there are occasions where it is advisable for a pastoral relationship to be designated for a term, the length of which is determined by action of the Commission on Ministry in consultation with the congregation and specified in the call. All conditions for a full call are required in such instances—i.e. a full and open search by a duly elected pastor nominating committee, examination by and concurrence of the Commission on Ministry, and an affirmative congregational vote. The only difference between such a call being for a designated period is that all parties agree to the time limitation in question. After the time limitation has been met, the Session of the church may petition the Commission on Ministry for additional designated time. Or, should the congregation so desire and vote affirmatively, a pastor in a designated position may be called with Commission on Ministry approval to an indefinite term as installed pastor.

As a general rule, a teaching elder in a position as Associate Pastor is not eligible to become the pastor in the church in which he or she is serving as Associate Pastor. (*G-2.0504a*). Any action to move an Associate Pastor to become the installed pastor must be achieved as outlined in the Book of Order

(G 2.0504 c) and the Presbytery of Carlisle Policy on Making Exceptions in Calling a Pastor (VI-DPR-4-5), Carlisle Presbytery Leadership Handbook.

TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Book of Order permits the presbytery to establish temporary pastoral relationships which do not carry a formal call or installation. In general, a temporary pastoral relationship is established when a congregation is without called and installed pastoral leadership. Any temporary pastoral relationship shall be set forth in a Covenant of Agreement between the temporary pastor and the Session of the church where the pastor will be serving. The Commission on Ministry shall vote to approve or not approve any temporary pastoral relationship arranged by a Session. An individual in a temporary pastoral leadership relationship may be a teaching elder, or a commissioned ruling elder. Since temporary pastoral leadership is arranged without a duly elected PNC and without a full and open search, no formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place. When the congregation is without called and installed pastoral leadership, the Session, in consultation with the Commission on Ministry, takes the initiative to secure someone to provide temporary pastoral leadership.

The Book of Order leaves it to presbyteries to determine the appropriate titles for these temporary pastoral relationships. The Presbytery of Carlisle recognizes that there are varying circumstances when a church is in need of temporary pastoral leadership and that not all temporary pastoral relationships are alike. To respond to these various needs, the Presbytery has designated three temporary pastoral relationships:

- Interim pastor (aka- Transitional Pastor)
- Temporary pastor
- Supply Pastor

An Interim Pastor shall have successfully completed special training for the unique ministry of serving churches in the midst of pastoral transition. The Interim Pastor shall provide documentation of such required training. An Interim Pastor is a teaching elder hired by a session to fill specific pastoral duties during a time when the church is without an installed pastor. These duties shall be outlined in a Covenant of Agreement between Session and Pastor and approved by the Commission on Ministry. An Interim Pastor is the preferable option when a church needs time and leadership to bridge the transition between fully installed pastors.

A Temporary Pastor¹ is a teaching elder already ordained for ministry, or a commissioned ruling elder², who is placed in a temporary position defined by a Covenant of Agreement between Session and Pastor, and approved by the Commission on Ministry. When a ruling elder is commissioned as an appointed pastor, the plan included in the Carlisle Presbytery Leadership Handbook (VI- CRE– 1, 2) entitled “Commissioned Ruling Elder Plan for the Presbytery of Carlisle” shall be followed. A temporary pastor is an option when a church is in need of pastoral leadership while searching for the next fully installed pastor.

¹ *The temporary pastor encompasses what had previously been referred to by one of these terms: Designated Pastor, stated Supply Pastor, Temporary Supply Pastor, Commissioned Lay Pastor and Parish Associate. These terms will no longer be used by the Presbytery of Carlisle.*

² *As defined in the **Book of Order**, G-2.10 Commissioning Ruling Elders to Particular Pastoral Service*

A Supply Pastor may be placed in a congregation to serve over a longer term than might be customary for a temporary pastor. There are some congregations which, for various reasons, find themselves in need of pastoral leadership for an unspecified amount of time but are unable to call a pastor to an indefinite term. Among the examples are congregations that have difficulty supporting a full time called pastor but still wish to continue as a congregation. The duties of the supply pastor shall be outlined in a Covenant of Agreement between Session and Pastor and approved by the Commission on Ministry. The length of the term for any of the above people in a temporary pastor relationship may be up to twelve months. The term is renewable annually, with the approval of the Commission on Ministry.

