**Commission On Ministry (COM)**

Manual of Operations

(revised/approved – 11/11/2021

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# Section 1:Homestead Presbytery and its Commission on Ministry

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304). This shall guide all the work of the Commission on Ministry.

“Presbyteries shall be open at all times to communication regarding the life and ministry of their congregations. Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to its pastors, both ministers of the Word and Sacrament and, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service (also called commissioned pastors [also known as commissioned ruling elders]), as well as the certified Christian educators of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the presbytery and its congregations, pastors, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient.”

“To facilitate the presbytery’s reception and oversight of minister of the Word and Sacrament members, approval of calls for pastoral services and invitations for temporary pastoral services, oversight of congregations without pastors, dissolution of relationships, dismissal of members, and its close relationship with both member congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, it may delegate its authority to designated entities within the presbytery. Such entities shall be composed of ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament in approximately equal numbers, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403. All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting.” [a portion of G‐3.0307].

In general, all matters dealing with the calling, care, supervision, and dismissal of clergy are the responsibility of the Commission on Ministry (COM). The two significant exceptions are the training of clergy prior to ordination (the responsibility of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry) and the disciplining of clergy (the responsibility of the presbytery following the Rules of Discipline portion of the *Book of Order*).

### The Commission on Ministry (COM)\*

The Homestead Presbytery Bylaws define the role and authority of the Commission on Ministry:

Membership shall be as follows: Fifteen people, equally divided between teaching and ruling elders, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V.B. of the Presbytery Bylaws.

Responsibilities:

* + 1. Shall fulfill the responsibilities designated for a commissionon ministry by the Form of Government [G-3.0307]:
       1. to find terms of calls of teaching elders in order;
       2. to examine and receive into presbytery membership teaching elders seeking admission to presbytery;
       3. to dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries;
       4. to authorize teaching elders to labor within or without the bounds of presbytery;
       5. to visit particular sessions or congregations reported to be affected with disorder, and inquire into and settle the difficulties therein [G-3.03d.,e.], except that no pastoral relationship may be dissolved without the specific action of presbytery.
       6. All such actions taken pursuant to this section are to be reported to the next stated

assembly of the presbytery.

* + 1. Shall conduct a pastoral visitation with each session in the presbytery at least triennially.
    2. Shall make recommendations to presbytery concerning minimum salary for pastors and all other matters relating to compensation, benefits, allowances, and reimbursements, and conduct annually a review of total compensation for all ministers and report that to the presbytery.
    3. Shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators of presbytery.
    4. Shall be responsible for the annual review of session minutes and records.
    5. Shall appoint moderators for sessions without pastoral leadership.
    6. Shall administer the Personal Assistance Fund for ministers, and the Ministry Support Fund for churches.

### Staffing\*

The executive presbyter serves as a resource person for COM. The stated clerk provides interpretation of the *Book of Order* as needed by the COM and advises the COM whenever there is the possibility of an

Administrative Commission or an investigating committee [D‐10.000] being established to work with a congregation or pastor. The stated clerk also handles all official correspondence on behalf of presbytery, including but not limited to transfers of membership, processing of calls, and permission to labor in and out of bounds.

### Meetings

#### 1.4a Meeting Schedule\*

The COM will meet according to its own schedule, but no less than four times a year.

#### b Agendas

The COM Chairperson will prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with the executive presbyter and the stated clerk. Every member of COM has a right to bring concerns or issues not on the agenda to the attention of the committee.

### Electronic Meetings

Electronic meetings will abide by the Homestead Presbytery policy for electronic meetings as found in the Manual of Operations.

#### a Electronic Votes

When a call for an email vote is sent, it shall include verbatim the Homestead Presbytery policy on email votes. Currently that policy is:

###### ELECTRONIC DECISION-MAKING

* + 1. Council, committees, commissions, and other presbytery groups, in lieu of calling a special meeting, may choose to use e-mail for making decisions under the following conditions:
       1. The use of electronic voting shall be only on “non-controversial” issues.
       2. Moderators shall make a good faith effort to contact all members through e-mail, telephone, text, fax and/or other electronic means.
       3. Voting must be without a negative vote. If there is a negative vote, the matter may be considered in a conference call or held for consideration at the next scheduled meeting.
       4. A time and date for close of voting must be stated in calling for an e-mail vote, after which an affirmative decision will be considered the action of the body.
       5. Such action shall be reported to and confirmed at the next meeting of the body and recorded in its minutes.

At no time will COM be asked to vote by email on any issue that they do not have all the information necessary to make a vote in good conscience. Recalling that “God alone is Lord of the conscience,” (F- 3.0101), members are encouraged to vote their conscience regardless of the consequences.

If an issue is controversial and time is of essence, then a special COM meeting shall be called.

### Communications

The COM shall be open to communication at all times with Ministers of Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, commissioned ruling elders, and Certified Christian Educators within the presbytery. [G-3.0307]

### Confidentiality

When communication is received by any member of COM, including the chair, from a pastor or church representative seeking COM advice, approval, input, or informing COM of a situation, it is to be understood that it is a communication to COM and not just to the individual recipient. Therefore the communication shall be shared with the entire committee, either in summary or in whole, whichever is most appropriate. This presumes that all communication, while confidential, is confidential within the committee, not confidential to a particular person.

When people share information with COM members, the COM member(s) need to inform them that anything they say will be shared with other COM members.

### Conflict of Interest

In cases where items under discussion pertain directly to a member of the Commission on Ministry or the congregation the COM member serves or is a member of, that COM member will consider whether it will be helpful for the COM discussion to excuse him/herself from the conversation. Should the decision be made to be excused from that portion of the meeting, the COM member will be fully informed of the subject to be discussed, and be given a chance to speak before leaving. In all cases the COM member will abide by the Code of Ethics for COM members, including abstaining from voting on matters that pertain directly to the COM member or the congregation that member serves or is a member of.

### Conflict situations

It is not uncommon for pastors or church members to share concerns or conflicts with COM members, who may or may not be that church’s liaison. If there is a conflict situation in a church, whether it is within the church, between the pastor and church, or between staff, or a pattern or issue of concern that comes to the attention of a COM member, that member shall inform the church liaison and the COM so that all COM members are aware of the situation, and wisdom can be discerned together. Sometimes a judgment will have to be made as to when a situation involving a pastor becomes an issue for COM. Talk to another COM member if you need advice.

No member of COM, including the chairperson, has the authority to take action on behalf of, to mediate on

behalf of, to represent, to speak for COM, or to appoint a sub group of COM, without the explicit permission of the COM and such permission shall be entered into the minutes.

# Section 1 Appendices

### Appendix 1A: Position Description for COM Members

* + 1. Be a ruling elder holding membership in a church in the Presbytery or minister of the Word and Sacrament holding membership in the Presbytery.
    2. Attend regular meetings of COM. Also attend other meetings as needed or required.
    3. Have regular contact with and oversight of assigned churches.
    4. Assume special assignments as requested.
    5. Work with congregations, sessions and pastors of assigned churches when problems develop.
    6. Assist sessions, congregations and pastors of assigned churches in times of transition.
    7. Work with the Pastor Nominating Committee of assigned churches as advisor and resource person.
    8. Conduct triennial visits to sessions, assist in candidate interviews as requested or needed, and other times as required.
    9. Participate in training events sponsored by the COM and presbytery, including the Boundary Training Workshop.
    10. Each member of the Committee on Ministry will abide by “A Code of Ethics for Committee on Ministry Members” (Appendix 1B).

### Appendix 1B: Code of Ethics for COM Members

1. I will normally keep confidential all information and discussions of the Commission on Ministry. I will not share it with colleagues, friends, spouse or anyone except as required by law, the *Book of Order*, or the presbytery.
2. I will not give a reference concerning a Minister of the Word and Sacrament of the presbytery unless I have been listed by that person as a reference or otherwise approved in writing by that person. When giving references I will confine my answers to matters on which I have direct knowledge and competence or which could be substantiated by public records. I will not knowingly libel or slander a colleague in ministry.
3. I will be discreet in the way I conduct myself as a member of the Commission on Ministry. I will not knowingly take actions that would embarrass colleagues or signal others that “trouble” exists when they would not be entitled to that knowledge.
4. I will treat all my colleagues and particular churches of the presbytery fairly and equally.
5. I will avoid conflicts of interest by abstaining from voting on matters which pertain to my personal interests or the interests of my particular congregation.
6. I will not use my relationships with other members of the Commission on Ministry to attempt to influence the outcome of matters which pertain to my personal interests or the interests of my particular church.
7. I will be available within reason to Ministers of Word and Sacrament and session members of the presbytery who ask me to hear them. I will warn them that certain matters (as child abuse and sexual misconduct) must be reported to secular authorities and/or the courts of the Church, and that all matters shared will be kept confidential within the Commission on Ministry in accordance with Section 1.7.
8. I will not accept remunerations or personal gifts from Ministers of Word and Sacrament or congregations of the presbytery for my service as a member of COM, except as permitted by COM (such as for moderating meetings and preaching). I will report any and all such gifts to the Commission on Ministry and will accept its counsel in the disposition of such gifts.
9. I will respect the advice, counsel, and decisions of the Commission on Ministry and the Presbytery. In working with congregations and Ministers of Word and Sacrament I will remember that I am an agent of the COM. I will act only with authority given to me by the COM. I will fairly represent the position of the COM and will not present my own personal position or views as the position of the COM when my position or views may be different from those of the COM. I will comply with and be guided by the *Book of Order*.
10. I will conduct myself ethically in all the ways expected of ruling elders and Ministers of Word and Sacrament.

Signature Date

Print Name

# Section 2:Homestead Presbytery and its Ministers of the Word and Sacrament

A minister of the Word and Sacrament is a member of a presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry validated by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or honorably retired [G‐2.0503]

### Validated Ministry [G‐2.0503a] \*

* + 1. A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is an active member of the presbytery may be engaged
       1. in a validated ministry within congregations of this church,
       2. in a validated ministry in other service of this church,
       3. in a validated ministry in service
       4. beyond the jurisdiction of this church, or may be
       5. honorably retired.
    2. All ministries entered into by active members of Homestead Presbytery shall be validated, individually or by classification, by the presbytery on recommendation of the Commission on Ministry. All validated ministries shall be in demonstrable conformity with the criteria set forth by the Book of Order G-2.0503.
    3. A member in a validated ministry shall communicate regularly with the Commission on Ministry; this communication shall include as a minimum an annual report of the member’s activities, as requested by the Commission on Ministry.
    4. When the validated ministry is as a counselor or therapist (whether full or part time) the person involved in the ministry will annually furnish proof that he/she has liability insurance of at least one

$1 million per occurrence, and which also names the presbytery and/or the local congregation as an additional named insured.

**Criteria for Validation of Ministry:**

1. The ministry of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament of presbytery shall conform to the principles and requirements set forth in the *Book of Order* G‐2.0503a.
2. Ministries beyond the jurisdiction of the church (see G‐2.0503a) shall be validated and reviewed annually by the Commission on Ministry. It shall be the responsibility of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament engaging in such ministry to take the initiative for requesting validation of his or her ministry, and annual renewal of such validation. All such requests shall be evaluated by the

Commission on Ministry on a case‐by‐case basis.

1. The presbytery requires that Ministers of Word and Sacrament whose primary work is in the secular realm have a validated ministry to remain on the active roll of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the presbytery. Validation may be approved if the Minister of the Word and Sacrament is actively circulating a PIF, is serving as a parish associate, or is available to the presbytery to guest preach or fill full or part time temporary pastoral positions. Availability should include the potential for providing some service to the presbytery or congregation beyond the time required to prepare for and lead Sunday worship.
2. Continuing membership of Honorably Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament, whether actively engaged in ministry or not, does not require annual validation.
3. Ministries other than pastoral ministries recognized in the *Book of Order* include “work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. The Commission on Ministry will use these categories, along with the list of “Authorized Ecclesiastical Occupational Designations” listed on the Board of Pensions website, as the usual basis for recommending that a ministry be validated. The Commission on Ministry may, however, recommend approval for validation of a ministry which may not be included in these categories, if

the commission is satisfied that the ministry fulfills the requirements of validated ministry set forth

in G-2.0503a.

1. Validated ministries relating to other denominations or institutions shall be carried out in accountability for their character, conduct, and performance results to a board of directors, management committee, or other responsible body.
2. In accordance with G‐2.0503a validated ministries shall allow the continuing member to participate actively in the worship and service of a congregation of this presbytery, or of a denomination with which the Presbyterian Church (USA) is in correspondence, and such participation is expected.
3. Nothing in this policy shall be understood as contradicting or invalidating other requirements set forth elsewhere for membership in Homestead Presbytery.

### Member‐at‐Large\*

A member-at-large is a minister of the Word and Sacrament who has previously been engaged in a validated ministry, and who now, without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry, is no longer engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria in G-2.0503a. A minister of the Word and Sacrament may be designated a member-at-large because he or she is limited in his or her ability to engage in a ministry fulfilling all of the criteria for a validated ministry due to family responsibilities or other individual circumstances recognized by the presbytery. A member-at-large shall comply with as many of the criteria in G-2.0503a as possible. A member-at-large is entitled to take part in the meetings of the presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of member-at-large shall be reviewed annually. [G‐2.0503b]

A member‐at‐large ordinarily meets the criteria listed below:

* + 1. Is a member in good standing of a presbytery.
    2. Has not intentionally abandoned the exercise of ministry.
    3. Complies with as many of the criteria of G‐2.0503a as possible, although is no longer engaged in ministry that meets all of these criteria because of family responsibilities or individual circumstances which presbytery recognizes as important.
    4. Continues service or involvement in a local congregation and in presbytery.
    5. Demonstrates continued fulfillment of these criteria (confirmed by annual report).

### Honorably Retired\*

“Upon request of a member of presbytery, the presbytery may designate the member honorably retired because of age or physical or mental disability.” [G‐2.0503c]

### Parish Associates\*

The position of Parish Associate is recognized within Homestead Presbytery. Since those ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Presbyterian Church (USA) are not members of any particular congregation but have instead official ecclesiastical relationship with a presbytery, the position of Parish Associate can provide a member of presbytery serving in a ministry that is not installed or a temporary relationship with an official relationship in the congregation in which he or she regularly joins in worship and work.

Sessions are free to establish Parish Associate relationships with Minsters who are members of Homestead Presbytery as they see fit. COM requires that the terms of such relationships be reported annually to COM.

### Roles and Functions of the COM Regarding Minister Members of Presbytery

#### 2.5a Conduct Annual Visits\*

COM shall visit regularly and consult with each Minister of the Word and Sacrament and report to the presbytery annually. It shall require an annual report from every Minister of the Word and Sacrament performing work which is not under the jurisdiction of the presbytery or the larger church. [G‐2.0503a(5)]

#### 2.5b Examine for Membership or Employment\*

Homestead Presbytery has the responsibility to examine Ministers of Word and Sacrament and candidates, and commissioned pastors seeking membership/employment in the presbytery, including their Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Homestead Presbytery has delegated this examination to the COM. In order to facilitate the employment of ministers and commissioned pastors, and to protect the presbytery, its churches and its officers from claims arising from employment relationships, personnel inquiries may also be a part of the examination.

The purpose of the examination is to see that the individual has a valid call, is theologically within the standards of the presbytery, and seeks to assure a good match between the person and the field of ministry. As part of the examination, each candidate for membership or employment shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G‐2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. Appendix 2E contains the guidelines and scope of the examination. In addition each candidate for membership or employment shall sign an acknowledgement of intent to adhere to the PCUSA ordination and installation vows, whether a minister of Word and Sacrament or equivalent, or commissioned pastor. (Appendix 6L)

#### c Conduct Reference Checks\*

* + 1. For Ministers of Word and Sacrament, and commissioned pastors seeking membership or employment in Homestead Presbytery:
       1. Reference checks shall be conducted by the executive presbyter or Commission on Ministry chairperson.

In the case of ministers of the Word and Sacrament, such reference checks shall include but need not be limited to the executive presbyter (or similar person) or stated clerk of the presbytery the individual is transferring from. A written record of the reference check shall be made, and a complete report of information received in the reference check shall be shared with the COM chairperson and, in the case of a minister or commissioned pastor seeking employment in a particular church, the COM liaison working with the particular church.

* + - 1. Background checks shall be conducted as a part of the process of receiving ministers of the Word and Sacrament seeking to be received into Homestead Presbytery, and for commissioned pastors seeking to serve a validated ministry within Homestead Presbytery. Background checks will include criminal, credit and sexual offender registry background checks. The cost of the background checks shall be borne by the presbytery.

Completed background and reference checks and all communication received from former employers and presbytery officials shall be kept in the permanent confidential personnel file of the minister. This file shall be maintained at the Homestead Presbytery office.

* + 1. For Ministers of Word and Sacrament seeking transfer to another presbytery, and in the case of

requests for information concerning certified Christian educators and commissioned pastors: In order to facilitate the calls of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and to protect Homestead Presbytery, its churches and its officers from claims arising from employment relationships, personnel inquiries have become an unfortunate but necessary practice. Representatives of Presbytery may respond to such inquiries with confirmation of employment or service to the

Presbytery and/or validated ministry, and dates of employment or service to the Presbytery and/or validated ministry.

In the case of executive level reference checks (see 2.5c1a above), the executive presbyter or Commission on Ministry chairperson may also share what is documented in the individual’s file. Before representatives of this presbytery are permitted to respond to further employment inquiries, a release needs to be completed *(Appendix 2E)*, signed and on file at the presbytery office.

#### d Minister Files\*

Homestead Presbytery shall keep hard copy files for all members of presbytery. Files will include such things as:

* + 1. Terms of Call
    2. Background Check Results
    3. Personal Information Forms
    4. Written Records of Reference Checks
    5. Emergency Contact Form
    6. Constitutional Question Acknowledgement Form
    7. Permanent Judicial Commission Decisions
    8. Commission on Ministry Actions and Reports
    9. Installation Administrative Commission Minutes

Access to the file will be limited to:

* + - 1. the Moderator of COM,
      2. the Stated Clerk,
      3. the staff of the presbytery in the presence of the Executive Presbyter or the Stated Clerk and
      4. the individual the file pertains to in the presence of the Executive Presbyter or the Stated Clerk.

When an individual is deceased or departs from the presbytery, files may be transferred to a secured electronic copy.

#### 2.5e Implement Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity\*

The COM is responsible for orienting every Pastor Nominating Committee regarding AA/EEO, and taking steps to assure that every search is conducted to fulfill AA/EEO requirements. Thus, every pastor, regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability will be assured equal consideration by each search committee.

#### 2.5f Dismiss Ministers of Word and Sacrament to Another Presbytery\*

The COM is responsible for granting or denying transfers of its ministers of the Word and Sacrament to other presbyteries. [G‐2.0502]

#### 2.5g Grant Permission to Labor In or Out of Bounds\*

No permission is needed for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to labor outside the bounds of Homestead Presbytery, however it is wise for a Minister of the Word and Sacrament to consult with the judicatory they will be laboring in, in case they require permission to labor within the bounds of their judicatory.

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament must be engaged in a validated ministry, be a member at large, or retired, in order to retain status as a member of Homestead Presbytery. If a minister is laboring outside the bounds of the presbytery in either a temporary or permanent ministry position, that minister is responsible for communicating with COM regarding the work he/she is engaged in and whether or not it fulfills the requirements for membership in Homestead Presbytery.

If a minister of the Word and Sacrament from another presbytery is laboring within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery, he/she is expected to communicate with COM regarding his/her work and is encouraged to participate in the life of the presbytery. If the work is with a congregation or ministry under the jurisdiction of Homestead Presbytery, the procedures outlined in Section 2.5g and 2.5h related to ministers of the Word and Sacrament seeking employment within Homestead Presbytery shall apply.

No permission is needed or required to labor within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery in the case of performing a marriage, funeral, providing occasional pulpit supply, or in general one time services.

#### 2.5h Receive Clergy from Other Denominations\*

Occasionally clergy from other denominations may seek to respond to a call within the presbytery and to transfer their ordination to the PCUSA. In such cases, the requirements of the *Book of Order* [G-2.0505] will be followed.

The clergy will make application for membership to the stated clerk of presbytery, who then transfers the request to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) for supervision and guidance until all

requirements of G‐2.0607 and 2.0610, including taking and passing the standardized ordination exams if required, have been met.

When the CPM certifies that the above requirements have been met, COM will examine the candidate to determine whether the candidate is appropriate for the particular situation for which he/she is being called. The interview/examination will proceed as outlined in Appendix 2F.

#### 2.5i Temporarily Enroll a Minister of Another Christian Church\*

A presbytery may enroll a minister of another Christian church who is serving temporarily in a validated ministry in this church, or in an installed relationship under the Formula of Agreement, when the minster has satisfied the requirements of preparation for such service established by the presbytery’s own rule. [G- 2.0506].

Just as the examination of ministers of word and sacrament for membership in the presbytery has been delegated to COM, so has the examination of ministers of other Christian churches for temporary enrollment in the presbytery. COM will be guided by appendix 2E, Examination of Ministers of Word and Sacrament Seeking Membership in Homestead Presbytery, and appendix 2F, Sample Questions for Examination for Membership, in conducting such examinations.

#### j Provide Oversight/Ecclesiastical Services for Honorably Retired Pastors\*

Presbytery is encouraged to receive, as active members, honorably retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament living within its bounds. Where appropriate, it will encourage continued involvement in the life of the church, and, when necessary, will provide nurture and support. [G-20503]

### Professional Ethics

#### 2.6a Code of Ethics\*

Every Minister of the Word and Sacrament is held to a high standard of conduct as an expression of her or his ordination vows. Homestead Presbytery approves for its ministers of the Word and Sacrament the “Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” (Appendix 2H). These standards apply to all interactions personal and public with individuals, groups, and organizations whether

those interactions are face‐to‐face, or through any form of media be it social, public, or private.

#### 2.6b Sexual Misconduct Prevention\*

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament member of Homestead Presbytery, minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in any capacity within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery, minister of another denomination serving under the authority of Homestead Presbytery, commissioned pastor, and certified Christian educator is required to abide by the Presbytery “Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy.” (Appendix 2I)

#### c Boundary Training (Misconduct Prevention Training)\*

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament member of Homestead Presbytery, minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in any capacity within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery, minister of another denomination serving under the authority of Homestead Presbytery, commissioned pastor, and certified Christian educator is required to complete presbytery sponsored and conducted boundary trainings (misconduct prevention) training approved by COM to prevent misconduct in the church.

Record of completion is made a part of the permanent record of each minister of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned pastor, and certified Christian educator. Exemptions from the requirement of completing

presbytery‐approved boundary training may be granted only by formal action of the Commission on Ministry solely on the basis of either of the following grounds for exemption:

* + 1. no longer doing any form of ministry and having signed a statement to that effect, or
    2. being incapacitated by reasons of health and/or age.

Any minister of the Word and Sacrament of Homestead Presbytery failing to fulfill this requirement shall be deemed not to be in good standing, and shall not cleared to move membership to another presbytery.

Anyone covered by this policy may also be excluded from being eligible to be listed on the pulpit supply list, to serve on Presbytery committees or commissions, or elected to the position of commissioner to Synod or General Assembly, as determined by the COM.

COM will send a letter of delinquency to the governing board of any church or validated ministry served by anyone covered by this policy who has not fulfilled this requirement. The COM will annually report to the presbytery the status of those covered by this policy in regards to their fulfilment of this requirement.

#### 2.6d Fiduciary Accountability\*

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament member of Homestead Presbytery, minister of the Word and Sacrament serving in any capacity within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery, minister of another denomination serving under the authority of Homestead Presbytery, commissioned pastor, and certified Christian educator are held to a high standard of fiduciary accountability. Unethical behavior includes stealing, using church monies in ways other than those for which they were contributed, borrowing from members of the congregation for personal use, and failure to act responsibly with either church or personal finances.

#### 2.6e Separation Ethics\*

In all cases of the ending of a pastoral relationship it is imperative that the departing minister of the Word and Sacrament have special responsibility for observing appropriate ethical standards so that a congregation can be free, in all respects, to make adjustments needed for changes in its pastoral leadership, both during an interim period and then in a new permanent pastoral relationship without influences from the departing pastor. For further information, see Section 4. All pastors leaving a church must sign off on

the “Separation Ethics” form (Appendix 4E).

#### 2.6f Personal Integrity\*

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament of presbytery is expected to conduct him or herself with integrity in every facet of life. Signs of such integrity include honesty, compassion, care and concern for the

well‐being of others, being accountable to presbytery and congregation in all matters of ministry, and “being appropriate” in necessary confrontations.

# Section 2 Appendices

### Appendix 2A: Validation of Ministry Application

Name:

Address:

Primary Phone: Cell Phone:

Email:

###### Ministry Seeking Validation:

Please describe how this ministry meets the criteria in the *Book of Order*, G‐2.0503a (use additional paper as needed):

A validated ministry shall:

1. Demonstrate conformity with the mission of God’s people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture,

*The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order* of this church.

1. Serve and aid others, and enable the ministries of others.
2. Give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God’s Word.
3. Be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served.
4. Include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA) [G‐ 5.0201].

### Appendix 2B: Annual Report Form for Serving Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Church

1. Working in agencies or other employment beyond Homestead Presbytery
2. Working in secular employment Report for the year:

Name: Address:

Primary Phone: Cell Phone:

Email: Employer:

Describe ministry/employment:

Has your ministry or employment changed since your last interview or report to the contact person of COM?

Yes No

* 1. If yes, describe your new ministry or employment:
  2. If yes, describe how your ordination relates to or is necessary for your ministry or employment:
  3. If no, describe any other changes within your continuing ministry or employment which bear on your continuing membership in presbytery:

1. As a Minister of the Word and Sacrament of presbytery, the presbytery is required to review your ministry annually on the basis of the following five criteria, all of which apply (see G‐2.0503a):
   1. *Demonstrate conformity with the mission of God’s people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture,* The Book of Confessions*, and the* Book of Order *of this church.* How do you see your ministry in this regard?
   2. *Serve and aid others, and enable the ministries of others*. How do you see your ministry in this regard?
   3. *Give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God’s Word.* How do you see what you are doing as related to this?
   4. *Be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served.* How do you see your ministry in this regard?
   5. *Include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the*

*PC(USA) [G‐5.0201]*. How do you see what you are doing as meeting this criterion, and in what congregation are you finding your spiritual needs met?

1. List the times that you, as part of your validated ministry, were involved in the administration of the Sacraments in the past year.
2. Share your continuing theological education experiences in the past year and plans for the coming year (e.g., lectures, seminars, workshops, reading, etc.).
3. How are you serving the presbytery or how would you be interested in serving?

Signature: Date:

Please keep a copy for your future reference.

Put additional comments, or further explanation made to the five criterion may be put in additional paper.

*If your work involves pastoral counseling or work as a therapist, please fill out the Annual Report for Counselors and Therapists*

### Appendix 2C: Annual Report for Counselors and Therapists

Name:

Address:

Primary Phone: Email:

Current Position:

Counseling Education (name of institution and degrees)

Certifying Body:

Specialty for which Certified:

Licensed: Yes No If yes, what state:

Requirements of License:

License Category:

Name of Insurance Carrier:

Amount of Liability Insurance Carried:

*Please submit a copy of your liability insurance coverage from the front page of your policy*

List Continuing Education Courses taken the past three years by titles, units, sponsor/institution:

Name of Supervising Counselor:

Supervisor’s Address:

Supervisor’s Phone: Supervisor’s Email:

Frequency of meetings with Supervisor:

Comments:

*Use additional paper for more comments*

Signature Date

### Appendix 2D: Suggested Covenant for Parish Associate Relationship

###### Parish Association Covenant between

**The Rev. and the Session of**

***Pastor church***

###### Effective Date:

Specific Duties (if any):

Remuneration (if any):

It is understood that this parish associate relationship will be reviewed at least annually by the Session and may be terminated at any time by the session or by the Parish Associate.

Signatures:

Clerk of Session Date

Parish Associate Date

### Appendix 2E: Reference Check Release Form

I understand that Homestead Presbytery may be contacted by those seeking a reference check on my character and service. I further understand that Homestead Presbytery policy is that:

1. Representatives of Homestead Presbytery may respond to such inquiries with confirmation of my employment or service to the Presbytery and/or validated ministry, and dates of my employment or service to the Presbytery and/or validated ministry;
2. In the case of executive level reference checks, the executive presbyter or Committee on Ministry chairperson may also share what is documented in my file.
3. Before representatives of this presbytery are permitted to respond to further employment inquiries, a release needs to be completed, signed and on file at the presbytery office.

I hereby give the following permissions: *(initial choice)*

That the executive presbyter, Commission on Ministry chairperson, or their designees, are free to answer any questions regarding my character or employment/service.

That no further information be shared with those seeking references on my character or employment. I understand that this directive will be shared with those seeking information.

Other:

Signed: Date:

Print Name:

### Appendix 2F: Examination of Ministers of Word and Sacrament Seeking Membership in Homestead Presbytery

###### Purpose

The *Book of Order* provides that the presbytery, through its appropriate commission shall examine each Minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church (G‐3.0306).

The examination provides an opportunity for discussion of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament’s Statement of Faith, understanding of the Reformed faith, and experience in ministry and witness.

###### Responsible for Examination

A COM Interview Team will examine the incoming Minister of the Word and Sacrament in a face‐to‐face (electronic or in person) interview, and will make a recommendation to COM regarding receiving each new Minister of the Word and Sacrament into the presbytery.

As part of the examination, each candidate for membership or employment shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G‐2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a candidate which the COM has otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a serious departure as determined by the COM, the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission must be done at either the next stated meeting or special meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case‐by‐case basis whether the departure is from an essential or not and whether to approve membership in the presbytery.

If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position the Pastor Nominating Committee/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of the church seeking pastoral staff will be notified that action on the Minister of the Word and Sacrament’s reception must be deferred until the next stated or special meeting of the presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to receive the Minister of the Word and Sacrament into membership. The PNC/APNC may then seek another candidate for examination

by the COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of Homestead Presbytery.

This procedure applies only to examination for reception of Ministers of Word and Sacrament already ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Candidates under care of this presbytery will be examined by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and presented for direct theological examination by the presbytery. Procedures for reception of ministers from other denominations are described in Appendix 2F.

###### Preparation by the Minister of the Word and Sacrament

In preparation for the Interview Team examination, each Minister of the Word and Sacrament shall provide a current one page statement of his or her theological beliefs, a Personal Information Form or equivalent, and the signed copy of the “Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Revised Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct of Homestead Presbytery” form (Appendix 2J).

Each Minister of the Word and Sacrament shall meet with the Interview Team for the interview which will start from, but not be limited to, discussion of the statement of faith, its application to life and ministry, and the person’s work history. Other areas for conversation may include self‐care and professional ethics (code of ethics, sexual misconduct, fiduciary responsibility, separation ethics, and personal integrity).

###### Time of Examination

The Interview Team shall interview and examine all Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are finalists for a pastoral call, whether they are members of the presbytery or not, when they are brought to the community by a Pastor Nominating Committee for interview and preaching in a neutral pulpit. The Interview Team will report to the COM on all candidate interviews.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are seeking membership in Homestead Presbytery but are not finalists for a pastor call ‐ e.g., candidate for a Validated Ministry, Honorably Retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament, etc. ‐ may be interviewed at any time mutually convenient for the person and the Interview Team.

If the Interview Team has serious concerns, or if it expects serious concerns in the COM about

* whether a candidate adheres to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity;
* the applicant, if a finalist for a pastoral call, is an appropriate match for the calling congregation; or
* there are some other reasons the candidate may not be received as a member,

the Interview Team shall immediately notify the COM chair and the executive presbyter, if either is not present at the interview and examination. If the applicant is a finalist for a pastoral call, the Interview Team shall also immediately notify the Pastor Nominating Committee. If the PNC continues to move toward a call, the Interview Team shall request the COM to consider whether the person is acceptable for membership.

At its discretion, the COM may request that the person be examined upon the floor of presbytery by the presbytery. If the applicant is a finalist for a pastoral call, such an examination shall occur before presentation of the person to the congregation for a call. On the basis of the report and recommendation of the COM, and the personal appearance when the person in question can respond to the concerns of the presbytery, presbytery shall take action on the request to concur in the pastoral call (if the applicant is the choice of a Pastor Nominating Committee for a pastoral call) and the request to receive the person as a member of Homestead Presbytery. If necessary, the presbytery may share in the reasonable expenses of a visit for direct examination by the presbytery.

###### Report

The convener of the Interview Team shall make a full report and recommendation (with copy of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament’s one page statement of faith and copy of his or her PIF or equivalent) to the COM, which will normally take action on behalf of the presbytery. The action of the COM will be reported to the presbytery at its next Stated Meeting. A copy of the one page statement of faith shall be made a part of the COM report to presbytery.

###### Examination of Ministers of Word and Sacrament not Called to Congregations

An Interview Team of three members of COM shall conduct the examination as though the Minister of the Word and Sacrament were being called to a pastoral position, and will make its recommendation to the COM for action.

### Appendix 2G: Sample Questions for Examination for Membership

###### Sample Questions for Examination of Ministers of Word and Sacrament Seeking Membership or candidates for employment in Homestead Presbytery

The interview will start from, but not be limited to, discussion of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament’s statement of faith, the person’s work history, in the case of a finalist for a pastoral call, includes the

appropriateness of the “match” of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament with the church.

###### Personal Faith Experience

* + How has the Gospel been good news in your life, and how might you share it with others?
  + What are the “growing edges” in your ministry?

###### Theology and Sacraments

* + What elements of Bible content and Reformed theology give you most guidance in our present struggle for social justice?
  + How are the sacraments sources of hope and promise? Give a specific example from your ministry.

###### Polity

* Describe the *Book of Order’s* portrayal of the working relationship between presbytery and congregations. Mention the main practical issues that have arisen in your experience of that relationship.
* Do you have any departures from the ordination standards as described in G-2.0105 of the Book of Order. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance.

###### Mission and Constitution

* + How do you balance denominational loyalty with personal freedom of conscience? Are there specific issues where this presents a problem for you?
  + How have you implemented evangelism, peacemaking, alleviation of hunger, education and inclusivity into your ministry?

###### Ministry

* + What goals have you set for your ministry?
  + How would you describe your leadership style? What are your expectations of leadership to be provided by others (e.g., session, governing board, colleagues)?
  + What are your feelings about conflict? What is your preferred style (or styles) for responding to conflict, both within the congregation or group that you serve, and between you and others?
  + Describe your commitment to presbytery and the mission program of the PC(USA).
  + What is your approach to, and your commitment to, professional development and personal growth? Give some examples of what you have done in this area.
  + (For pastoral calls) What are your perceptions of the congregation you are being called to serve: its goals, its style and character, its particular strengths, needs and potential?
  + (For pastoral calls) What particular skills do you have in the congregation’s top two priorities (Ministry Information Form)?

### Appendix 2H: Ethical Conduct Policy\*

*Taken from the Minutes of the 210th General Assembly, 1998*

###### Life Together in the Community of Faith:

**Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

As an ordained officer in the Presbyterian Church (USA), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made at my ordination, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry, and, relying on God’s grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

###### Section 1

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
2. Be honest, and truthful in my relationships with others;
3. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
4. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
5. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
6. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitative behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness responsive to God’s reconciling will.

###### Section 2

I will conduct my ministry so that nothing need be hidden from a governing body1 or colleagues in ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Preach, teach, and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
2. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
3. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my office and the positions of responsibility I hold;
4. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my ministry;
5. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the community of faith for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (USA) policy;
6. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, unless an individual is a danger to self or others;
7. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;
8. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit for all sources used in sermons, papers, music, and presentations, and observe copyrights;
9. Refrain from incurring indebtedness that might compromise my ministry;
10. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;
11. Observe limits set by the appropriate governing body1 for honoraria, personal business endeavors, and gifts or loans from persons other than family;
12. Accept the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am

accountable for my ministry;

1. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;
2. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and upon leaving a ministry or office speak and act in ways that support the ministry of my successor;
3. Participate in the life of a ministry setting I left or from which I have retired only as directed by presbytery;\*
4. Provide pastoral services for a congregation I previously served only as directed by the presbytery and provide pastoral services to members of other congregations only with the consent of their pastors;\* and
5. Consult with the Commission on Ministry2 in the presbytery of my residence regarding my involvement in any ministry setting during my retirement.\*

\*These standards apply only to pastors; they also apply to commissioned pastors when they are performing pastoral function.

###### Section 3

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal. Therefore, I will:

1. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;
2. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues in ministry;
3. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships, and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and
4. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion, and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

Footnotes based on the New Form of Government, approved, July 2011:

1 Now called “mid‐councils” 2 Now called “Committee on Ministry”

### Appendix 2I: Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy\*

1. Preface
   1. In recent years there has been an increasing number of instances in which ministers of word and sacrament, continuing members of presbytery (hereinafter referred to as continuing members), have been alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is a practice that contravenes the ordination vows, and in most instances, is in violation of the laws of the state as well. It should be noted that this is not an issue for this particular denomination alone, but is being experienced within many religious communities.
   2. When accusations of sexual misconduct against a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned lay pastor are brought forward, even in the rumor stage, it is important that the presbytery act promptly and lovingly toward all parties involved. Prompt action must be taken to deal with such accusations.
   3. Homestead Presbytery strongly condemns discrimination based upon sex including sexual harassment. Such conduct is against the law and will not be tolerated in any form by any person.
2. Definitions
   1. Sexual misconduct includes:
      1. Sexual misconduct specifically defined elsewhere by scripture or church authority.
      2. Nebraska state statutory civil and criminal definitions for sexual misconduct including, but not limited to: adultery, harassment, molestation, rape, sexual battery, sodomy, and other similar offenses.
   2. Sexual harassment includes:
      1. Making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature a condition of an employee's obtaining employment or the continuation of said employment; or
      2. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee; or
      3. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment by such conduct. This prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to unwelcome sexual flirtations; advances or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal comments about an individual's body; sexually degrading words; and the display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
3. Procedures
   1. Sexual misconduct allegations
      1. When accusations of sexual misconduct are brought forward, they will be dealt with according to the procedures defined in the Rules of Discipline in the Book of Order.
      2. Those empowered in these and Book of Order procedures shall do all in their power to maintain the confidentiality of the name(s) and particular church(es) involved.
      3. In case of an accusation by an individual against another, or of self-accusation, no preliminary procedure shall be instituted and no charges shall be filed against the alleged offender until a statement of an alleged offense, together with supporting information, shall have been submitted in writing to the stated clerk of the presbytery. The written statement should give a clear narrative and alleged facts that if proven true would likely result in disciplinary action. (Book of Order, D-10.0101)
      4. In the case of an alleged offense of sexual abuse toward any person under the age of eighteen, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent, the Book of Order, D-10.0106, regarding administrative leave, will be followed.
      5. In all cases, without undertaking further inquiry the stated clerk shall then report to the presbytery only that an offense has been alleged without naming the alleged offender, or the nature of the alleged offense, and refer the statement immediately to an investigating committee designated by the presbytery. (Book of Order, D-10.0103)
      6. Upon receipt of a written accusation an investigating committee (as defined in the Book of Order) shall be formed in the following manner:
         1. Five members shall be appointed to an investigating committee: a moderator (elder or minister of the word and sacrament), who shall have voting power, and two additional elders and two additional ministers of the word and sacrament. No current member of the commission on ministry or the permanent judicial commission shall be appointed to serve. Careful consideration shall be given to the wisdom of naming an attorney.
         2. These members shall be appointed by the executive presbyter, the stated clerk, and the moderator of the commission on ministry in consultation with one another and by unanimous decision.
         3. Should the executive presbyter or the stated clerk or the moderator of the commission on ministry be the target of an accusation, he/she shall be replaced in the appointing process by the moderator of presbytery council.
         4. All expenses of the investigating committee shall be paid by the presbytery.
         5. The investigating committee shall not commence its work until the presbytery has been duly notified of the names of those individuals appointed to serve.
      7. The investigating committee, entrusted with the responsibilities assigned in the Book of Order D-10.0202, is ordinarily to be appointed within three days of the receipt of the written accusation(s).
      8. Homestead Presbytery shall respond to the charges (be there any) expediently, in recognition of its responsibility for maintaining the peace and purity for its particular churches and its responsibility for both the churches and the continuing members under its care. Therefore, Homestead Presbytery shall:
         1. Direct the stated clerk to notify the continuing member, the session of the particular church(es) (or governing board of the agency) and the commission on ministry that the continuing member has been placed on paid administrative leave without prejudice, from all ministerial rights and responsibilities until a full investigation has been completed and a decision has been rendered.
         2. Provide, through and at the expense of the commission on ministry, for the continuity of worship, preaching, administration of sacraments, a moderator of session, and pastoral care of the particular church.
         3. Offer, through and at the expense of the commission on ministry, counseling for the continuing member and family. This will be provided during the time that any judicial process is pending.
         4. Offer, through and at the expense of the commission on ministry, counseling for the alleged victim(s) and their families and provide an advocate for the alleged victim(s). The advocate for the alleged victim(s) shall counsel with the victim(s) advising them of the procedure and status of the church investigation. The advocate shall make recommendations to both the alleged victim(s) and the commission on ministry for the care of the victim(s). The advocate will be provided during the time that any judicial process is pending.
         5. Work, through the commission on ministry, with the particular church’s session, to keep the particular church informed. Commission on ministry will assign an advocate for the particular congregation.
         6. It is not necessary for the advocate to have any more information about the

accusation(s) other than where in the process they lie.

* + - 1. Publicly exonerate the continuing member or take whatever action is appropriate once the investigation and judicial process, if any, has been completed.
      2. Work, through the commissionon ministry, with the particular church to mend, where possible, the pain, hurt, and grief that it experiences.
      3. Retain and utilize legal counsel if and as needed.
      4. Direct the stated clerk to counsel anyone filing accusation(s) that false accusation(s) are punishable by church law and may make them liable to civil suit.
  1. Sexual harassment allegations
     1. Employees who believe that they have been the subjects of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately to their supervisor. If they do not feel comfortable talking to that individual, they may speak with any executive or executive staff person, or the moderator of the personnel committee.
     2. Any supervisor, agent, or other employee who has been found by Homestead Presbytery, after appropriate investigation, to have sexually harassed another employee, will be subject to appropriate sanctions, depending upon the circumstances, from a warning in his or her personnel file up to and including termination.