Within the Presbytery of Carlisle, an individual serving in any temporary pastoral relationship is not eligible to become installed as Pastor or Associate Pastor in the church where he or she is serving. While the Book of Order gives presbyteries the flexibility to allow such teaching elders to become installed as Pastor or Associate Pastor in the church where they are serving, that exception calls for the presbytery’s mission strategy to permit such exceptions. Any action to move a temporary pastor to become an installed pastor or Associate Pastor must be achieved as outlined in the Book of Order (G 2.0504 c) and the “Presbytery of Carlisle Policy on Making Exceptions in Calling a Pastor” (VI-DPR-4-5), Carlisle Presbytery Leadership Handbook.

Presbytery of Carlisle Policy on Making Exceptions in Calling a Pastor

The Book of Order states in section G-2.0504a”An Associate Pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed Pastor of that congregation.” It also states in section G-2.0504b”a minister of Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor.” However in G-2.0504c the Book of Order states:

c. Exceptions

“A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a minister of Word and Sacrament currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a minister of Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. Presbyteries that permit this eligibility shall establish such relationships only by a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present and voting.” Below is the policy of the Presbytery of Carlisle in regard to dealing with this allowed exception.

The Pastor Nominating Committee or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC or APNC), or the Session if applicable (in the case of a proposed merger or shared ministry) of a particular congregation shall produce a written report listing their justifications and rationale as to why this is an exceptional case. The representatives of the PNC, APNC or Session (if applicable) shall meet with the Commission on Ministry and present their request for exception both orally and in written form. Subsequently, the Commission on Ministry will meet with the candidate.

The Commission on Ministry after meeting with the PNC, APNC or Session (if applicable) and the Candidate shall refer the request for exception to presbytery at a regularly stated meeting with a recommendation (positive, negative, or neutral) along with rationale. The PNC APNC or Session (if applicable) shall present to Presbytery the same material presented to COM stating the reasons why the exception should be granted. At its meeting the presbytery will examine the Candidate and question the PNC, APNC or Session (if applicable) to determine for itself if the change in the pastoral relationship is within the strategic interests of the presbytery. In order for

the exception to be granted, the Presbytery must vote to approve the exception and establish the pastoral relationship by an affirmative vote of three fourths of the members of presbytery present and voting, prior to the approval of the Call by the congregation.

Pastor Emeritus or Pastor Emerita

When a Teaching Elder retires, and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue an association in an honorary relationship, it may, at a regularly called congregational meeting, elect him or her as Pastor Emeritus or Emerita, with or without honorarium, but with no pastoral authority or duty. This action shall be taken only after approval by the Commission on Ministry concerning the wisdom of this relationship. This action may take effect immediately following a two-year period of separation or at any time thereafter.

Approved by Presbytery May 28, 2019

APPENDIX A

Chart of ALL Pastoral Relationships in Presbytery of Carlisle

PASTOR/ ASSOCIATE/ CO-PASTOR	DESIGNATED PASTOR	TEMPORARY PASTOR	INTERIM PASTOR/ INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR	SUPPLY PASTOR
<i>Called/Installed</i>	<i>Called/Installed</i>	<i>Provides pastoral leadership during time when a church is seeking a permanent pastor</i>	<i>Provides pastoral leadership & helps guide church through time of transition</i>	<i>Church is not seeking an installed pastor, provides pastoral leadership</i>
PNC elected by congregation	PNC elected by congregation	Chosen by Session with Presbytery approval through COM	Chosen by Session with Presbytery approval through COM	Chosen by Session with Presbytery approval through COM
Open search process	Open search process	Search process probably limited	Search process probably limited	Search process probably limited
Called by congregation	Called by congregation for limited term; renewable	Hired by Session/ Congregation not involved	Hired by Session/ Congregation not involved	Hired by Session/ Congregation not involved

Terms of Call	Terms of Call	Terms of Call/ Covenant of Agreement outlining expected duties	Terms of Call/ Covenant of Agreement outlining expected duties	Terms of Call/ Covenant of Agreement outlining expected duties
Approved by COM	Approved by COM	Approved by COM	Approved by COM	Approved by COM
Permanent position	After completion of specified term, can be called as permanent pastor if search is open	May not be called as next installed pastor, associate pastor, or designated pastor	May not be called as next installed pastor, associate pastor or designated pastor	may not be called as next installed pastor, associate pastor or designated pastor

Original chart inspiration came from Genesee Valley Presbytery