### Appendix 2J: Ethical Conduct/Sexual Misconduct and Prevention Policy – Sign‐off

###### Acknowledgement and Acceptance of

**Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Sexual Misconduct and Prevention Policy of Homestead Presbytery**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the “Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)” adopted by Homestead Presbytery.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the “Sexual Misconduct and Prevention Policy” of Homestead Presbytery.

By my signature below, I confirm that I have read the Standards of Ethical Conduct and the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy, that I understand the meaning of the documents, and that I agree to conduct myself in accordance with both the Standards and Policy. I acknowledge also that I will be expected to sign a similar document at all such times as amendments and/or revisions to these documents may be made and provided to me for my signature.

Please complete the form below and return to the Office of the Stated Clerk.

Signature Printed Name

Street Address City, State, Zip

Email Address Date

# Section 3:Homestead Presbytery and its Congregations

The *Book of Order* directs the Commission on Ministry (COM) to assist churches and clergy in the ministry of a particular congregation [G‐3.0307].

To this end the COM shall visit with each session in the presbytery at least every three years. In addition, it is the goal of COM to provide assistance and support through a regular and continuing relationship with each session and its pastor(s).

### Liaisons

The COM will assign every congregation a COM Liaison as its primary contact with a congregation. Liaisons will make a point of getting to know a congregation through its pastors (pastors, associate pastors, and parish associates), clerk of session, and the Session, and of being a resource for them. The primary role of the liaison is to be a support and a resource for a congregation and its pastors.

Responsibilities of the COM liaison:

* + 1. Communicating with the clerk of session and all pastors introducing themselves and outlining duties and responsibilities of the liaison relationship, encouraging contact with the liaison regarding any matters to be brought to the attention of the COM.
    2. Meet annually with the session and quarterly with all pastors, to hear joys, questions and concerns, and serve as a resource when needed. It would be appropriate for the liaison to ask to be put on the mailing list for the newsletter and special mailings and to ask the clerk to share the session minutes.
    3. Meet for an in depth triennial review with the session once every three years.
    4. When pastoral vacancies occur, the COM liaison is the primary contact person with the church and will represent the Presbytery and guide the congregation and pastors in such areas as the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the securing of interim leadership, the formation and process of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and the calling and installation of pastoral leadership.
    5. When experiencing conflict or working in an area of church government with which the liaison is not familiar or well trained, the COM liaison will enlist the help of others in carrying out these responsibilities.
    6. At all times the COM liaison will keep the COM informed about his/her work with a congregation, and will communicate to the session information from COM relevant to that congregation.
    7. At all times COM liaisons will keep in mind issues related to confidentiality and conflict of interest (See sections 1.7 and 1.8.)

### Session Records Review\*

The COM is responsible for the annual review of session records. (G-3.0108a) The COM will work with the Stated Clerk to facilitate that review.

### Moderators of Session

According to the *Book of Order*, G-3.0104, the pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session of that congregation. Pastors of the congregations in Homestead Presbytery are not always Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or commissioned pastors of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Such

pastors often are not familiar with PC(USA) polity and are therefore not prepared to moderate session meetings.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) shall determine case by case the best way to train pastors who are not familiar with PC(USA) polity. Possible options include the polity class offered through the Education for Lay Ministry (ELM) program, the assignment of an ordained minister as a mentor, or one-on-one training with an experienced pastor.

Once the pastor being trained completes the assigned training, COM shall assign the pastor a teaching elder or a ruling elder experienced in moderating session meetings to serve as a coach to help the pastor get started as moderator. This will include providing advice prior to a session meeting and providing feedback after the meeting, and may include serving as the pastor’s advisor during the meeting. The pastor shall explain the role of the coach to session members before each meeting when the coach is present. The pastor’s coach shall only provide help to the pastor during a meeting at the pastor’s request and the

pastor’s coach shall not take over as moderator of the meeting.

The coach shall be paid half of the rate for moderators according to current presbytery policy plus reimbursement for mileage.

The pastor and the coach will agree together when the coach is no longer needed and they will report that to COM.

### Guidelines for the Triennial Visit

The COM is responsible for visiting with each session at least every three years. This triennial visit is designed to encourage communication and to connect with Pastor and Session of the individual churches.

Toward that end, instead of having separate conversations with the pastor and the session, which might

imply that COM is trying to “ferret out” problems, ordinarily Liaisons should meet with the pastor and the session together.

The four main rubrics on the report form (Appendix 3A) constitute appropriate talking points for the Liaison to try to gain an understanding of the life of the church. The fifth rubric, the tour of the building, is optional at the discretion of the COM Liaison. In some visits it may help open up dialogue where the session isn’t particularly "talkative" about what is going on in the church. In that situation, a tour with the pastor and/or one or more of the elders will give them an opportunity to talk about ministry activities. In other situations, it may not be necessary. The goal is for the COM Liaison to gain a fuller picture of the church’s life and ministry.

### Mission Studies\*

Congregations are encouraged to engage in a mission study process every 5 years, as a way of continually evaluating its life and ministry and responding to the ongoing movement of God’s Spirit. This can take the form of a new mission study, or a review of a previous mission study. For most congregations seeking pastoral leadership, the COM may consider a mission study that follows the guidelines below, conducted within the previous three years, as sufficient for a pastoral search process. A mission study process should be led by a person or team experienced in planning strategies, and approved by the session. Leaders may be a pastor, interim pastor, a member of the congregation, or an outside consultant. Any costs related to a mission study are the responsibility of the session.

###### The following principles for the mission study process are affirmed:

* 1. Introduction of mission study process with session
  2. There will be continuity with the mission study process and the on‐going life of the congregation.
  3. There will be a broad based cross‐section of involvement in the mission study process (including the pastor).
  4. The focus of the mission study process will be on all facets of congregational life and not just when there is a pastoral search.
  5. The mission study process will be a process of discovery and not just of confirmation of the same old patterns.
  6. The mission study process will provide flexibility (a tool box and not a cookie cutter) within certain defined areas that need explored.
  7. The mission study process will be a search for God’s will (God’s call is the community’s call).
  8. The mission study process will expand and enhance the congregation’s current planning process (start where the church is) while keeping focus on the “big picture.”

###### The following elements of procedure for the mission study process are affirmed:

* 1. Introduction of mission study process with session
     1. Session approves process.
     2. Session appoints Mission Study Task Force.
  2. Orientation of Mission Study Task Force
  3. Scope of areas to be addressed in the mission study
     1. Who ‐ study congregation membership
     2. What ‐ assess programs
     3. Where ‐ study community
     4. When ‐ focus on next five years
     5. Why ‐ theological rationale
  4. Church Identity Celebration ‐ Telling Our Story
  5. Planning Workshop ‐ Setting Goals
  6. Creation of mission statement and goals
     1. How ‐ annual objectives & action plans
  7. Triennial Visits with session ‐ share progress
  8. Review and Revision every five years

# Section 3 Appendices

### Appendix 3A: Triennial Report Form

**Triennial Visit Report Form**

Church Session Visited Moderator

Date COM Member conducting visit

Topics to discuss (for each, provide a summary)

1. What are you celebrating as a congregation?
2. What are you passionate about as a congregation?
3. What challenges are you facing?
4. How might the Presbytery help?
5. Results of a tour of the building with the pastor and/or session member(s) (optional).

# Section 4:The Commission on Ministry and Times of Pastoral Transition

### Principles\*

The pastoral relationship in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a three‐way covenant among a pastor, a congregation and a presbytery. All three parties must concur before the pastoral relationship may be established or dissolved. Most commonly, it is the pastor who initiates the dissolution of the relationship, ordinarily to accept another pastoral call, to enter another form of labor, or to retire from professional ministry. There are occasions when a congregation initiates action to end a relationship with a particular pastor. There are also occasions in which the presbytery may initiate the process.

In all cases of Presbyterian pastoral relationships, it is the presbytery (ordinarily through its Commissionon Ministry) which must concur in either the creation or dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Moreover, the COM has responsibility for ongoing review and supervision of the relationship(s) between a pastor and an employing congregation or other church body.

In every situation the relevant principles and guidelines for dissolving pastoral relationships as found in the Book of Order apply (G-2.09).

Several principles of our polity also provide helpful background to understanding and implementing this policy:

* + 1. When the congregation and the pastor are in agreement, the Commission on Ministry (COM) is empowered to act with the power of the Presbytery in this regard and report all such action to the Presbytery itself. If all parties are not in agreement, the action proceeds to the floor of the Presbytery as specified in the Book of Order.
    2. All official matters regarding separation/termination of a pastor shall be documented in writing and shared with all three parties.
    3. All conditions for separation shall be compatible with the provisions of the Book of Order.
    4. The separation process shall be considered incomplete until the congregation and the Presbytery vote on the dissolution of the call and any severance terms.

### Types & Process for Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships\*

#### a Request for Dissolution (Resignation) \*

This is a voluntary dissolution which takes places between a pastor and a congregation for any of the following reasons listed in the *Book of Order*:

* + 1. The pastor chooses to dissolve the relationship under G‐2.0902 to take another call.
    2. The pastor chooses to set aside ordination credentials and to ask the presbytery for release from the exercise of ordained office [G‐2.0507].
    3. The pastor chooses to accept membership in another denomination [G‐2.0509], often in conjunction with renunciation of jurisdiction [G‐6.0701].
    4. The pastor chooses to retire [G‐2.0503c].
    5. The pastor chooses to renounce the jurisdiction of the presbytery and denomination, ordinarily because of theological or relational matters of personal conscience [G‐2.0509]
    6. The pastor chooses to resign for other personal reasons.

Process:

The usual process for the voluntary dissolution of a pastoral relationship is as follows:

1. A decision is made by the pastor to end the pastoral relationship.
2. The pastor contacts the COM liaison to discuss time lines and processes [G‐2.0902].
3. The pastor notifies the session in writing, requesting that a meeting of the congregation be called for the purpose of acting on a request to dissolve the pastoral relationship.
4. A meeting of the congregation is called [G‐1.0502], and according to appropriate provisions of the bylaws of the particular congregation [if any], to dissolve the pastoral relationship. It is appropriate that the COM liaison assigned to the congregation be present at the meeting of both the session which calls the meeting of the congregation and at the meeting of the congregation itself. Ordinarily the pastor shall moderate this meeting. If this is impractical, he or she shall invite, with the concurrence of the session, another minister of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elder of the presbytery to preside [G‐1.0504].
5. When congregational action on the pastor’s request to dissolve the pastoral relationship on a specific date has been taken, that recommendation is forwarded to the COM for approval.
6. The COM will work with the departing pastor and the leaders of the particular congregation to suggest appropriate transitional celebrations, to arrange for an “exit interview” with the pastor, to explain the requirements of “separation ethics,” to explain to congregation and session the processes for interim pastoral services, to appoint a moderator of session when the church is without a pastor, and to answer questions which might arise regarding the process of selection of a new pastor.
7. Under ordinary circumstances, a period of not more than 30‐60 days should elapse between the date when the congregation acts on the dissolution of the pastoral relationship and the departure of the pastor. This amount of time is needed for appropriate closure between the pastor and the congregation and community and is not so long as to hinder the work of the church due to having a “lame duck” pastor.
8. The congregation is responsible for paying the pastor the value of their unused earned vacation at the official date of separation. As of the official date of separation, the pastor should remove all personal property from the church property, and if living in a manse, vacate the manse unless other arrangements have been made with the session.

#### b Request for Dissolution (Medical Disability)\*

This is typically a negotiated, voluntary dissolution which takes place between a pastor and congregation due to the medical needs of the pastor, in order for the pastor to go on medical disability.

Process:

* + 1. The normal process for voluntary dissolution (4.2a) is followed, recognizing that the pastor and COM liaison will normally be in conversation with the session about the medical circumstances prior to a decision to request dissolution.
    2. In addition, the time period in 4.2a(7) may be adjusted due to medical necessity.
    3. The provisions of 7.4c apply regarding long term sick leave and the church’s responsibility to continue salary, housing and Board of Pension dues for 90 days until the pastor can go on Board of Pension disability.

#### 4.2c Negotiated Termination\*

Either the pastor or the Session may request that COM assist in negotiating a peaceful and appropriate end to a relationship which either the pastor or the Session believe is no longer workable. This may be the result of funding limitations, changing ministry environment, poor performance, or any other situation that

brings into question the viability of the pastoral relationship. In determining the specific terms of the dissolution, consideration must be given to the reason for separation, the financial situation and overall health of the congregation, and the specific circumstances of the pastor. Salary and benefit continuation may be negotiated but will not normally exceed six (6) months and the cash equivalent of unused earned vacation.

In the event the negotiated termination is a result of dissatisfaction with pastoral performance, documentation of any and all allegations and issues, and attempts at alternative dispute resolution, are to be presented to the COM before a decision to seek a negotiated termination is sought.

Process:

In these situations the process described in Section 4.3 “Severance/Termination Agreements” applies.

#### 4.2d Dissolution for Cause\*

The pastoral relationship may be dissolved as a result of judicial action or presbytery determination that “the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.” (G-2.0904) There are no special terms of dissolution other than the fulfillment of the contractual agreement, i.e., salary and benefits paid up to the date the relationship is dissolved, and cash equivalent of unused earned vacation. Pastor emeritus status shall not be granted to a minister terminated for cause.

Process:

The COM will work with the pastor and session, guided by the “Severance/ Termination Agreement” guidelines in Section 4.3 where appropriate.

#### e Death in Service\*

In the event of the death of a pastor, the salary, housing allowance or manse and allowable benefits of that person will be continued by the congregation to the spouse or dependent for three (3) months from the date on which the death occurs or until the Board of Pension or other insurance death and retirement benefits commence. Presbytery staff can direct the spouse or dependents to further resources as needed.

The COM will be actively involved with the congregation and its session in making arrangements for temporary pastoral services (including an appointed moderator of session) and in assisting the

congregation, pastor’s family, and all others concerned in coping with what is ordinarily a time of special emotional stress and particular needs.

### Severance / Termination Agreements\*

Sessions must contact COM for guidance and counsel prior to the negotiation of any severance/termination agreement.

Following the policies of the Presbytery, the pastor and session will negotiate an agreement. The process for approving the agreement will be in the following sequence (except when the pastor is placed on leave of absence at the recommendation of COM or is terminated by the Presbytery).

* + 1. Session and pastor consult with COM.
    2. Session, pastor and COM mutually agree upon a written severance agreement.
    3. Copies of the written severance agreement are made available to members of the congregation no later than the date of first call for the congregational meeting to consider the dissolution of call and the written severance agreement or copies of a summary with the whole document available. The

agreement shall contain a termination date, financial terms, and the closure of any other issues which were part of the congregation’s call to the pastor. Specific legal agreements between the pastor, the Session and the presbytery may be kept confidential.

* + 1. The congregation votes on dissolution of call and the written severance agreement. The severance terms cannot be amended by any party at the congregational meeting.

The agreement shall specify that if a pastor secures full-time employment before time period of the agreement elapsed, at an equal or greater compensation, the severance agreement will terminate as of the date new employment begins. If he/she secures part‐time employment during the severance period, or full-time employment at a lesser compensation, the church will make up the difference until the last day of the severance period.

Financial arrangements will be conducted through the congregation’s financial system. In special circumstances the church may request the presbytery’s assistance in administering the financial

arrangements. In that case, the church will make severance payments to the Presbytery at least seven days prior to the respective due dates for said payments to the former pastor and the Presbytery will make the respective payments to the former pastor after receipt of payments from the church. The church will deliver to the pastor any and all tax documents (such as W-2 forms) as if the church has paid the salary to the pastor directly. Should a church default on payments under a Termination/Separation Agreement, the Presbytery will not ordinarily assume financial liability for the agreement.

Only in extreme cases of financial hardship will HP financially assist either the church or the pastor during or after termination of the pastoral relationship, and then only upon proper application through the COM to Homestead Presbytery.

Certain non-financial terms also must be included in any severance agreement providing for compensation following the date of dissolution:

1. The minister is to abstain from any pastoral duties and congregational or church sponsored activities and is to maintain accountability to the Commission on Ministry (COM) with regard to progress in a search process toward employment. The minister shall not conduct worship services in the congregation he or she is departing unless approved by the COM. A minister, who following a single warning conducts such shall immediately forfeit all of his or her remaining financial payments under the Severance Agreement.
2. A minister who makes inappropriate contacts with his or her former church or violates the Homestead Presbytery “Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament &

Commissioned Pastors” (Appendix 4E) shall be sent two written warnings by the COM. The first warning may be sent by email to the last known email address. The second warning shall be sent by standard U.S. mail service to the last known address. Upon a third violation, after written notice to the pastor, the severance agreement will become null and void. Remaining financial payments under the Severance Agreement shall be forfeited.

1. In cases other than reduction in force, retirement or the acceptance of a new call, the minister may be required to meet at least monthly with a counselor mutually agreed upon by the minister and the COM and paid for by the minister or using the Employee Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. Alternatively, and no later than the end of the second month of the agreement, the minister may be required by the COM to participate in a professional assessment, the cost of which will be shared equally among the minister, congregation and presbytery, with follow up as required. Failure to meet these agreed to expectations will result in forfeiture of all unpaid financial payments under the Severance Agreement.

#### a Negotiated Settlement/Severance Agreement Considerations\*

The involuntary dissolution of a pastoral relationship with a church is often a time of distress for both congregation and pastor. All parties are encouraged to act in a spirit of mutual forbearance, fairness and forgiveness. A measure of mutual reconciliation is possible even in the midst of dissolution. Feelings often are as important as facts in these matters. Honest statements of feelings and attempts at reconciliation are necessary for the future effectiveness of the pastor and the future health of the congregation. It is the responsibility of the church leadership – Presbytery, congregation and pastor – to create the climate for that to happen, relying on the Spirit of God and example of Christ for strength and guidance.

A thorough and fair severance package is in order following dismissal without prejudice. Severance is understood to include payments equal to salary, housing allowance or use of manse, and continuation of pension/medical/death and disability coverage, deferred income, annuities, and supplemental insurance, if any, for a specified period of time. Homestead Presbytery at a duly called meeting must approve dissolutions and all terms of severance.

COM is available for consultation and counsel in conflict situations before such differences escalate to a crisis level. Only after all reasonable attempts at resolution have failed should termination negotiations begin. Written notice to begin negotiations will come from the session or the pastor after consultation with the COM. In determining the specific terms of the severance agreement, consideration must be given to the reason for separation, the financial situation and overall health of the congregation and the specific circumstances of the pastor. Salary and benefit continuation may be negotiated but shall not normally exceed (six) months and the cash equivalent of all unused vacation leave. Study leave or sabbatical leave will not be granted as part of a severance agreement.

###### Considerations for Pastors and Sessions:

Salary and Pension/Medical Provisions: Recognizing that because churches are exempt from paying unemployment taxes, and thus clergy do not have access to unemployment security payments, COM recommends that Sessions consider paying full salary, housing, pension/medical/death/disability, medical deductible and Social Security payments for between three (3) months minimum and six (6) months maximum beyond the effective date of dissolution or until the Pastor has found full- time employment at a pay rate equal to the severance agreement (see Section 4.3), whichever occurs first. Payments should be made at one of the following rates:

* + 1. the rate in effect at the time the pastoral relationship is dissolved;
    2. rates mutually agreed upon by all parties; or
    3. rates negotiated by the parties as part of the dissolution process.

Should a church default on payments under a Termination/Separation Agreement, the Presbytery will not assume financial liability for the agreement.

The Board of Pensions has specific rules regarding payment of dues in cases of severance agreements, and should be consulted before an agreement is finalized.

Church-owned manse: If a manse has been provided, but it seems appropriate to arrange for other housing prior to the effective dissolution date, the church shall provide for other housing, either physically or financially. Otherwise, manse occupancy is expected to terminate on the effective dissolution date, and definitely at the end of the severance period. A thorough inspection of the manse by a representative of the Session, a member of the COM and an additional officer of the involved church must be made when the manse is vacated and prior to the departure of the Pastor. The Pastor shall be responsible for any damages to the manse beyond ordinary wear and tear. Any reimbursement for unusual damage

shall be negotiated among the Session, COM representative and Pastor. If the parties cannot agree the COM will determine what is fair.

Vacation, Study Leave and Allowances: Compensation for earned, unused vacation time shall be included in the agreement. Unless the pastor and Session agree on other terms with COM approval, the pastor should be paid the cash equivalent of the accrued, unused vacation at the effective date of separation. Accrued study leave or sabbatical time is forfeited; compensatory accounts associated with study leave or sabbatical work also are forfeited. No additional vacation, study leave, sabbatical time, or financial credit for the same, will accrue following the date of dissolution while the severance agreement is in effect. Auto allowances and other perquisites are not allowed after the date of dissolution.

Payment of severance allowance will not be provided in a lump sum. The salary will continue on the regular schedule through the severance period.

The church's share of the pastor's pension and other benefits payments will continue to be paid by the church during the severance.

Outplacement Assistance: The pastor may be offered personal assistance, career planning guidance and help in locating employment elsewhere. These services can be provided on an individual, group or consultative basis. These services may be offered to assist the departing pastor with counseling required by the severance agreement.

Pastoral Contact: The Pastor is subject to the Book of Order G-2.0905 and the Homestead Presbytery “Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors (Appendix 4E) regarding professional contact with members of the former parish after the date of dissolution.

Approval of the Congregation: When the terms of dissolution have been negotiated, the dissolution of call and the written severance agreement must be approved at a congregational meeting. The agreement must be shared with the congregation no later than the time of the first notice given of the congregational meeting.

The Congregational Meeting: The Presbytery strongly advises the pastor to allow the COM to appoint a neutral moderator for the meeting.

1. The call to the meeting is issued by Session and the Clerk of Session is to arrange for verbal announcement of the call during worship at least two successive Sundays. Where the congregation customarily has more than one worship service each Sunday, the notice must be made in all worship services. In all congregations where the members customarily communicate in a language other than English, or in addition to English, the call will be issued in the language(s) in customary use by the congregation. The Clerk of Session will need to certify to the COM and the Moderator of the meeting that the call has been constitutionally made. At its own discretion the Session may also issue the call in writing, but this does not change the requirement for verbally announcing it. If the call is issued in writing, this correspondence is to be directed to those persons currently on the active members roll only. In a situation where a majority of the Session is unable or unwilling to issue the call to such a meeting, the presbytery acting through the COM shall issue the call and shall appoint the Moderator. The announcement will make clear that this is a special meeting of the congregation with a single item of business and nothing else will be acted upon.
2. The Clerk of Session will bring to the meeting a current list of the active members of the congregation as defined in G-1.0402. In all disputes regarding the right of a member to vote, the Clerk’s list will be determinative.
3. Following the call to order and prayer, the Moderator and Clerk shall attest to the presence of a quorum of the active members. In the absence of a quorum, the Moderator will declare the meeting adjourned, close with prayer and dismiss those attending.
4. The motion regarding dissolution and severance will be made by a member of Session. The Moderator will explain that by a special policy of the COM, the motion cannot be divided so as to allow a vote on the dissolution and a separate vote on the severance agreement; neither can the motion be amended in any way.

Rationale: the severance agreement is the product of a three-way consultation and negotiation— with the pastor, the Session, and the presbytery. To amend it in any way is to have the congregation vote on something which the other parties have not agreed to. The motion cannot be divided since the pastor has agreed to terminate on the basis of this package only.

1. In every instance where the termination/severance is the outcome of conflict, the vote on the motion will be taken by written ballot on which will be written:

In favor of the dissolution with the severance agreement

Opposed to the dissolution with the severance agreement

Abstain

1. A motion to make a divided voting result unanimous will be out of order. A motion that adds comments of any kind to the record of the meeting will be out of order.
2. The Clerk of Session, who has functioned as the secretary of the congregational meeting, will submit the minutes for the review and signature of the Moderator; when the Clerk’s signature is added, the minutes are submitted to the next Session meeting for approval.
3. The congregation’s action becomes final upon the concurrence of the presbytery through its COM.

Signed Agreements: The pastor, the Clerk of Session (on behalf of the congregation), and the COM moderator or his/her designee (on behalf of the Presbytery) will sign agreements of the terms of dissolution including agreements not to sue.

###### Role of Commission on Ministry:

The obligations of the COM are to the peace and welfare of both the congregation and the Pastor. As such, COM will first make every effort to assist pastors and congregations in finding successful conflict resolutions that do not involve the dissolution of pastoral relationships. Should dissolution prove necessary, COM will be faithful to both parties in the negotiations in the following roles.

Assist with Severance Agreement Negotiations: Pastoral calls are established and dissolved by the Presbytery. COM will represent the Presbytery as a party to the negotiations.

Approval of COM: The COM must approve the dissolution/severance agreement.

Pastoral Counseling and Training: The COM may recommend or require appropriate counseling, training or other services for the pastor. Continued receipt of severance payments during the period of the

Termination/Separation Agreement may be contingent upon demonstration to COM of good faith effort in meeting these or other stipulated requirements.

Congregational Counseling and Training: In order to restore congregational vitality and address causes underlying the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, COM may recommend appropriate actions for the congregation to undertake.

Administration of Severance Agreement: If necessary, financial arrangements of the Termination/ Separation Agreement may be conducted through the Presbytery Office after the pastor’s departure from the church. The church will make severance payments to the Presbytery at least seven days prior to the respective due dates for said payments to the former pastor, and the Presbytery will make the respective payments to the former pastor after receipt of payments from the church.

Authority of Presbytery and Committee on Ministry: The Presbytery and the COM will require that both church and pastor fulfill obligations under the agreement and may impose such sanctions as the Book of Order provides and as Presbytery deems appropriate. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, withholding recommendations for future secular/ecclesiastical employment for the pastor and refusal to allow the church either to begin or to continue a search process.

###### Role of Pastor:

Congregations that provide a severance package to pastors with whom they have dissolved a pastoral relationship are providing a benefit to a pastor in transition, often at financial hardship to the church. The severance gives the pastor adequate financial protection while seeking another calling or other employment, during a time when he or she would be ineligible for other types of assistance. Simultaneous to paying the severance package, the congregation also must provide regular compensation to the interim pastor. The pastor covered by the severance agreement should be making good faith effort to secure a new calling or other employment.

### When Pastoral Staffing is Increased, Decreased, or Changed\*

There are times when a congregation finds it necessary either to decrease or change its staffing pattern, and a pastor’s job description may change over the course of a longer pastorate. Any change in the terms of call and duties of the pastor requires the concurrence by the presbytery through the COM.

#### 4.4a Increasing Pastoral Time\*

In the case of a pastor employed in a less‐than‐full‐time position, a request to increase the pastor’s time of professional employment shall be made to the COM, which will then review with the church and pastor the needs and desires and abilities which have led to the request and will, if it concurs, approve the request and revised terms of call and position description. Revised terms of call shall be presented to a congregational meeting for a vote of the congregation.

#### 4.4b Establishing Pastoral Positions\*

In the case of a church desiring to increase its professional pastoral staff by the addition of an associate pastor or associate pastors or co‐pastors, initial approval of the new position is required. Evidence of the ability of the congregation to provide appropriate financial support of a person in a new staff position must be demonstrated before the position can be “validated” by COM action and the church permitted to begin seeking candidates through the process described for selected a new pastor. COM must also be informed if

there is a sunset clause on the funding.

#### c Reducing Pastoral Time\*

If a congregation desires to reduce a full‐time pastoral position to part‐time, the COM will consult with the congregation and its leaders regarding any and all circumstances which may have led to the proposal. If convinced that the proposal will not severely reduce the congregation’s abilities to minister effectively, and if the current pastor is willing to have the terms of call changed, and the reduced terms are approved by the congregation, the COM may approve the revision of the terms of call. If the installed pastor is unwilling to accept a reduction in terms of call and there seems to be no other alternative for the particular congregation served, this then becomes the basis for an involuntary dissolution of the pastoral relationship. In any case, a change in the terms of call is to come as the result of congregational action to request the change, with the request to come to the COM for action and approval.

Any reduction in terms of call relative to compensation or percentage of full time shall be subject to the following:

* + 1. Full review by the Commission on Ministry, including careful consultation with the session and pastor or pastors involved.
    2. Concurrence by the presbytery in a specific action. This action is to be separate from the annual approval of changes in terms of call.
    3. Six months’ notice from time of official action for implementation by the congregation involved. If the pastor(s) and the congregation agree, and the COM agrees that it is appropriate, an exception to the six months’ notice may be granted.

The COM will give careful consideration to the following:

1. The level of commitment to ministry of the pastor and of the congregation.
2. The adequacy of the congregation’s program relative to potential with special attention given to stewardship and evangelism.
3. The socioeconomic environment in which the church exists.
4. The quality of relationship between congregation and pastor.
5. Short and long range strategy concerns for the ministry of this congregation.
6. Options available for congregation and pastor.

#### d Eliminating Pastoral Positions\*

When a church desires to “close” a pastoral position rather than to seek a new person to fill it, certain policies apply. The COM will consult with the church regarding the advisability of the elimination of any pastoral position. A decision to close a pastoral position must be approved by a congregational meeting and approved by the COM. A position may not be reopened or re‐validated for a period of two years after the position was eliminated.

### When a Pastor Retires\*

When a pastor chooses to retire, the COM is to be consulted regarding appropriate time lines and processes and ethical standards which are to be observed in the transition process. Although planning for retirement should be a long and careful process over the course of many years, it is not advisable for a pastor to announce to the congregation his or her intention to retire earlier than 3-6 months before the date at which the pastoral relationship is to be dissolved. The normal process for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship then is to be followed. The election of a Pastor Nominating Committee to secure a pastor to succeed the retiring pastor cannot occur until after the pastoral relationship has ended [G‐2.0801], however

plans to begin seeking an interim with the guidance of COM may begin while the retiring pastor is still serving.

Honorably retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament are encouraged to transfer their membership to the presbytery in which they live and the presbytery is encouraged to receive them.

#### 4.5a Honorably Retired Status\*

The designation of “honorably retired” is made by the presbytery by action of the COM [G‐2.0503c]. It may include a time of recognition and celebration at a meeting of the presbytery, during which comments from colleagues and the church(es) or ministries the pastor served may be shared.

#### b Pastor Emeritus, Emerita\*

When a pastor or associate pastor retires, a congregation may be moved by affection and gratitude to continue its association with the person by designating the retired pastor or associate pastor as “Pastor Emeritus/Emerita” or “Associate Pastor Emeritus/Emerita.” This is an honorary position which shall have no pastoral authority or duty. The proposal for emeritus/emerita status is to come from the congregation from which a pastor has retired. The request is not to come from the pastor nor may it be any consideration or requirement for the retirement of the pastor or associate pastor. Action to grant a Minister of the Word and Sacrament emeritus status is taken by the COM after consultation with the congregation and the person nominated.

### Exit Interview\*

Whenever a pastoral relationship has ended an exit interview will be conducted by the COM. (Appendix 4D). During this interview the policy on Separation Ethics will be explained (Appendix 4E) and the sign‐off form completed (Appendix 4F).

Healthy endings are as important as healthy beginnings. When they are well-planned, both pastor and congregation find them freeing and life-giving, even if relationships have not been good leading up to the ending. Incomplete or poor endings often take their toll in both seen and unseen ways for both pastor and congregation, often extending years into the future. The goal of the exit interview is to help both pastor and congregation move forward into life-giving futures by acknowledging both the good and bad in the past, and celebrating the ending.

The Exit Interview forms below are a guide for the interview, and also a guide for the written report of the interviews to be kept on file in the presbytery office.

###### Exit Interview with Departing Pastor:

* + - The pastor can reflect on the time in the position with presbytery representatives. The pastor can receive feedback to help in the next position or stage in life.
    - COM learns about the current status in the church from the pastor who is leaving. COM communicates and discusses the separation ethics policy.
    - Appreciation is expressed for the ministry of the pastor.

###### Exit Interview with Session:

* + - The session can reflect on their ministry with the pastor with presbytery representatives, and receive feedback to help understand the dynamics of the ministry and its import for the future of the church, including reflecting on the impact the departing pastor’s leadership style may have on

the search for future leadership.

* + - COM learns about the current status in the church from the session. COM communicates and discusses the separation ethics policy.
    - Appreciation is expressed for the ministry of the congregation
    - If the pastor as not yet departed, plans for a heathy ending of the relationship is planned, including a time of celebration and goodbye with the congregation.

### Separation Ethics\*

A departing pastor, particularly after a long and successful pastorate, must be careful that formal and official pastoral relationships with a congregation and its members end with the dissolution of a pastoral relationship. The departing pastor shall exercise great care to not interfere in the process by which the church secures interim and installed pastoral services.

Whenever a pastoral relationship is concluded, there is the potential for confusion regarding appropriate conduct between the departing pastor and the former congregation. Any problems in this area are the responsibility of the COM. To prevent difficulties, so much as possible, separation ethics are discussed as a part of the exit interview (Appendix 4D), a copy of presbytery’s “Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament & Commissioned Pastors” policy is given to the departing pastor (Appendix 4E), and the departing pastor signs off (Appendix 4E: Exhibit 1).

# Section 4 Appendices

### Appendix 4A: Procedures for Establishing New Pastoral Positions

1. Ascertain the willingness of the congregation and session to support a staff expansion ‐ spiritually, emotionally and financially. Determine the ability of the congregation to afford the additional financial obligation without adversely affecting mission support of the whole church.
2. If an approved mission study has not been conducted within the previous four years, one shall be conducted to determine the mission of the local congregation within the mission of the whole church, with a special focus on staffing needs.
3. Because a congregation should equip its own members for ministry in and beyond the congregation, the session shall first determine how staff needs which emerged in the mission study may be met by volunteers and/or current paid staff, whether ordained or non‐ordained.
4. Each current staff position should have a position description, stating the skills, style and kind of person needed to do the work (see *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*, published by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Churchwide Personnel Services).
5. Should it be determined that an additional pastoral staff position is needed, a position description shall be written and submitted to the session for approval.
6. Ask the congregation to establish the new position.
7. Send a request to approve the position to COM. If approved, the search process for the new position may begin.

### Appendix 4B: Information Form for Retirees

Full Name:

Ordained (date, presbytery):

Seminary and other post‐seminary studies:

Work History (Indicate how long at each position):

Service to governing bodies:

Special honors, awards or accomplishments:

Family:

Retirement plans:

### Appendix 4C: Exit Interview Guidelines with Pastor

###### COM Exit Interview Guide and Report Form Pastor

**Interview with:**

**Date:**

**Present at interview:**

**Topics Discussed:**

1. Church or position. (Present state of the congregation)
2. Sharing of insights on the work there. (How long there, what went well; concerns)
3. Pastor’s future plans. (Next position, retirement plans, etc.)
4. Separation Ethics Agreement. (“. . .was given a copy of the current separation ethics policy and was discussed. The signed “Separation Ethics Sign‐off Form” is placed put in pastor’s file.)
5. Board of Pensions. (was directed to have the church authorized person submit the service termination form to the Board of Pensions)
6. Additional comments and/or concerns.

###### Possible Questions:

1. What do you feel good about having accomplished in this congregation?
2. What are some of the concerns you have about the future of this congregation?
3. Are there any old “grudges” you need to settle or goodbyes you need to say? Do you need any help with those?
4. Are there any left-over financial details that need to be worked out?
5. What agenda do you feel the COM should help the interim leaders address before a new pastor is called?
6. How is your family managing this shift?
7. Is there anything COM can do to help with this transition?
8. Anything else you feel is important to share with COM?

### Appendix 4D: Exit Interview Guidelines with Session

###### COM Exit Interview Guide and Report Form Session

**Interview with Session of (Church/City):**

**Date:**

**Present at interview:**

**Topics discussed:**

1. Church or position. (Present state of the congregation)
2. Sharing of insights on time the departing pastor ministered there. (How long there, what went well; concerns)
3. Session’s hopes for the future
4. Separation Ethics Agreement. (“. . .was given a copy of the current separation ethics policy and was discussed.)
5. Board of Pensions. (was directed to have the church authorized person submit the service termination form to the Board of Pensions)
6. Additional comments and/or concerns.

###### Possible Questions:

1. What do you feel good about regarding the ministry of the church while the departing pastor

was here? What was the positive growth in the life of the congregation during the pastor’s time here?

1. What are some of the things you had hoped to accomplish in this ministry but were unable to? What might have helped you accomplish these?
2. Were there any difficulties in the relationship between the pastor and session or congregation?
3. Are there any left-over issues that need to be addressed? Grudges that need to be settled, hurts addressed, goodbyes said? Do you need any help with those?
4. Is there anything you regret or are sorry about?
5. What are you thankful for?
6. How is the congregation different now from what it was when your pastor began?
7. What are some of the concerns you have about the future of this congregation?
8. Are there any left-over financial details that need to be worked out?
9. What issues should be addressed before a new pastor is called?
10. Anything else you feel is important to share with COM?

### Appendix 4E: Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament & Commissioned Pastors\*

In accordance with G-2.0905 and Standards of Ethical Conduct (as approved by the 210th General Assembly-1998), the Commission on Ministry (COM) has adopted the following guidelines for pastors and their former congregations. Therefore the Presbytery rejects any pastoral activities which invade another minister of the Word and Sacrament or commissioned pastor’s arena or calling without a specific invitation by that minister, including returning to former calling bodies for pastoral services.

1. Former pastors shall refrain from pastoral functions and shall not accept any position of leadership in their former congregation, nor attend meetings of the session, deacons, trustees, or official congregational meetings.
2. Former pastors shall not officiate at any sacraments, weddings, funerals, or other functions or rituals involving members of their former congregation or within its properties, except by

invitation of the congregation’s current moderator and with approval of COM. While Homestead Presbytery (HP) recognizes that congregations develop emotional ties to pastors, a congregation and members of its community are to be discouraged from making requests for pastoral services from former pastors, nor shall former pastors encourage such requests either directly or indirectly.

1. Former pastors shall in every way avoid any formal or informal participation or comment on the work or recommendations of the pastor nominating committee of their former congregation.
2. In any community activities, former pastors shall be cautious to see that their views are interpreted as their own and not attributed by association to their former congregations and their new leadership.
3. In every way, former pastors shall demonstrate support of their successor and avoid any actual or resemblance or inference of interference or involvement with the former congregation.
4. Former pastors should be aware that their participation in any way in the activity of their former congregation could be disruptive and detrimental to the peace and harmony of that congregation. Former pastors shall not attend worship except at the invitation of the current pastor and with approval of COM.
5. In the considerations of any minister's retirement, a particular concern arises for the needs of other family members, especially the minister's spouse. Quite often family members have joined the church their spouse/parent was serving, have become very involved in congregational programs, invested great interest and energy in the church's life, and established deep personal relationships with other church members. The Presbytery has no direct jurisdiction over the

non-clergy members of ministers' families, but the Presbytery urges the spouse, in the context of those relationships, not to do anything that would undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the relationship between the congregation and an interim pastor or new called pastor. It may be wise to consider not worshiping with the former congregation at all during the period of pastoral vacancy, or while an interim pastor is present.

1. An exception to the above guidelines may occur when a former pastor lives in the community and the pulpit of their former congregation is vacant. COM may approve allowing the former pastors to use their own discretion in responding to these special requests. In all other cases

they should refer such members to the person(s) with whom the session has made arrangements for pastoral care.

1. Former pastors should promptly report all such requests, contacts and pertinent information to the session so proper follow up may be made on the part of the congregation.
2. Social Media: Former pastors should be sensitive to the changed relationship they have with congregational members and the role social media plays in those relationships. Former pastors are expected to treat social media interactions as they would in person interactions, in regards to the above expectations. Furthermore:
   1. Recognizing that some social media connections have been nurtured purely as a result of the pastor-congregant relationship, former pastors shall remove those connections when they depart the congregation.
   2. Recognizing that some social media connections are with a limited number of congregants who have become friends, when leaving a congregation the former pastor shall:
      1. reveal those connections to the session, and
      2. refrain from any interaction on social media with those congregants that pertain to the former congregation during the interim period, and for a period of one year after a new pastor has been installed.
3. The COM shall take appropriate steps to resolve any questions that may arise in these areas (G- 3.0307).
4. It is recognized that commissioned pastors and parish associates sometimes stay in the congregation they served after leaving formal service in those roles. It is important to remember that former parish associates or commissioned pastors are no longer “just a member” of the congregation in the member’s minds. Because members may still come to those persons as though they are still in those positions, it is especially important for them to

not only be rigorous is adhering to these ethics, but to refrain from doing or saying anything that will hinder the ability of the next leaders to fulfill their role and calling.

### Appendix 4F: Separation Ethics Sign‐off Form

**ETHICS FOR DEPARTING MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT**

**& COMMISSIONED PASTORS**

These “Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament & Commissioned Pastors” apply to all who are ordained to as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, as well as to commissioned pastors. It is important that all who are subject to the separation ethics read them, acknowledge receipt of the ethical standards, and formally consent to being bound by the presbytery’s discipline in these matters.

I have received a copy, have read it, understand it, and acknowledge that the “Separation Ethics” as adopted by Homestead Presbytery in effect on this date.

Signature:

Printed Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Date:

### Appendix 4G: Dissolution and Severance Agreement Form

###### DISSOLUTION AND SEVERANCE AGREEMENT

**FOR USE IN CASES OF NEGOTIATED TERMINATION OR TERMINATION FOR CAUSE**

**(May be used in other cases as necessary or helpful)**

Presbyterian Church gives thanks to God for the service of Rev. (Dr.) as pastor.

Mutually the pastor, the Session of Presbyterian Church and

Homestead Presbytery agree that the best concern of each now is served by the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.

The Rev. (Dr.) and Presbyterian Church agree to request that the Homestead Presbytery dissolve the pastoral relationship that exists between them with the following terms (fill out appropriate options):

1. *LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS:*
   1. *Date ministerial duties will terminate:*
   2. *Effective date employment will terminate if using accrued vacation leave instead of receiving compensation for unused, accrued vacation leave):*
   3. *Effective date severance commences (if applicable):*
   4. *Effective date severance ends (if applicable and if not ended earlier*

*due to provisions in this agreement)*

* 1. *Date minister will return all church property and vacate offices:*
  2. *Date minister and family will vacate church manse:*

1. *FINANCIAL TERMS (if applicable):*
   1. Salary (monthly for term of severance) $
   2. Housing (monthly for term of severance) $
   3. Compensation for unused, accrued vacation leave $
   4. Provision for repayment of any loans: $
   5. Other $
   6. Other $
   7. Other $
   8. Other $

*Full Board of Pension dues will be paid on all severance payments Severance payments will be made through the church payroll service*

1. *OTHER TERMS:*
   1. The minister, acknowledging receipt of financial payments under this agreement, covenants and agrees that he or she waives all rights to demand and/or secure a civil court and/or a jury trial with respect to adjudication of the matters contained in this Severance Agreement, in matters that pertain to his/her ministry in the church and/or the negotiations that have led up to this agreement.
   2. The church, acknowledging the negotiations that resulted in this agreement, covenants and agrees to waive all rights to demand and/or secure a civil court and/or a jury trial

with respect to adjudication of the matters contained in this Severance Agreement, in matters that pertain to the pastor/s ministry in the church and/or the negotiations that have led up to this agreement.

* 1. If the minister secures full-time employment before time period of this agreement elapsed, at an equal or greater compensation than provided for in this severance agreement, the severance agreement will terminate as of the date new employment begins. If the minister secures part‐time employment during the severance period, or full-time employment at a lesser compensation, upon presentation of appropriate documentation, the church will make up the difference until the last day of the severance period.
  2. All parties agree to conform to and abide by the Homestead Presbytery “Ethics for Departing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors” and understand that repeated violation of the Ethics shall result in forfeiture of financial payments under this Separation Agreement, in accordance with the Homestead Presbytery Separation/Termination Policy.
  3. Other Provisions: (See Section 4.3a for guidance)

Failure on the part of the minister to adhere to the agreements in this severance agreement will result in forfeiture of all unpaid financial payments under the Severance Agreement. Failure on the part of the church to adhere to the agreements in this severance agreement may result in legal action.

It is understood that this Severance Agreement is a final disposition of all matters between the minister and the releasees. This Severance Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties hereto and any representations made before or during negotiation are hereby merged in their entirety and this agreement may not be modified.

The undersigned parties have negotiated this agreement in good faith and have every intention of being faithful in fulfilling it and further agree to the releases contained herein, representing that they understand its contents and sign it as their own free act after a full review of the contents.

###### APPROVED BY:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Pastor Date |  | Clerk of Session |  | Date |
| *(upon conclusion of negotiations)* |  | *(upon approval of Session)* |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Moderator or Clerk of Date |  | Chair of COM (or his/her |  | Date |
| Congregational Meeting |  | Designee) |  |  |
| *(upon approval of congregation)* |  | *(upon approval of COM)* |  |  |

Copies of final, signed document to: Minister, Clerk of Session, Stated Clerk & Chair of Committee on Ministry

# Section 5:The Commission on Ministry When a Congregation is without a Pastor

The Commission on Ministry (COM) works with the session through the COM liaison when a congregation is without a pastor:

1. Work with the session to see that the immediate needs of the congregation are met.
2. Assist the congregation to determine transitional leadership, which may include an interim pastor. This includes looking at financial considerations, special skills needed, issues that need to be addressed, and the scope for seeking names for transitional leadership.
3. Name a temporary moderator of session by COM action.
4. Discuss with the session honoraria and/or reimbursable expenses for persons serving as temporary moderators of the session or serving as pulpit supplies (see Section 7.4).
5. Provide continuing support, encouragement, and guidance to the session, the Pastor Nominating Committee, and the congregation.

### 5.1 Temporary Pastoral Relationships [G‐2.0504b]\*

When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the session, with the approval of presbytery may obtain the services of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

There is a limit to the time of (Contract/agreement/commission) for temporary pastoral relationships as described below. Temporary pastors are not, ordinarily, eligible to serve as the next installed pastor of the congregation they are serving.

#### 5.1a Interim Pastor, Interim Associate Pastor\*

An interim pastor (also called transitional pastor) is a minister of the Word and Sacrament who is called to a congregation between installed pastors. This is a time for the congregation to look back to its past and peer into the future that God is calling them to move into. Homestead Presbytery requires that interim pastors have completed week 1 of transitional pastor training prior to beginning service, and week 2 of transitional pastor training within six months of beginning service. If circumstances warrant an extension of the six month requirement, application can be made for an extension through the COM.

The interim relationship is formalized through a covenant (Appendix 5A), and is signed by session representative(s), the successful candidate, and presbytery representative(s). The Interim Covenant must be approved by the COM.

The covenant will be for a period of up to one year. Approval may be requested from the COM for an extension of the covenant. The church’s relationship with an interim shall not be ended without the approval of the COM.

* 1. **a(1) Process for Seeking an Interim Pastor:**

The following procedures apply when the session has decided to seek an interim:

* + 1. Interim Pastor.
       1. After the previous pastor has left, the session appoints an interim pastor selection committee.
       2. That committee prepares a position description for the interim pastor in consultation with its COM liaison.
       3. When the session has approved the position description, the executive presbyter in conjunction with the COM liaison will provide Personal Information Forms (PIFs) to the selection committee. The selection committee may also seek names through other means, including Church Leadership Connection, which requires the Session and COM to approve a Ministry Information Form for the interim position.
       4. The selection committee will check references, interview, arrange for a COM interview, and finally, negotiate with the person whom it deems to be the best candidate.
       5. The final terms will be submitted to COM for approval.
       6. The candidate’s name is then presented to the session which then votes to invite that individual to become interim pastor.
       7. When a person accepts the invitation of a session to serve as interim pastor s/he is declaring that s/he is not ordinarily eligible to become the next installed pastor, associate pastor, or

co‐pastor of that church [G‐2.0504c].

* + - 1. Homestead Presbytery requires an interim pastor become a member of Homestead Presbytery. The procedures outlined in 2.5b will be followed.
    1. Interim Associate Pastor.
       1. After the previous associate pastor has left the position, or when the congregation of a church has voted to seek an associate pastor for the first time, and has received permission from COM to establish a position of associate pastor, the session appoints an interim associate pastor selection committee.
       2. The process will proceed very much as the interim pastor process (above) except that the pastor who is head of staff should be invited to be part of the position description development process and the establishment of the terms for employment. The head of staff also should interview any finalist candidates for compatibility.
       3. As in the case of an interim pastor, a person accepting the invitation by the session to serve as interim associate pastor also declares, by that acceptance, that he or she is not ordinarily eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or associate pastor of that church [G‐2.0504c].
       4. Homestead Presbytery requires an interim associate pastor become a member of Homestead Presbytery. The procedures outlined in 2.5b will be followed.

#### b Designated Pastor, Associate Pastor, Co-Pastor\*

A designated pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor is a Minister of the Word and Sacrament who is called to a congregation, between installed pastors or associate pastors, when a congregation is seeking to respond to acute needs or unique opportunities.

A designated pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor is approved by the Commission on Ministry to be elected for a term of not less than two years or more than four years by the vote of the congregation. The relationship shall be established by the presbytery. Such a pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) shall normally be nominated by the congregation’s Pastor Nominating Committee.

The congregation and the Minister of the Word and Sacrament both must volunteer to be considered for a designated term relationship. With the concurrence of the session, COM will present a limited number of candidates for the session to consider for the designated pastor position. This is for a designated (2-4 year) term.

## b(1) Reasons for Calling a Designated Pastor or Associate Pastor

* + 1. A designated pastor may be called in place of an interim pastor with the long-term hope that the designated pastor or associate pastor will prove to be a good long term match for the church. In these cases, a designated pastor will be expected to have interim skills to address the interim needs of the church, including looking back to its past and peering into the future thatGod is calling them to move into.
    2. A church may call a designated pastor to address a specific ministry need that is not anticipated to be long-term, but may require more time than a typical interim provides, such as starting a new ministry, dealing with a conflict situation, or re-evaluating staffing needs.
    3. For a variety of reasons, sometimes churches find it difficult to find a pastor, or they have had a history of poor matches with pastoral leadership, and a designated search provides an opportunity for pastors and congregations to minister together for a designated period of time while both evaluate if the relationship is a good long-term match.

## b(2) Process for Seeking a Designated Pastor

* + 1. With the exception that the PNC shall choose only from among candidates vetted and designated by the Commission on Ministry, the process for seeking a designated pastor follows the same process as seeking an installed pastor. Such a relationship may be established only with the prior concurrence of the Commission on Ministry. The terms of the contract shall be approved by the presbytery.
    2. The presbytery shall provide for an installation service for the minister.
    3. If the PNC through the Commission on Ministry has conducted an open search, and after at least two years of the designated pastor relationship, the session may request the Commission on Ministry’s concurrence to act in place of the Pastor Nominating Committee and recommend that the congregation call the designated pastor to become the installed pastor without a term limit. If the congregational action is affirmative, the presbytery, after voting to approve the new pastoral relationship, shall hold a service to celebrate the transition of the designated pastor to pastor.

#### 5.2c Stated Supply Pastor\*

When a congregation is not ready to call or contract with a pastor for a called position they may choose to have a stated supply pastor. A stated supply pastor is a minister of the Word and Sacrament serving a congregation with a contract for specific times and or specific services and compensation for one year, renewable. Ordinarily, either party can end the contract with a 30 day notice.

## c(1) Process for Seeking a Stated Supply Pastor

* + 1. In consultation with the COM liaison, the session creates a job description and sets the compensation for the position.
    2. The executive presbyter, in consultation with the COM liaison, suggests a name or names to the session. Sometimes the Session has someone they would like to consider, in which case that name is supplied to the executive presbyter and the COM liaison. The executive presbyter will conduct reference checks on all names submitted for consideration.
    3. Session chooses from the supplied list, interviews, and negotiates with the candidate.
    4. The supply pastor is approved by COM.
    5. The COM reviews every supply pastoral relationship on an annual basis.

When a congregation elects a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to begin seeking an installed pastor, the supply pastor serving the congregation is ordinarily unable to serve as the next installed pastor of

that church. [G‐2.0504c]

COM shall be informed whenever a stated supply relationship is terminated.

#### 5.2d Commissioned Pastor\*

A commissioned pastor is a ruling elder who has completed special training approved by the Presbytery and then commissioned to be the commissioned pastor of a specific congregation for up to 3 years. This is renewable. Commissioned Pastors will have a minister of the Word and Sacrament assigned to them as a mentor to support them in their ministry.

## d(1) Process for Seeking a Commissioned Pastor

* + 1. In consultation with the COM liaison, the session creates a job description and sets the compensation for the position.
    2. The executive presbyter, in consultation with the COM liaison, suggests a name or names to the session. Sometimes the Session has someone they would like to consider, in which case that name is supplied to the executive presbyter and the COM liaison. The COM liaison will consult with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry which oversaw the commissioned pastor

candidate’s training regarding the candidate’s training and fit for the particular church applied to.

* + 1. Commissioned pastor candidates are required to prepare a Personal Information Form or equivalent, including a statement of faith.
    2. Session chooses from the supplied list, interviews, and negotiates with the candidate.
    3. The commissioned pastor is approved by COM and a mentor is assigned.
    4. The COM reviews every commissioned pastoral relationship prior to any renewal.

#### 5.2e Organizing Pastor\*

A person is called by the presbytery to provide pastoral services to a group of people who are in the process of organizing a church as a new church development. The responsibility for overseeing development of new churches is with the presbytery committee responsible for new church developments. That committee is responsible for the selection of an organizing pastor by its own processes. Once an organizing pastor is selected, the interview and approval process follows the same process as for a pastor called to serve an existing church.

The relationship of organizing pastor to a new church terminates when the church is formally organized by the presbytery. The organizing pastor may be called as the new congregation’s installed pastor if COM approves. Otherwise, the new church will go through the process of calling an installed pastor.

#### f Pulpit Supply\*

While “pulpit supply” is not a temporary position, churches in transition often have a period of time where they are without a temporary or installed pastor, and seek individuals to preach on a temporary basis. This may be a one-time only relationship, or a relationship that lasts for several weeks. While churches are free to seek preachers from a variety of sources, the Commission on Ministry maintains a list of endorsed individuals who are available to preach on a short term basis.

Basic requirements for individuals who wish to have their names added to the Pulpit Supply List:

* + 1. Be endorsed by the session or governing body of the church they are a member of and one additional session or governing body, as being qualified to preach. This endorsement may come as a result of either hearing the individual preach, or observing a class they have taught.
    2. Be endorsed by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry if they are under care as a candidate or inquirer for ministry.
    3. Possess a basic understanding of reformed theology and Bible content.
    4. Identify denominational affiliation.
    5. Fulfill the presbytery requirements for boundary training.
    6. Have a working phone and email address that is checked regularly.
    7. Indicate their preferred way of contact (text, email, phone).
    8. Provide their own transportation.
    9. Indicate how many miles they are willing to drive to a preaching point.
    10. Indicate if they are approved to serve communion.
    11. Participate in presbytery required boundary training as established by COM.

# Section 5 Appendices

### Appendix 5A: Designated or Interim Pastor Covenant

###### PASTORAL COVENANT Interim Interim Associate

**Designated Designated Associate Between the Rev. ,**

**(church/city), and Homestead Presbytery**

**Effective Dates: -**

*Starting Ending*

*Designated: covenant to be less than 2 years or more than 4 years Interim: covenant to be for not more than 1 year*

###### GUIDING OBJECTIVES

The guiding objectives during this period of transition is to explore the faithfulness and effectiveness

of (church), in fulfilling God’s purposes for today and tomorrow.

In pursuit of that objective and in partnership with the session, the pastor will assist the congregation in a process of assessment and reflection, using the five focus points of:

* Heritage (what is the church’s birthright, inheritance, legacy, and tradition? What needs to be carried forward, what needs to be celebrated and let go?),
* Mission (the boundaries within which the church will operate (core values), why the church exists (mission statement), what the church aims to accomplish (vision statement), and the specific practical steps it will take to achieve its mission/vision (ministry plans)),
* Leadership (reviewing the membership, its needs, staffing, and its ways of organizing and making decisions),
* Connections (Who are we related to and why? All the relationships a congregation builds outside of itself – denomination, ministries, secular organizations, etc.),
* Future (developing a pastoral profile, summarizing the work, recommendations for the future), to address
* identity (Who are we?)
* context (Who are our neighbors?)
* and purpose (What is God calling us to do/be?).

In addition, the pastor and the Session mutually agree to work together in partnership to provide continuity of leadership and to maintain a healthy congregational life.

###### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Pastor will generally be responsible for responsibilities typically fulfilled by the pastor, in partnership with church leaders, including *(adjust as needed for this specific covenant)*:

* + 1. Worship:
       1. Preaching and leading worship in the Reformed tradition
       2. Administering the sacraments;
       3. Officiating at weddings and funerals, as requested; and
       4. Working with the Worship Committee in planning for special worship events.
    2. Pastoral Care and Visitation:
       1. Developing bonds of caring with members through visiting members who are in hospital

and nursing home as well as those homebound as agreed upon with the session;

* + - 1. Providing pastoral care to persons in crisis or significant life changes; and
      2. Assisting with the visitation of new and prospective members.
    1. Church Leadership and Administration:
       1. Moderating and leading the Session in its responsibilities;
       2. Assisting with the development and planning of an appropriate program of activities;
       3. Resourcing church committees and lay leaders;
       4. Facilitating communication;
       5. Serving as Ex-officio of the Nominating Committee;
       6. Serving as Head of Staff, ex-officio on the Personnel Committee, and supervisor of the church office.
    2. Personal Growth:
       1. Growing in faith through regular attention to prayer and spiritual disciplines
       2. Growing in personal maturity and pastoral skills through participation in continuing education.
    3. Denominational Participation:
       1. Participating in the life of the larger church including presbytery, synod, and general assembly as appropriate.
    4. Other responsibilities specific to the needs of this church): a.

b.

c.

###### SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Session commits itself to support and encourage the pastor in the performance of his/her duties by the faithful performance of its responsibilities, to pray for him/her, to fairly compensate him/her, and to be a full partner in ministry working together for the upbuilding of the church.

###### PASTOR WORK WEEK:

This will be a (circle one) full-time / part-time ( %) commitment, based on a 40 hour work week. Except for required off-site pastoral responsibilities, the pastor's working hours will be spent on-site at the church accomplishing objectives and fulfilling the responsibilities contained in this agreement.

###### ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT:

The pastor will be accountable to the Commission on Ministry of Homestead Presbytery, and the session of the \_\_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church through the personnel committee. The pastor agrees not to be involved with Pastor Nominating Committee except to facilitate the preparation of the Ministry Information Form as appropriate, with the COM Liaison to assist in providing orientation to the PNC at the beginning of the process, and to see that the committee makes adequate reports. It is understood that the case of an interim Pastor, the pastor will not ordinarily be a candidate for the position of installed pastor in the church and will work in every way to prepare the way for the arrival of an installed pastor.

###### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

It is agreed that all sermons, liturgies, curricula, and study materials created by the pastor for use by the church may be used in any proper manner by the employing church, but that the pastor retains all rights of ownership of such intellectual property.

###### TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT FOR A DESIGNATED PASTOR:

In the case of a designated pastor relationship, since this is a called position, provisions for terminating such relationship prior to the expiration of the covenant is the normal process for terminating any other

called relationship. Any decision to end the designated relationship at the end of the covenant period without seeking COM approval to move the designated to an installed position without term limit shall be communicated to the designated pastor no later than six (6) months prior to the expiration of the covenant agreement so that the designated pastor may have an opportunity seek new employment.

Should six month’s notice not be given, the church will provide a severance agreement that will contain salary, housing, and Board of Pension insurance (or the equivalent if the church has provided health insurance through another plan) to equal six month notice (time remaining in the covenant after notice is given, plus severance time).

###### TERMINATION AND RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT FOR AN INTERIM PASTOR:

In the case of an interim relationship, this Agreement shall continue for the time period designated above, unless terminated earlier under the terms and conditions set forth below.

1. The agreement between the church and the interim pastor may be terminated by the interim pastor (with Commission on Ministry approval) with at least 30 days written notice. There will be no further compensation beyond the 30-day period.
2. The agreement between the church and the interim pastor may be terminated by the session with COM approval with at least 90 days written notice. Should a permanent pastor come to the field prior to this termination date, the compensation to the interim pastor shall continue for the balance of the 90 day notice period.
3. Upon receiving notice, the interim pastor shall diligently pursue new employment, and shall be entitled to such time off as will reasonably facilitate this effort, without interfering with the

interim’s primary duties. Once notice is given, the interim shall be entitled to accelerate the termination of the contract, so as to be available for any new employment. All compensation for the balance of the notice shall cease upon commencement of the new employment.

1. If this agreement has not expired or otherwise been terminated in accordance with any of the above options, upon written notice by the PNC that a pastor has been selected and accepted the invitation to candidate, the interim pastor's monetary compensation and medical, pension and death and disability benefits will continue for no less than sixty (60) days beyond the date written notification has been delivered to the interim pastor.
2. This agreement may be extended at the discretion of the Church with agreement by the Interim Pastor in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

###### TERMS OF AGREEMENT:

Effective salary

* Cash Salary $
* Fair rental value of manse $
* Housing Allowance $
* Utilities Allowance $
* Deferred Compensation $
* Other allowances $

Total $

Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)

* Automobile expense (IRS Rate) $
* Business/professional expenses $
* Continuing Education $
* Other allowances $

SECA Supplement (up to 50%) $

Moving Costs (up to) $

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions

*May be negotiated should the pastor be a member of another denominational health & pension plan, or be retired.*

Paid Vacation (minimum of 22 working days & 4 Sundays) Full Vacation time accrues at the start of the contract and will not be pro-rated in the event the contract is terminated early. Unused, accrued vacation will be due to the interim pastor in event this agreement is terminated early for any reason.

Paid Continuing Education including Sundays (minimum of 2 weeks)

Full Continuing Education time and dollars accrues at the start of the contract and will not be pro-rated in the event the contract is terminated early. Unused, accrued continuing education time or dollars are canceled at the termination of this agreement.

Homestead Presbytery minimum for continuing education is $500, and 2 weeks including Sundays. The money and the time can be carried over for 3 years, including into a renewal of the interim covenant.

Sick, holiday and personal days as provided by written policy of presbytery and/or session

Clerk of Session Date

Pastor Date

Commission on Ministry Date

### Appendix 5B: Supply Pastor Covenant

###### SUPPLY PASTOR COVENANT

**Between the Rev. ,**

**(church/city), and Homestead Presbytery**

**Effective Dates: -**

*Starting Ending*

The supply pastor (mark appropriate response):

Will become Is a member of Homestead Presbytery

Will Will not serve as moderator of session

Will Will not serve as head of staff

###### Position Description:

The position description for this position is attached to this covenant (see *Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees* for more information on writing position descriptions).

The goals for this relationship, approved by session and the Commission on Ministry are as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

###### Annual Review:

The session and COM of the presbytery will conduct a review with the pastor each year before considering renewal of the covenant. Goals and terms may be revised at that time. Renewal of the covenant requires approval by the Commission on Ministry.

###### Pastoral Search:

If the church, with COM approval, begins a search for a new pastor, the stated supply pastor may not be considered as prospective candidate, and may not be involved in the pastoral nominating process.

###### Terms:

1. This agreement is for not more than 12 months. This agreement may be ended by the session upon 30 days written notice. The stated supply pastor may end the agreement with 30 days written notice and a forfeiture of any payment beyond the 30 day period.
2. The supply pastor is employed on a 40 hour per week basis:

full time part time (indicate percentage of time)

1. Compensation, to be reviewed annually, is as follows:

Effective salary

* Cash Salary $
* Fair rental value of manse$
* Housing Allowance $
* Utilities Allowance $
* Deferred Compensation $
* Other allowances $

Total $

Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)

* Automobile expense (IRS Rate) $
* Business/professional expenses $
* Continuing Education $
* Other allowances $

SECA Supplement (up to 50%) $

Moving Costs (up to) $

Adopted by Session

*Date*

###### Signatures:

Clerk of Session Date

Stated Supply Pastor Date

Commission on Ministry Date

### Appendix 5C: Commissioned Pastor Covenant

###### COMMISSIONED PASTOR COVENANT

**Between ,**

**(church/city), and Homestead Presbytery**

**Effective Dates: -**

*Starting Ending*

The Commissioned Pastor supply pastor (mark appropriate response):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Will | Will not | serve as moderator of session |
|  | Will | Will not | serve as head of staff |
|  | Will | Will not | officiate at sacraments |

###### Position Description:

The position description for this position is attached to this covenant (see *Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees* for more information on writing position descriptions).

The goals for this relationship, approved by session and the Commission on Ministry are as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

###### Annual Review and Renewal

The session and COM of the presbytery will conduct a review with the commissioned pastor each year as well as before considering renewal of the covenant. Goals and terms may be revised at that time. Renewal of the covenant requires approval by the Commission on Ministry.

###### Pastoral Search:

If the church, with COM approval, begins a search for a new pastor, the commissioned pastor may not be considered as prospective candidate, and may not be involved in the pastoral nominating process.

###### Terms:

1. This agreement is for not more than 3 years. This agreement may be ended by the session upon 30 days written notice. The commissioned pastor may end the agreement with 30 days written notice and a forfeiture of any payment beyond the 30 day period.
2. The commissioned pastor is employed on a 40 hour per week basis:

full time part time (indicate percentage of time)

1. Compensation, to be reviewed annually, is as follows:

Effective salary

* Cash Salary $
* Deferred Compensation $
* Other allowances $

Total $

Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)

* + Automobile expense (IRS Rate) $
  + Business/professional expenses $
* Continuing Education $
* Other allowances $

Paid Vacation (minimum of 22 working days & 4 Sundays)

Vacation time accrues per pay period. Unused, accrued vacation will be due to the commissioned pastor in event this agreement is terminated or expires.

Paid Continuing Education including Sundays (minimum of 2 weeks) Continuing Education time and dollars accrues per pay period. Unused, accrued continuing education time or dollars are canceled at the termination of this agreement.

Homestead Presbytery minimum for continuing education is $500 and 2 weeks including Sundays. The money and the time can be carried over for 3 years, including into a renewal of the commissioned pastor covenant.

Assigned Mentor:

Moderator of Session, if not Commissioned Pastor:

Adopted by Session

*Date*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Signatures**: |  | |
| Clerk of Session |  | Date |
| Commissioned Pastor |  | Date |
| Mentor |  | Date |
| Commission on Ministry |  | Date |

### Appendix 5D: Process for Granting Exceptions through G‐2.0504(c)\*

“A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a Minister of the Word and Sacrament

currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co‐pastor, or Minister of the 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.” [G‐2.0504c]

Ordinarily a request for COM to consider bringing to Presbytery a recommendation that an associate pastor move to pastor or co-pastor, or that a temporary pastor move to installed, shall come only after the PNC has done due diligence in their search. In all cases, inquiry about moving from associate pastor to pastor/co-pastor, or temporary pastor to installed, shall come from the PNC, ordinarily through the COM Liaison.

Process:

1. After doing due diligence in addressing the interim process and in searching for a pastor, if the PNC feels that they wish to consider their existing associate pastor or temporary pastor for the position of pastor, they notify the COM Liaison, who then notifies COM.
2. The COM shall meet with the PNC to review the interim progress, the search progress, the mission study, and reasons for desiring to consider the associate or temporary pastor.
3. If the COM feels that this is helpful for the mission and ministry of the congregation, the COM will visit with the associate or temporary pastor to see if that person has a desire to serve as the next installed pastor.
4. If the associate or temporary pastor has such a desire, the COM shall consult with the session to determine if it has a desire to have the associate or temporary pastor serve as the next called pastor or co‐pastor.
5. If the session has such a desire, the COM shall review the mission strategy of the presbytery to determine if such an exception is advisable.
6. If the COM determines that such an exception is not advisable, it will notify both the associate or temporary pastor and the session.
7. If the COM determines that such an exception is advisable, it shall advise the PNC that it is acceptable to interview the associate or temporary pastor as part of their ongoing interviews, using the same criteria they have agreed to use in interviewing other candidates.
8. If the PNC desires to present the associate or temporary pastor as their nominee for the installed pastor position, the COM will examine that person as to their fit with this congregation.
9. If the COM determines that the fit is good, the PNC may proceed to request the session call a congregational meeting for the purpose of requesting the Presbytery to approve their call to the interim pastor for the installed position.
10. Should the congregation vote in the affirmative and all be in agreement, COM will present the request for an exemption to the floor of presbytery for its vote.
11. The vote of the presbytery to grant or not grant such an exception is reported to the associate or temporary pastor, the session and the duly elected Pastor Nominating Committee.
12. If the presbytery votes to grant the exception, an installation commission will be appointed.

# Section 6:Selecting a New Pastor

A pastor has a profound effect on the life of a congregation, influencing virtually every part of its life, sometimes for years beyond that particular person’s tenure. This reality makes the selection of a pastor a critically important task. In order to obtain the best possible outcome, the selection process follows narrowly defined rules and procedures to form a three‐way partnership among the pastor, the congregation, and the presbytery.

### Overview

The election of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) does not begin until:

* + 1. the formal pastoral relationship is dissolved and that pastor has completed his or her time of ministry with that congregation (see Section 4), and
    2. any interim tasks that need to be addressed before a congregation is ready to seek a new pastor are completed.

The COM Liaison will assist the session and pastoral leadership in knowing when it is appropriate to elect a PNC.

The Commission on Ministry works with the congregation while:

* + - 1. Temporary pastoral services are secured.
      2. A Mission Study is completed (or a review of the most recent mission study if completed within the last three years)
      3. A PNC is elected by the congregation.
      4. The Ministry Information Form (MIF) is completed.
      5. Personal Information Forms (PIFs) from applicants are received and screened.
      6. Applicants are interviewed and finalists heard to preach (COM will also examine candidates at this time).
      7. One candidate is selected by the PNC for nomination to the congregation for election.
      8. The candidate is presented to the congregation for election.
      9. The presbytery (through COM) concurs with the call.
      10. The person is installed.

### Types of Pastoral Relationships

“As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be Ministers of Word and Sacrament, so the church confirms that call through the action of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work may be helpful to the church in mission and is a call to be validated ministry requiring ordination as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. In the performance of that ministry, the Minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be accountable to presbytery. Ministers of Word and Sacrament have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery.”

[G‐2.0502] Ministers of Word and Sacrament may be called and installed as pastor, co‐ pastor, or associate pastor, or they may be installed for a designated term determined by the presbytery in

consultation with the congregation and the specific call. [G‐2.0504 and G‐2.0504a] Ministers of Word and Sacrament may also serve in temporary pastoral relationships approved by the presbytery but

without a formal call or installation. [G‐2.0504b]

In deciding what kind of pastoral services are needed, it is helpful to consider all the options.

#### 6.3a Temporary Pastoral Relationships

These are discussed in Section 5.1.

#### 6.3b Installed Pastoral Relationships

“The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co‐pastor, and associate pastor. A Minister of the Word and Sacrament may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the terms of call. When a congregation determines that its strategy for mission under the Word so requires, the

congregation may call additional pastors. Such additional pastors shall be called co‐pastors or associate pastors, and the duties of each pastor and the relationship between the pastors of the congregation shall be determined by the session with the approval of the presbytery. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co‐pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as a pastor. The relationship of an associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation.” [G‐ 2.0504a]

Although an associate is normally ineligible to be the next installed pastor, an exception can be granted under G‐2.0504b; the process is found in Appendix 5E.

#### c Designated Pastor [G‐2.0504a]

These are discussed in Section 5.2b.

### The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC)

“The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a nominating committee, which shall be

representative of the whole congregation. The committee’s duty shall be to nominate a pastor for election by the congregation.” [G‐2.0802]

Normally nominees for a PNC are proposed by the congregational nominating committee.

It is required that the floor be open for nominations. All persons nominated to serve on a PNC must be members of that particular congregation. Either the session or the nominating committee may suggest a suitable number of members for the PNC, but the congregation, ultimately, will elect the number of its own choosing. A suggested position description for a PNC member is included in Appendix 6A.

The COM liaison is the resource staff for the PNC. The COM liaison at the orientation meeting will provide the handbook, *On Calling a Pastor* produced by Churchwide Personnel Services.

The PNC is encouraged to give reports to the session and the congregation on its progress, but does not report the details of its work or on persons considered until it is ready to present a candidate. However, in all financial matters ‐ costs for the PNC to do its work, financial matters for the MIF, and final

negotiation on terms of call with a candidate ‐ the PNC will seek guidance and instruction from the session.

### The Call Process

The process that shall be followed is:

* + 1. Following the dissolution of the previous pastoral relationship, the session confers with the COM Liaison about whether a mission study will be required. If so, plans for a mission study are implemented and completed prior to the PNC being elected.
       1. If a mission study has been completed within the previous three years, no mission study is required, however a review of the most recent mission study is.
       2. Regardless of whether a mission study is required, the Session must:
          1. Discern leadership needs
          2. Assess the financial capability of the congregation
    2. The session authorizes a congregation meeting to elect a PNC.
       1. Normally nominees for the PNC are presented by the congregational nominating committee. An opportunity to nominate people from the floor must be offered.
    3. The congregation elects the PNC.
    4. The PNC writes the Ministry Information Form (MIF).
    5. The MIF is submitted to the COM liaison for feedback, and after that is received it is submitted to session and then COM for approval.
    6. The MIF is submitted to Church Leadership Connection for matching.
       1. The PNC may choose to advertise in other places to gather names of potential pastoral candidates.
    7. An interview process is decided on.
    8. Personal Information Forms (PIFs) are received and reviewed.
       1. Self-referrals should be communicated with, acknowledging receipt.
       2. Candidates the PNC is interested in talking to should be contacted to see if they are available and interested to enter into discernment and set up an initial interview
       3. Initial interviews are set up
       4. If the PNC is interested in further discussion:
          1. Request additional materials (i.e. sermons, follow-up questions in writing). These can also be requested prior to the initial interview.
          2. Ask if the candidate gives permission to contact secondary references. (Appendix 6E)
          3. Contact references.
       5. Secondary interview if desired
       6. Determine who the PNC wishes to invite to an on-site interview.
    9. Presbytery reference checks are made on the candidates the PNC desires to invite to an on-site interview before the invitation to visit is made.
    10. Top candidates are invited to an on-sight interview
        1. Schedule dates
        2. Determine if the visit will include the candidate’s spouse or significant other
        3. Request COM liaison to set up a neutral pulpit location.
           1. If the position the candidate is being interviewed for is not primarily a preaching position, or if other circumstance warrant, PNCs may request from COM permission an exemption from the requirement to have the candidate preach in a neutral pulpit.
           2. For a variety of reasons, there are occasions scheduling makes it difficult for the candidate to get time off to preach on a Sunday. While not preferred, some PNCs schedule a weeknight evening and have the candidate preach just to the PNC.
           3. PNCS shall not make an offer of a call while additional neutral pulpits are still scheduled.
        4. Set up interview with COM during the visit. One or two members of the PNC are welcome to attend the COM interview, which will also include time for the candidate to speak with the COM without the PNC members present. (See 6.6 for required paperwork for the COM

interview.)

* + - * 1. If a candidate is non-ordained and certified as ready for to receive a call by their

committee of care, a representative of Homestead Presbytery’s CPM will be invited to participate in the interview.

* + - 1. Schedule tours of the church, manse (if one), and local community. Ask the candidate what else he/she would like to see while visiting. Some candidates also like to meet with a realtor at this time.
      2. Schedule face to face interviews with the candidate and PNC
    1. A nominee is selected and a call extended.
    2. Terms of call are negotiated.
    3. COM approves the terms of call, Presbytery will initiate the required background checks and final paperwork is completed.
    4. The call is reported to session, who authorizes a congregational meeting to elect the pastor.
    5. Information is shared with the congregation about the pastor nominee.
    6. A candidating weekend date is set, when the pastor will preach at a worship service, followed by the congregational meeting to elect the pastor.
    7. If a candidate is a non-ordained candidate under care and certified as ready to receive a call, as the presbytery of call, Homestead Presbytery will ordinarily conduct the ordination examination (G-2.0702), which will be coordinated between Homestead Presbytery’s COM and CPM.
    8. The call papers are signed and turned in to Presbytery.
    9. An installation service is scheduled, and installation administrative commission is selected, and the pastor is installed.

### Role of the COM Liaison During the Search Process

The COM Liaison will normally have been involved in the process of dissolving the previous pastoral relationship and helping the church establish interim leadership. The following roles come into play once a PNC has been elected.

* + 1. Meet with the PNC to assist in its organization and orientation
    2. Conduct or arrange for training for the PNC: review of process, definition of terms, understanding the Ministry Information Form (MIF), Personal Information Form (PIF) and help on the interview process.
    3. Assist the PNC in developing the MIF, and getting it approved through session and COM.
    4. Facilitate communication with the session, interim pastoral leadership, congregation, and COM, moving the process forward in a timely fashion.
    5. Assure that the presbytery’s policy on equal employment opportunity is presented to the PNC, agreed to by the PNC, and upon completion of the search process reported to COM in detail on the appropriate forms.
    6. Assist with reference checks as needed, and assure that executive reference checks have been completed prior to the candidate being invited in for a face to face interview. In consultation with the COM chairperson, share appropriate information from the executive reference check with the PNC.
    7. Inform the PNC about the presbytery’s requirement for background checks on the final nominee, to be completed prior to the final approval by the COM, prior to the call for the congregational meeting to elect the nominee.
    8. When a candidate has been selected for a face to face interview, the COM liaison will be responsible for obtaining from the candidate

1. a release form for all required background checks, which shall be run only if the person is chosen as the final candidate.
2. A signed acknowledgement of intent to adhere to the ordination vows as found in the Book

of Order.

* + 1. Meet with each candidate brought in for a face to face interview, and arrange for a COM examination for membership and fit. The liaison will provide the COM interview team with:

1. a copy of the church’s MIF and the candidate’s PIF;
2. the candidate’s statement of faith;
   * 1. When the PNC has selected their final candidate, the COM liaison will assist the PNC in negotiating terms of call, being sure that such terms meet the minimum requirements of Homestead Presbytery and will initiate the process of completing required background checks.
     2. The completed background checks, terms of call, EEO Reporting Form, and signed Policy Sign-Off Form (Appendix 2J), will be presented to the COM for approval before the PNC is cleared to ask the session to call a congregational meeting for electing a pastor.
     3. Help with arrangements at time of candidating/introduction to the congregation. Arrange for a moderator, if necessary.
     4. Collect signed call forms and return them to the presbytery’s stated clerk.
     5. Help the new pastor with plans for the installation service, and submitting a request for an installation commission to the Moderator of Presbytery.
     6. After the new pastor is installed, work with COM to provide a mentor for their first year, and orient the new pastor to the resources in the presbytery.

# Section 6 Appendices

### Appendix 6A: Suggested Position Description for Pastor Nominating Committee Members

###### Purpose:

* To present a candidate for pastoral call to the congregation.

###### Accountability:

* To the session for approval of the Ministry Information Form (MIF).
* To the congregation and to presbytery through the Commission on Ministry throughout the process.

###### Responsibilities:

* Regular attendance and participation. It is common for a member to be released from other leadership responsibilities in the congregation while on Pastor Nominating Committee [PNC].

###### Commitment to purpose:

* Commitment to the process which includes possible participation in the Mission Study if it has not been completed, completing the Ministry Information Form, reviewing Personal Information Forms, doing reference checks, interviewing, and participating in several neutral pulpit weekends before choosing candidate.
* Understanding of the time (meeting frequently, usually weekly or every other week for 10‐12 months or more if needed), energy, and prayer required.
* Cooperation and willingness to complete all tasks assigned. Willingness to support final choice of the PNC.
* Complete confidentiality and trust in others on the PNC.

###### Skills:

* Group process.
* For some on committee: writing, leadership, computer, secretarial, discernment.
* Communication and listening.
* Knowledge of Presbyterian polity is helpful.
* Experience as participating member of the congregation.

### Appendix 6B: Guidelines for effective Pastor Nominating Committee Meetings

1. Build a community of trust. Sharing on a personal level should be a vital part of every meeting, to build and nurture relationships. Building a covenant or agreement of shared understanding of the task and deciding where to start the task are important first steps.
2. Let the group struggle together with how to approach the task. It is important that the process that is developed not be dictated by one or a couple, but that the whole group decide together how to approach the task.
3. Be ready for shared leadership. When leadership is shared, different people take responsibility for different aspects of the group’s work, and people are allowed to use their own unique gifts.
4. Frame meetings in worship, prayer and study of scripture. This may take the form of beginning meetings with a devotional that speaks to the task before the group at that particular meeting. Share the responsibility and privilege of prayer during the meeting.
5. Devote significant time and energy to listening to and trying to understand different voices. The members of the PNC were most likely asked to serve, not because they think alike, but because they do not. Each brings a unique perspective on the needs of the church and unique hopes for the future of the church. Take time to understand where each is coming from, and to find common ground. Above all, respect the differences, for they will reflect the diversity within the congregation.

### Appendix 6C: Writing the Ministry Information Form

The PNC often has the task of writing the Ministry Information Form. This is the primary source of information for those who would consider applying for the pastoral position – it is the “dating profile” of the church. Great care needs to be taken to have it accurately reflect the church and its hopes.

Sources of information for writing the MIF:

1. Most recent congregational mission study
2. Demographic information on the congregation
3. Demographic information on the community
4. Congregational annual reports of ministries of the church.
5. Session goals
6. Financial information for putting together a compensation package, including presbytery policies.

In addition to the above, the individual members of the PNC bring their own perspective to the writing of the MIF, including their perspective on the future of the church, the role of the church in society, the role of the church in member’s lives, their view of scripture, and their own relationship with God. It is vital that the PNC take care to try to write a MIF that reflects the wider congregation, and not just their own particular outlook.

Just like PNCs read a lot of Personal Information Forms (PIFs), pastors read a lot of MIFs. Be creative in thinking about how to make your MIF stand out from the crowd. What are the stories that illustrate who you are, what you believe God is calling you to, and the kind of pastor you are seeking?

In addition to having the COM liaison review your MIF, you may want to have a couple of PCUSA pastors who are familiar with MIFs and who know your congregation to read your MIF before submitting it to the COM and session for final review and approval.

### Appendix 6D: Role of Current Pastoral Staff in the Call Process

It is the responsibility of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to consult with COM regarding how and when the current pastoral staff will be involved in the search process.

Appropriate input in decision‐making should be decided ahead of time. For example, will any pastoral staff members have veto power? Will the question to other pastoral staff be something like “can you work with this candidate?” Will the pastor or interim pastor meet with any candidates or be listed on the MIF as a reference? In the case of an interim pastor, will the interim pastor play any role in resourcing the PNC? All of this should be decided at the very beginning of the PNC process in consultation with the COM liaison.

COM provides the staffing for the process. The executive presbyter is available as needed.

1. Appropriate roles for the head of staff to be involved:
   1. Moderate the meeting to elect PNC.
   2. Attend the PNC orientation meeting which will be led by the COM resource person. Participate during the mission study process when requested.
   3. Consult with the PNC on the development of the position description.
   4. Meet with session to provide the budget for the position and the search.
   5. Suggest potential candidates.
   6. Be available for informal conversations when requested by applicants.
   7. Meet with finalists during neutral pulpit weekend.
   8. Moderate congregational meeting to extend the call.
2. Appropriate roles for other pastoral and program staff as determined by PNC in consultation with head of staff and COM
   1. Participate in mission study process when requested.
   2. Consult with the PNC on the development of the position description.
   3. Be available for informal conversations when requested by applicants.
   4. Meet with finalists during neutral pulpit weekend.
3. Inappropriate roles for all current staff
   1. Direct the mission study process (with the exception of a trained interim pastor)
   2. Meet regularly with PNC.
   3. Screen PIFs.
   4. Vote as a member of the committee.
   5. Participate in early interviews.
   6. Participate in reference checks.

### Appendix 6E: Permission for Secondary References

Name of church:

Title of position:

Name of candidate for position:

Return this form by:

Return this form to:

The committee will begin to talk with the references that you listed on your application. We would like your permission to talk with others who know you and your ministry but who are not listed on your application. To indicate your continuing interest in the position at our church please fill out and sign this secondary reference release return to the PNC.

I give my permission to the search committee of the above named church to talk with people not listed on my application about my ministry and qualifications for the position named above, as indicated below:

*The committee may talk to anyone they wish.*

*Please contact only the references whose names I have given you.*

*The committee may talk to anyone except (list names*):

*The committee may contact the following persons in addition to the names already given (list names and contact info):*

Signature Date

### Appendix 6F: Interview Helps

**Listed below are some areas that any interview with a prospective pastor might include:**

1. **The image of the ministry:**

How does the pastor view their ministry? What is most often reflected in preaching, teaching, and community involvement?

What is the pastor’s style of ministry?

How will lay persons be involved in ministry?

###### The nature of worship:

What role would the candidate play in the worship, in setting the style of worship?

What does the candidate see as the nature of the sermon, the use of innovation in worship?

###### The pastoral role:

What does the candidate see as the purpose of pastoral visiting? Of counseling? How much will the laity be used in these tasks?

###### Evangelism:

What does it mean & how will it be furthered?

What are the candidate’s past experiences and new ideas?

###### Christian Education:

What is the candidate’s training and/or experience?

What is the candidate’s experience relating to volunteer leaders and teachers?

###### Stewardship:

Is the candidate able and willing to talk effectively about money and budgets? Is the meaning of stewardship seen more broadly than raising money?

###### Administration:

How will the candidate work at this? Who else will assist?

###### Community involvement:

What involvement would there be in community affairs, community groups, social action concerns?

How much will church members be encouraged to be a part of them?

###### Denominational involvements:

Is the candidate currently active in wider denominational interests?

###### Personal life:

How is the personal life separated from the professional life?

What habits assist the candidate to have time for family and personal friends?

###### Conditions of the call:

Be specific about the preliminary salary and benefits offered: salary, housing, health insurance, pension, vacation, clergy renewal leave, continuing education, professional expenses, etc.

Ask if the candidate is in serious conversation with other churches.

**Examples of questions that would be inappropriate to ask:**

* 1. **Any question that could potentially lead to categorizing people based on attributes, such as:**
     1. Age
     2. Marital status
     3. Sexual orientation or identity
     4. Ability or disability

It may be that a candidate has a visible disability, such as vision or hearing impairment, or is in a wheelchair. It is not appropriate to ask how the candidate sees him/herself fulfilling the responsibilities of the call, however it is appropriate for the search committee to ask the candidate what kind of accommodations he/she would need to fulfill the responsibilities of the call. It is a responsibility of the calling body to welcome all whom God calls, recognizing

that at times that requires more from us in terms of accommodations.

###### Personal questions about the pastor’s family, such as:

* + 1. If the candidate’s family will be involved in the life of the church
    2. If the candidate has plans for children
    3. About the spouse’s career

It is important to remember that the candidate is the one being interviewed for the position, not the candidate’s partner, children, or anyone else. Nevertheless, we know that a candidate’s family is an important factor in a move. It is appropriate to ask if there are any factors the pastor needs to consider in making this decision and if there are questions the PNC can answer that may be of help. That opens the door for the candidate to ask about schools, employment opportunities, and such, on their terms.

###### Questions about a candidate’s political views, such as:

* + 1. Who the candidate voted for in the last election
    2. What party the candidate belongs to
    3. What the candidate thinks about the current political state of affairs
    4. What the candidate thinks about “litmus test” issues, such as health care, abortion, homosexuality, marriage, immigration

Some of these may seem relevant to the congregation based on the congregation’s ministry setting, for example there may be a high number of immigrants in the area or congregation. It is acceptable to talk about the ministry setting of the church, and issues of past conflicts, the challenges that puts to the church, and how the candidate sees themselves being a part of that ministry or helping the church meet that challenge.

###### Questions about how a candidate may vote on denominational issues

There may be denominational issues that are of significant concern to the congregation. Sharing that is important, as is asking how the candidate will help the church navigate those issues.

However one of the foundational principles of the PCUSA is that those who are elected to session, presbytery, synod and General Assembly are charged to listen to others, to listen to the Holy Spirit, and to vote as they feel led by God. Believing that God is at work in our discussions, we also believe that we should not come to those debates and votes with our minds already made up.

###### Requests for references from the candidate’s current congregation

More often than not, candidates keep confidential from their current employers the fact that they are seeking other employment. There is always a risk if the current employers find out, that would affect the candidate’s ability to be effective in their current call. Candidates may

have other reasons as well for not wanting their current employer to be aware of their search.

If you are wondering if any particular question is appropriate, it is good to keep in mind the words of Paul: “while all things are possible, not all things are wise.” Questions posed to candidates should focus on ministry effectiveness and not be unnecessarily intrusive.

### Appendix 6G: Congregational Meeting for Calling a Pastor

1. Meeting is opened with prayer and moderator declares that a quorum is present and that the call of the meeting is in order.
2. Moderator calls for report from the PNC. PNC chair presents the name of their candidate and the reasons for selecting this nominee and something of his/her background, experience, and abilities, and a time of questions of the candidate by the congregation will commence.
3. Moderator puts the question, “Are you ready to proceed to the election of a pastor?” If there is a verbal yes indicating readiness, the moderator shall declare the name submitted by the nominating committee to be in nomination and the chair of the PNC shall read the terms of call.
4. Moderator asks a member of the PNC to escort the nominee from the room, to a previously agreed upon location, where s/he will await the outcome of the vote.
5. Moderator, in the absence of the nominee, asks if there is any further discussion.
6. Moderator asks if the congregation is ready to vote on the candidate and the terms of call.
7. Voting may be by voice, raise of hands, or written ballots. Only members are entitled to vote. The vote is “yes” or “no.”

If by ballot: ballots are collected and counted. In most situations, it is a good idea to have session, prior to the meeting, determine the place where the count will take place and name a committee of three to collect and count the votes. The committee membership and counting place should be selected so as to dispel any possibility of suspicion about vote counting.

1. The Committee reports their count to the congregation.

If it appears that a substantial minority of the voters are averse to the nominee who has received a majority of votes, the moderator may recommend to the majority that they reconsider the motion. Such action would require a motion to reconsider be made by one who voted in the majority. If such a motion passes, it would put the original motion to call back on the table and open the floor for debate and discussion, where the concerns of those who voted in the minority may be heard if they were not heard in the original discussion. Robert’s Rules will be followed regarding reconsideration of the motion.

If the congregation is nearly unanimous, or if the majority insists upon their right to call a pastor (associate pastor), the moderator shall forward the call to the COM, certifying the vote and any other facts of importance.

1. The nominee is informed of the outcome of the vote in private, including the numbers for and against, and then asked to return to the room. If the count is unanimous, or nearly so, the nominee will usually indicate his/her willingness to accept the call. If there is a substantial minority but the majority insists on their right to call a pastor, it would be reasonable to expect the pastor to take a couple days to make a decision.
2. The congregation elects persons to sign the call and prosecute the call before presbytery. The PNC members and/or the congregation officers (clerk, etc.) are often the ones elected to do this. The call is prosecuted by signing the call forms and delivering them to the COM liaison.
3. It is recommended that the PNC continue to serve until the new pastor is installed. A motion to dismiss the PNC with thanks upon the benediction of the installation service is in order. It is appropriate for the moderator to express thanks to the PNC on behalf of the congregation.
4. The meeting is closed with prayer.

### Appendix 6H: Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Standards\*

The Presbyterian Church (USA) and through it, Homestead Presbytery and its member churches, is an Equal Opportunity employer, hiring persons to support ministry and calling pastors for congregational leadership without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status or disability (G-3.0103). For us as the Church, of far more fundamental importance is the moral and ethical basis for this practice, In complying with this policy it is an expression of our witness to the purpose of serving Jesus Christ, declaring and serving his will. Paul reminds us that there is neither Jew nor Gentile, male or female, slave or free, but all are one in Christ. We affirm God’s good creation and the inclusiveness it renders to the Church.

Affirmative action involves positive action, sincere effort, deliberately including for consideration and inviting all whom Christ has called to serve.

Therefore, Homestead Presbytery requests each church, in the course of its search for a pastor, to keep a record of its inclusive search performed without bias, using the following process and reporting procedure.

The EEO In Ministry Report Form, completed as an integral part of the pastor search process, is to be presented to COM at its conclusion, normally with the completed call form for the new pastor.

Procedure to implement EEO in the pastoral search process:

1. The Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison consults with the session, congregation and the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) about their responsibility for AA/EEO, and assists them in developing a plan of implementation.
2. The COM shall assist the PNC in developing non‐discriminatory criteria for the selection of the pastor. Discrimination based on racial ethnicity, age, gender, marital condition or disability is illegal.
3. The COM liaison in the course of working with the PNC shall, when necessary, challenge the members to stay with their commitment and shall, when appropriate, help them face questions and feelings which arise.
4. Before the PNC presents a name to the congregation, the COM liaison shall be clear that he/she is prepared to certify that the AA/EEO commitment has been followed in good faith.
5. The EEO Report Form certifying that the requirements of AA/EEO have been met will be submitted to COM (see Appendix 6F: Exhibit 1).

### Appendix 6I: Equal Employment Opportunity in Ministry Report Form

**STEP ONE: INTENTION AND ENDORSEMENT--THE SESSION**

The Session of the Church has reviewed, understands and accepts the Equal Employment Opportunity requirements of the PC (USA) as well as the requirements, ethical and moral, place in the character and practice of the Church. The Session has taken action making our congregation an EEO employer, and assures the Presbytery that the Pastor Nominating Committee will follow EEO practices in conducting its search for our next pastor.

Signed: Clerk of Session: Date

Moderator: Date

**STEP TWO: INTENTION AND ENDORSEMENT—PASTOR NOMINATING**

The Pastor Nominating Committee of the Church has reviewed, understands and accepts the Equal Employment Opportunity requirements of the PC (USA), and commits itself to follow EEO practices in our search for our next pastor.

Signed: PNC Chairperson Date

**STEP THREE: TRACKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROSPECTIVE PASTORS**

Following is a summary of our contacts during the search process within EEO guidelines: Pastor Information Forms received: Total Women Minorities

Telephone/Skype Interviewed: Total Women Minorities

Heard Preach: Total Women Minorities

Face to Face Interviews: Total Women Minorities

Please offer on back comments on your total screening of PIFs, contacting, interviewing, candidating of prospects, etc.

Name of Person Being Called:

Person’s *Present* Presbytery:

Signed: PNC Chairperson Date

Thank you for tracking your EEO procedures and efforts in the processing of your call through the COM. The presbytery will not proceed unless this completed form accompanies the printed call for your pastor elect. Deadline for submission: at least by the Friday preceding the next presbytery meeting.

**STEP FOUR: RECEIPT AND ACTION BY THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY**

Report presented to the Committee on Ministry: Date: Report found to demonstrate compliance with EEO guidelines and placed on its minutes by COM: Date:

### Appendix 6J: Pastoral Call Form

##### PASTORAL CALL FORM

###### Pastoral Call for Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor

The Presbyterian Church of belonging to Homestead Presbytery, being well satisfied with your qualification for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls

(name)

to undertake the office of

of this congregation, beginning , promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

That you may be free to devote full-time / part-time (circle one) to the ministry of Word and Sacrament among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you in regular monthly payments the following effective salary and following vouchered expenses (fill in those which are agreed to):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Effective salary** |  | **Reimbursable expenses (by voucher)** |
| Cash Salary | $ | Automobile expense ( per mile) $ |
| Fair rental value of manse | $ | Business/professional expenses $ |
| Housing Allowance | $ | SECA Supplement (up to 50%) $ |
| Utilities Allowance | $ | Continuing Education $ |
| Deferred Compensation | $ | Other allowances $ |
| Other allowances | $ |  |
| **Total** | $ | Moving Costs (up to) $ |

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions

Paid Vacation Paid Continuing Education

(minimum of 22 working days & 4 Sundays) including Sundays (minimum of 2 weeks)

We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

Homestead Presbytery minimum for continuing Education is $500, and 2 weeks including Sundays. The money and the time can be carried over for 3 years. The minimum salary for HP is posted on the website.

Homestead Presbytery recommends at minimum that **i**n the seventh year of service, the congregation provides for a three-month Clergy Renewal Leave, continuing the salary and benefits for that period, and providing for pulpit supply in the pastor's absence.

###### The church will / will not (circle one) provide a Clergy Renewal Leave.

If the church offers a Clergy Renewal Leave other than the minimum recommended, please indicate the terms:

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this day of , 20 .

Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended this call for ministerial services, I do certify that the call has been made in all respect according to the presbytery policy and the Form of Government, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

Vote of the congregation at the meeting was in favor of the candidate and opposed. (signed) moderator of the meeting

###### Certification of Call

1. **Action by Presbytery of Call**

The Presbytery of has reviewed and approved this call. Date of action (Signed)

Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

###### Action by the Minister's/Candidate's Presbytery

The Presbytery of finds it expedient (not expedient) to release to accept this call.

Date of action (Signed)

Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

###### Acceptance of the Call

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call. Date of action (Signed)

Minister

### Appendix 6K: Ordination/Installation and the Administrative Commission\*

Ordinations and Installations are an action of the whole presbytery on behalf of the church universal. Presbytery will routinely delegate the planning and execution of ordinations and installations to an administrative commission.

The administrative commission is responsible for the worship service attendant to the ordination or installation. However, the administrative commission will normally ask the ordinand or the minister being installed to plan the worship service and invite participants, subject to the commission’s approval. The time and place of these services shall be determined by the administrative commission if not previously set by presbytery. Since these services are an act of the presbytery, it is normally

inappropriate for them to be at the same time as a congregation’s normal Sunday worship celebration.

An offering is part of the worship service. When an ordination is being conducted the offering shall be dedicated to the Presbytery’s support of its candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. When an installation of a previously ordained minister is being conducted, the offering shall be dedicated to the Presbytery’s support of its minister members’ special or emergency needs.

It is appropriate for the service to include a time for presentations of gifts to the newly ordained or installed minister. The Presbytery shall present the newly ordained minister with a stole. At services of ordination and of installation, the sacrament of communion may be served.

The chairperson of the administrative commission is responsible for submitting the minutes of the commission to the stated clerk of the presbytery. Such minutes will include:

* 1. Date of the ordination/installation service
  2. Names of members of the administrative commission as well as names of additional persons participating in leadership roles in the worship service
  3. Record that the meeting opened and closed with prayer
  4. Motion to request that the presbytery dismiss the administrative commission at the conclusion of the service

###### The Service for Ordination or Installation

The structure of the installation portion of the worship service may look something like this:

* A Litany speaking about God’s call and gifts for ministry given to all members
* Presentation of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament
* The Constitutional Questions to Minister of the Word and Sacrament
* The Constitutional Questions to Congregation
* The Installation Prayer (Laying on of Hands for Ordination)
* The Declaration of Installation and Welcome
* The Charge to the Pastor
* The Charge to the Congregation

The participants in the service should be named with their respective congregations listed.

### Appendix 6L: Affirmation of Ordination Vows

##### Affirmation of PCUSA Ordination Vows

The Book of Order requires all who serve in ordered ministries to sign an acknowledgement and promise to abide by the ordination and installation vows (G-2.0704). As such, whenever a minster of the Word and sacrament or equivalent, or a commission pastor, either seeks membership in Homestead Presbytery or seeks employment in a church or ministry under the jurisdiction of Homestead Presbytery, that individual is required to sign an affirmation of the PCUSA Ordination Vows as found in W-4.0404:

1. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
2. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?
3. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
4. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
5. Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit?
6. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
7. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
8. Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
9. (1) (For minister of the Word and Sacrament) Will you be a faithful minister of the Word and Sacrament, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
   1. (For commissioned pastor [also known as commissioned ruling elder]) Will you be a faithful ruling elder in this commission, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?
   2. (For certified Christian educator) Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

In signing this form, I hereby acknowledge my affirmation of the ordination vows of the PCUSA. Signature: Date:

Print Name:

# Section 7:The Church as an Employer

Each congregation should have a Personnel Committee or a way to provide for the function of a personnel committee. The nature, function and responsibilities of this committee are outlined in *Guidelines for a Session Personnel Committee*, published by the Presbyterian Church (USA) (available from [www.pcusa.org/resource/guidelines-session-personnel-committee](http://www.pcusa.org/resource/guidelines-session-personnel-committee)).

### Work Week\*

Full time work is considered 40 hours per week, understood to be 5 working days and 2 days off per week. The nature of pastoral work is such that pastors are essentially on call 24/7 unless they are on vacation or continuing education leave. It is also recognized that there are often weeks in the life of the church when more time is needed from pastoral leaders than 40 hours. Pastors and sessions are encouraged to make adjustments as needed so that pastoral leaders remain refreshed and healthy and avoid burnout.

### Pastoral Compensation\*

**T**he Presbytery requires a minimum level of compensation and benefits for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or their equivalent in Homestead Presbytery serving congregations, as well as guidelines for accountable reimbursement plans. The presbytery has also established policies for additional benefits. These minimum requirements and guidelines lay a foundation for a healthy relationship between pastor and congregations, which fosters a healthy ministry by all.

#### a Minimum Terms of Call for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament\*

Homestead Presbytery sets minimum total annual terms of call based on pastoral position.

* + 1. For Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or their equivalent serving in installed, designated or interim positions:
       1. Effective salary equal to 80% of the current year’s median salary as determined by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Effective Salary includes:

* + - * 1. Salary – *paid no less than monthly*
        2. housing — either free use of the manse valued at the rate used to determine Board of Pensions effective salary (see Appendix 7B For Manse Use Policy), or a housing allowance; utilities and/or appurtenances;
        3. Annuities or other tax deferred income.
        4. Health Savings Accounts, Flexible Spending Accounts or other similar plans, whether through a salary deduction or otherwise.
        5. Employer contributes toward the pastor’s self-employment tax liability. Effective Salary does not include:

1. Reimbursable professional expenses (e.g. travel, education, books/periodicals, etc.)
2. Board of Pension or equivalent dues (such as death & disability for retired pastors in service), or dues through another denominational insurance or pension plan.
   * + 1. Minimum allowances include other benefits, including vacation and continuing education as described in the remainder of this section.
     1. For Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or their equivalent serving in any other temporary position there is no required minimum effective salary or other compensation or benefits except as described in the remainder of this section. Minimum effective salary and other compensation or benefits for certified Christian educators and commissioned pastors are detailed in Sections 9

and 10 respectively.

* + 1. Each church is required to meet the minimum compensation and benefits requirement for its pastoral position. Congregations are encouraged to pay pastors an adequate salary for their particular geographical area, taking into account such additional factors as the precise needs of that pastor/family, the special abilities, training or education of the pastor, the tenure of the pastor, and accomplishments attained under the pastor's leadership. In addition, a fair comparison should be reviewed relative to the level of income of the community within which the service is being provided, etc.
    2. In the event that a congregation cannot meet the minimum compensation and benefits requirement it should be immediately in touch with COM. This commission will determine with the session how best to proceed, that is, whether to help the church apply for funds through presbytery's ministry support fund, to encourage it to share pastoral leadership with another church(s), or to waive the requirement for a period of time etc.
    3. Questions/concerns regarding salary computation may be directed to COM. Information regarding who to contact may be obtained from the presbytery office or the stated clerk of the presbytery.

#### 7.3b Social Security\*

Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in congregations are considered self‐employed so far as Social Security is concerned, but are considered employees for income tax purposes. A W‐2 must be issued each year.

A church may decide to pay the pastor’s self-employment tax, typically up to no more than 50% of the total obligation, to offset what the church would normally have paid if ministers were considered employees for social security purposes. Any amount the church pays toward the pastor’s self- employment tax is reported as income for IRS purposes. If the congregation does pay the pastor’s self- employment tax or a portion of it, what the church pays up to 50% of the total obligation need not be

included in the pastor’s effective salary for Board of Pension calculations, and pension payments are not required on that amount. However, 100% of the amount the church pays may be included in computing effective salary for the purposes of meeting Homestead Presbytery’s minimum effective salary.

#### 7.3c Housing Allowance\*

The IRS allows pastors to designate a portion of their salary as a housing allowance, subject to specific rules of the IRS. That allowance needs to be set by the employing body prior to its use by the pastor. Once a portion of a minister of the Word and Sacrament’s effective salary has been designated as housing allowance, whether it is so designated as a percentage of the effective salary or as a set dollar amount, that designation shall remain from year to year until specifically changed by the respective governing council.

#### 7.3d Annual Compensation Review\*

Each session is required every year to consult with the pastor regarding compensation before the budget is completed. Both congregation and presbytery must approve that figure before it is official.

Sessions shall submit a compensation report to COM each year regarding the salary of their pastor(s). COM will present the salaries of Homestead Presbytery pastors each year for approval by presbytery at the May meeting. Undue delays in the negotiation process can affect a delay in the official approval of

the compensation by Homestead Presbytery and can create difficulties in reporting and satisfying stipulations as mandated by the Internal Revenue Service.

#### 7.3e Board of Pension Enrollment\*

The Church’s concern for the well‐being of its servants is reflected in the establishment of a Benefits Plan protecting members against the loss of income resulting from major medical expenses, retirement, disability and death. Because of the Church’s Benefits Plan, administered by the Board of Pensions, members can carry out the ministry of the Church, secure in the knowledge that they have adequate and continuous benefit protection. Those in called/installed positions are mandated to be enrolled in the Board of Pensions Benefits Plan.

The church treasurer is responsible for prompt payment of dues and reporting of salary changes for pastors serving churches. A church may also offer a medical expense reimbursement group plan.

Basic information regarding the Presbyterian Pension and Benefits Plan and offering may be found in the pension board's publications detailing the terms of the plan.

#### f Accountable Reimbursement of Pastor’s Church Expenses\*

The church is encouraged to provide an accountable reimbursement plan for the pastor’s use for expenses directly related to the ministry of the church. This is not intended to cover expenses rightly assigned to another section of the church’s budget, or personal expenses of the pastor not directly related to the church ministry. It is intended to cover such things as meals, mileage and expenses related to participating in church activities, ministries and ministry within and beyond the local congregation, books & webinars (if not covered by continuing education funds), pastoral resources, clergy vestments, or other such things as approved by the Session. Such a plan should be written and approved by Session.

Because tangible items purchased through the accountable reimbursement plan are purchased with church funds and are not part of the compensation of the pastor, all such tangible items belong to the church. Nevertheless, it is recognized that such items are often personal to the pastor therefore are of limited value to the church or the succeeding pastor. Therefore such items are considered expendable, and it is appropriate for the church to grant those items to the pastor when the pastor leaves service at the church.

Exceptions to this include computer equipment, any large purchase that one might legitimately consider a long-term asset of the church, or other specific items as negotiated with the church. It is recommended that exceptions be clarified prior to purchase.

Expense reimbursements are not considered part of a pastor’s compensation package, and so the congregation shall not vote on an expense reimbursement budget for the pastor. This allows the session to make mid-year adjustments as circumstances surface instead of having to go the congregation to make a change in the call which then also needs the approval of presbytery.

### Education & Renewal Leave

#### a Continuing Education\*

Ministry requires constant study and learning, with the sum total of knowledge not ending with the seminary degree. To this end, presbytery encourages all ministers and churches to seriously engage in a

regular, systematic approach to continuing education. This education encompasses a wide variety of opportunities, from one-day seminars to week-long events, to work on an advanced degree.

Furthermore, this program is one which is mutually beneficial to both the pastor and the local church. Continuing education is for the pastor's growth and development in ministry. Continuing education shall include:

* + 1. A minimum of $500 and two weeks per year (including two Sundays) for full time positions with appropriate adjustments for part time positions. Both the compensation and time shall be allowed to accumulate for three years.
    2. Unused study leave accumulations are cancelled at the termination of a call.
    3. Sessions shall include continuing education in all calls, part time service and contracts for temporary service of a year or more.
    4. All continuing education leaves shall be approved by the session.
    5. COM shall review annually the study leaves of its pastors through the liaison and session records review processes.

#### b Clergy Renewal Leave\*

Churches and other employing agencies of Homestead Presbytery are encouraged to consider providing a clergy renewal leave to their full-time pastor(s)/minister(s) for the purpose of renewal, rest, recreation, and self-improvement. This leave shall be used for spiritual and intellectual pursuits, continuing education, or volunteer mission activities. Such leaves should enrich and enhance the quality of the ministry to the congregation. Churches are free to create their own clergy renewal leave policies. If no policy exists and the congregation wishes to offer Clergy Renewal Leave, the following policy is suggested:

* + 1. A pastor/minister is eligible for a clergy renewal leave after serving seven (or fewer if the terms of call so state) consecutive years in his/her position.
    2. A written plan with identified goals must be submitted for approval to both the session/governing body of the employing agency and to the COM at least four months before the anticipated beginning of the leave time.
    3. Clergy renewal leave is normally over and above regular vacation days for that year as well as separate from annual study leave time.
       1. Leave with full pay and benefits will not exceed 90 days and may not be split into smaller leave times.
       2. Additional leave time up to 90 more days without pay may be negotiated in advance.
       3. Earned vacation days and study leave time (plus book and study leave allowances) may be used to extend the basic clergy renewal leave, but the pastor may not be required to use normal vacation or study leave time as part of the first 90 days of the leave.
    4. During the clergy renewal leave, the church or employing agency agrees to underwrite the cost of pastoral/ministerial services. Leave is contingent on satisfactory replacement or other arrangements so that there is little to no interruption in the program and progress of the congregation.
    5. The pastor/minister shall provide the session or employing agency and COM with a comprehensive report of the benefits gained through his/her spiritual experience, mission work or educational pursuits.
    6. If the pastor/minister chooses to leave the congregation or employing agency within a period of one year after the leave is completed, the pastor will reimburse the church the amount of salary for the time of the clergy renewal leave, unless another agreement has been reached between the pastor and session with the concurrence of the COM.
    7. Another clergy renewal leave cycle will begin after the leave is completed. Unused clergy renewal leave time cannot be carried forward into the next cycle.
    8. Congregations should budget annually a portion of the funds to be needed for replacement pastoral services during the clergy renewal leave so that all expenses are not a burden on one particular year.

### Vacation & Leaves of Absence

#### a Vacation\*

The length of vacation, any variations based on years of services, and how much time can be accumulated should be stated clearly. This Vacation Policy applies to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or equivalent, or a commissioned pastor in a particular congregation.

* + 1. A pastor in a particular congregation or validated ministry under the oversight of Homestead Presbytery accrues vacation from date of call at a minimum rate of 22 working days per year (1.833 days per month). A pastor serving part-time accrues vacation prorated based on weekly hours contracted for.
    2. The minimum of 22 vacation days per year will normally include 4 Sundays. Regular days off and holidays are not included in calculating vacation time. (Thus a week’s vacation amounts to 5 working days and 2 days off)
    3. A pastor’s vacation periods may be taken intermittently or on consecutive days. All vacation dates should be authorized by the session. The clerk of session will be responsible for an accounting of vacation periods earned and granted to the pastor and report to the session annually.
    4. Per Nebraska State Law (*NE Rev. Stat. Sec. 48-1229),* earned vacation is considered wages, and thus cannot expire if not used by the end of the year. A church may limit the amount of vacation time that can be accrued. (Example: Pastor can accrue up to 5 days over the amount one is entitled to earn during a calendar year, which would mean a pastor earning the minimum requirement of 22 working days could accrue up to 29 working days, and would cease to accrue more until vacation time is used and the accrued amount drops below 29.)
    5. Dissolution of pastoral relations with the church:
       1. In the final year of employment at a church, vacation time will accrue per pay period up to the official date of dissolution.
       2. Unused accrued vacation will be paid to the pastor.
       3. When a pastor already has taken unaccrued vacation, the amount will be deducted from his/her final check unless the session grants an exception.

#### 7.5b Holidays\*

Annual paid holidays should be made clear. It is typical for churches to have the following as paid holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas day. Each church will need to decide what makes sense in their own ministry setting.

#### c Sick Leave\*

* + 1. Short-Term Sick Leave
       1. When a minister is sick for a short period, or needs time off to care short-term for family members, it is appropriate for the congregation to make sick leave available. Sessions are responsible for determining an appropriate sick leave benefit.
       2. Homestead Presbytery suggests benefits of 12 working days per calendar year, accruing at one day per month, cumulative up to 90 days. At the time of termination of employment

(either voluntary or involuntary) an employee shall have no claim for pay in lieu of unused sick leave.

* + - 1. Should the pastor be unable to provide for leading worship, the session assumes the responsibility and cost of providing pulpit supply or worship leadership.
    1. **Long-Term Sick Leave:**
       1. Definition: When a minister is incapable of performing the functions of ministry and is normally under medical care.
       2. Terms: The congregation shall continue to pay full salary, housing, and pension/medical benefits until that time when the board of pension's disability benefits become applicable (after 90 days). Any accrued sick leave will be applied to that 90 day period, with the congregation continuing to pay the remainder of up to 90 days. Business and travel allowances, as well as other reimbursable expenses would not be payable during sick leave without specific authorization of the session.
       3. The session assumes the responsibility and cost of providing pulpit supply.
       4. Application: Notice shall be given by the minister to the clerk of session with copies to COM and Homestead Presbytery office as soon as Long-Term sick leave is needed, at which time terms would become applicable. For extended periods of leave, the Homestead Presbytery office and the COM moderator should be notified of the terms of agreement.

#### d Parental Leave\*

* + 1. Definition: When a Minister of the Word and Sacrament or spouse is to give birth, or to adopt a child.
    2. Terms:
       1. When the Minister of the Word and Sacrament chooses to remain home to care for the child, one of the following options may be negotiated:
          1. 45 days at 100 percent of pro-rated annual salary and full housing allowance, or
          2. 60 days at 75 percent of pro-rated annual salary and full housing allowance.
       2. Pension and medical benefits shall be continued by the congregation throughout the leave period.
       3. The Minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be freed from all pastoral duties including funerals, weddings, moderating session and/or congregational meetings.
       4. The session assumes the responsibility and cost of pulpit supply.
    3. Application: Application for parental leave shall be negotiated by the Minister of the Word and Sacrament with the session in a reasonable time before the anticipated arrival of the child.

#### e Family Emergency Leave\*

* + 1. Definition: When a sudden emergency arises within the minister's immediate family which requires his/her presence, rendering the minister unable to perform the functions of ministry for an indefinite period of time.
    2. Terms:
       1. Sick leave terms shall apply while the minister is incapable of performing the functions of a minister.
       2. Beyond the sick leave terms, additional time may be negotiated by the minister with the session and COM.
       3. During the leave, the minister shall be freed from all pastoral duties including funerals, weddings, moderating session and/or congregational meetings, congregational visitation, and leading worship.
       4. The session assumes the responsibility and cost of supplying the pulpit.
    3. Application: Application for family emergency leave of less than seven days will be through the clerk of session, while longer leave requires negotiation with the session.

#### f Bereavement Leave\*

* + 1. Definition: When a teaching elder experiences death in the immediate family
    2. Terms:
       1. In case of death in the immediate family the employee shall receive full pay for bereavement leave. This absence shall be at least four (4) working days. Additional leave may be granted by the session.
       2. Immediate family is defined as husband, wife, parent, step-parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, and equivalent in-laws.
       3. During the leave, the minister shall be freed from all pastoral duties, including funerals, weddings, moderating session and/or congregational meetings, congregational visitation, and leading worship.
       4. The session assumes the responsibility and cost of supplying the pulpit.
    3. Application: Application for Bereavement leave will be through the clerk of session. In extenuating circumstances, additional arrangements may be made by the Session.

#### g Long-Term Leave\*

When conditions with the minister or session do not fit in the above definitions, terms, and/or applications, or go beyond the time limits of the above pastoral leaves of absence, COM shall negotiate with the minister and session on a case-by-case basis upon the application of the minister and/or session.

### Honoraria\*

Ministers of Word and Sacrament should not expect to receive honoraria for services to members of the congregation. It is recognized that it is not uncommon for members of the congregation to want to give honoraria to their pastors for funerals. It is also recognized that some churches have a practice of setting forth the expectation that the pastor will receive from the member an honorarium or fee for officiating at weddings of members of the congregation. The pastor should clearly discuss expectations with the session regarding accepting honoraria or fees from members of the congregation for pastoral services.

If a pastor is serving full time at a church, at no time should a pastor refuse services for such things as weddings in the case of members, or funerals in the case of a deceased member’s family, due to an inability or unwillingness to provide honoraria. If a pastor is employed part time, they are encouraged to discuss appropriate compensation with the session.

When a Minister of the Word and Sacrament is working outside the bounds of the calling body, it is customary to receive honoraria or a fee for professional services rendered at weddings or funerals, for guest preaching, for lectures, for informal teaching, or for a variety of other services which might be performed in addition to the pastoral duties for which he or she is called and installed to service by a congregation or other employing body. It is recommended that such fees should be discussed in advance and agreements as to terms be fully understood by all involved in the professional‐service relationship.

Congregations utilizing the professional services of ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are not in their employ are to be responsible in providing fair honorarium or fees for services provided and for the direct reimbursement of expenses involved, such as travel or materials. Financial arrangements are to be

agreed upon in advance of the professional service provided.

#### 7.6a Moderating Meetings\*

If it is impractical for the pastor to moderate, he or she shall invite another minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a member of the presbytery or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator. (G-3.0104)

The following minimum compensation applies for temporary moderators of sessions or congregational meetings: $75 for up to 2 hours, and an additional $50 per hour or portion thereof over two hours, plus transportation paid at the current presbytery approved rate.

If possible, payment for services rendered will be available on the day of service. Churches shall use map programs or consult with the moderator to determine mileage in advance so that payment can be rendered at the time of service.

#### b Pulpit Supply\*

Homestead Presbytery provides a list of approved temporary pulpit supply preachers on its website, both clergy and non-clergy.

Minimum compensation for temporary pulpit supply is $125 for one service and $75 for each additional service with transportation paid at the current presbytery approved rate. Upon request of the session, ministers of the Word and Sacrament on the Pulpit Supply List may serve communion.

It is expected that payment for services rendered will be available on the day of service. Churches shall use map programs or consult with the guest preacher to determine mileage in advance so that payment can be rendered at the time of service. Exceptions shall be communicated clearly in advance to the guest preacher.

See Section 5.2f for criteria for placement on the approved pulpit supply list.

### Section 7 Appendices

### Appendix 7A: Manse Use Policy\* (revised 10/11/2021)

Any congregation providing a church owned home for their clergy shall have a Manse Use Policy that includes at least the following minimum guidelines:

1. Manse Use is a benefit/condition of employment for clergy and not a rental agreement and shall reflect such an understanding. Clergy must be allowed to negotiate the policy with the other terms of call.
2. Manse Use Policy shall be approved annually by COM AFTER the local session and clergy have reviewed the policy – amended/changed and/or adapted it for the coming year. This policy shall be due annually by January 31st – in the Presbytery Office.
3. Manse Use Policies must NOT be overly restrictive on the clergy and/or their families, however, the clergy are expected to exercise responsible stewardship of the property and are expected to leave the property in the same condition in which it was received (except for expected wear and tear.)
4. The manse is the clergy’s home and they are free to hang pictures on the walls. Any painting, wallpapering, permanent floor covering or remodeling MUST be approved by the session.
5. The clergy shall provide adequate Renter’s Insurance on personal property – and shall provide a copy of such coverage to the session annually.
6. It is the responsibility of the church to maintain the manse is a good, safe condition (including smoke alarms and all provided appliances), provide reasonable modern conveniences, address repairs in a timely manner, assuring that all safety features comply with state and local regulations on rental properties.
7. The church shall have the heating and cooling systems professionally inspected each year – and have them serviced as needed – at the church’s cost.
8. This policy shall stipulate which utilities will be paid by the church and which are the clergy person’s responsibility:

Electricity \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gas \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Water & garbage \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Landline (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Internet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Cable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Snow removal \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lawn mowing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Walk through of the manse shall happen every September and shall be to address general repair and any needed improvements. Judgements of cleanliness are not warranted – unless a true health hazard is present.

Potential Other Terms of The Manse Policy could include:

(please note these in detail on another page if any are applicable…)

1. Pets (indoor/outdoor)? Size limits?
2. Who lives in the manse (the usual expectation is that the manse is for the exclusive use of the pastor and her/his immediate family, but there may be circumstances which warrant including other people)
3. Will the water mitigation system be professionally inspected annually – and serviced as needed?
4. Radon removal/alert system? Included or not?
5. How are repairs to be reported when needed – to whom – in what method?

Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_clergy

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Clerk of Session

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Building/Grounds

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS ANNUALLY TO THE HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY OFFICE. THANK YOU.** You will be notified when it has been approved by COM.

# Section 8:Grant Opportunities

### Candidate Indebtedness Policy\*

Any Minister of the Word and Sacrament serving a first call following graduation from seminary who comes with any educational indebtedness shall be required to show evidence of having attended a financial planning workshop such as a fiscal fitness workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions, or other financial planning workshop. If the Minister of the Word and Sacrament has not attended such a workshop, he/she shall be required to do so within 12 months of start-up. The cost of registration fee, accommodation, and travel for such a workshop are to be considered legitimate reimbursable expense from study leave allowances.

COM shall encourage calling congregations to utilize further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.

There are special programs to support pastors with educational debt and those who are serving smaller congregations. On the MIF the COM should indicate when approving your form if your congregation is eligible to participate in the educational debt and special programs for those serving smaller congregations.

For more information see the links below:

* + - Transformational Leadership Debt Assistance (TLDA) [https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and- evangelism/financialaid/loans/transformational-leadership-debt-assistance/](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/theology-formation-and-evangelism/financialaid/loans/transformational-leadership-debt-assistance/)
    - Board of Pensions Minister Educational Debt Assistance: [http://www.pensions.org//plansandprograms/assistanceprogram/pages/church-workers- financial-vocational-needs.aspx](http://www.pensions.org/plansandprograms/assistanceprogram/pages/church-workers-financial-vocational-needs.aspx)

### Ministry Support Fund\*

*Administered by Homestead Presbytery*

1. General Considerations
   1. HP has mandated that this fund shall begin each calendar year with a total sum of $20,000 and shall be replenished up to that amount on January 1st of each new year.
   2. This fund is administered by the Commission on Ministry (COM) to provide assistance to churches which have temporary difficulty in funding pastoral care (not “brick and mortar”).
   3. In the interest of responsible Christian stewardship serious consideration shall be given to the implementation of the stipulations as set forth in this policy.
   4. Ordinarily ministry support is provided in gradually diminishing amounts over a period of time as specified by mutual agreement with the final authorization and approval by the COM. Such funds shall not be regarded as “automatically renewable” unless a specific and unique agreement states otherwise. It is conceivable that a particular congregation may be determined as an ongoing mission of HP.
   5. Upon initial request by the session the COM will appoint a representative to work with the session in this process as advisor and advocate.
   6. The mission support fund application shall include:
      1. Goals and statements as approved by the session:
         1. two-year stewardship and mission plan
         2. financial statement for the three preceding years
         3. proposed budget for the forthcoming year
         4. plan for pastoral leadership
      2. Stewardship Campaign Plan:
         1. shall be conducted for the purpose of encouraging each member to assume a significant and active participation in the area of financial stewardship;
         2. shall be required at least once every three years following this initial application;
         3. shall give evidence of taking advantage of the human, programmatic and financial resources available from the community, HP, and synod.
   7. Additional Considerations
      1. Per capita apportionment shall be current or demonstrate a plan approved by the session whereby it shall become current.
      2. Representatives of the session shall be present at a meeting of the COM or its authorized subcommittee when submitting its application. Generally, applications are processed during the month of August prior to the application year.
      3. Emergency applications will be considered at all times. The primary purpose for the representatives to be present shall be:
         1. to review together the application data;
         2. to have the opportunity to share and discuss the stewardship and mission rationale of the session;
         3. to provide a forum for discussion relative to the projected future of the church;
         4. to determine the advisability of including the involvement of the HP’s committee on congregational development and revitalization.
      4. Revisions of the Call of the congregation’s pastoral leadership shall include at least an annual cost of living increase keeping in mind the minimum salary as approved by HP.

### Personal Financial Assistance Fund\*

*Administered by Homestead Presbytery*

The Personal Financial Assistance Fund (PFAF) has been established to help with individuals and emergency needs of families within the professional work of the PC(USA) within the bounds of HP. The distribution of funds shall be administered by the COM of HP and information shall be regarded as private.

1. Availability - funds shall be available to:
   1. Continuing members of presbytery and their dependents
   2. Pensioners
2. Initiative:
   1. Person or persons in need
   2. COM and/or pensions coordinator
   3. Nebraska Presbyterian Welfare Foundation
   4. Others aware of possible need
3. Implementation:
   1. The financial assistance shall be regarded as a grant;
   2. Administration and distribution shall be under the sole direction of the COM moderator in consultation with the executive presbyter;
   3. Amount is to be determined by the COM moderator in consultation with the executive presbyter in personal contact with the person(s) in need and/or knowledgeable sources who provide information – e.g., supplemental income because of sudden disability prior to long term solutions; emergency medical costs not covered by major medical or other health insurance, or inadequate pension.
4. Review and Accountability:
   1. Review of the general condition/status of this fund shall be made at the next stated meeting of COM following each allocation but no less than annually by the COM

moderator (e.g., “Two requests have been approved each in the amount of $ and $ .”).

* 1. Quarterly reports by the treasurer of HP will reflect activity in this account.

1. Distribution of Funds:
   1. Funds are expended by the treasurer of HP upon receipt of a voucher from the COM moderator.

### Emergency Shared Assistance Grants\*

*Administered by Homestead Presbytery*

Periodically the Synod of Lakes and Prairies will receive funds from the Presbyterian Board of Pensions which represent accumulated dollars in the form of a “dividend” from the group contract which this synod has with the board of pensions for lay employees of the synod, its presbyteries, and local congregations. In each case, participation in the pension plan through the group contract will have been previously reviewed and approved. The funds received shall be accepted by the synod and placed into the appropriate account for investment and/or other use by action of the synod council. A certain number of dollars will be reserved each year for emergency shared assistance grants.

The following guidelines shall control the awarding of such grants:

Emergency shared assistance grants will be awarded on the basis of individual need and reviewed on a case by case basis. In ordinary circumstances not more than two grants will be awarded in any given calendar year to a single individual. Exceptions to this guideline can be made by the synod executive and/or his/her designee in consultation with the appropriate persons.

1. Eligibility: Participation in this program shall be open to any lay or clergy member of the Presbyterian Board of Pension Plan within the bounds of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, the spouse, children and/or immediate survivors.
2. Assistance Available: Emergency shared assistance grants are made available by the synod to any person or persons meeting the eligibility requirements in the following situations:
   1. Medical
   2. Psychological
   3. Financial
   4. Family or personal crisis
3. The responsibility for determining the validity of any request for an emergency grant rests with the following:
   1. in the case of synod employees, the responsibility rests with the synod executive or his/her designee;
   2. in the case of HP employees, the responsibility rests with the executive presbyter or his/her designee;
   3. in the case of employees of local churches, the responsibility rests with the moderator of the session, in consultation with the synod staff person responsible for the administration of the group contract.

### Assistance Program\*

*Administered by the Board of Pensions*

When special needs arise that the benefits plan, personal resources, or other means cannot meet, the financial assistance programs and the retirement housing programs can often help church workers and their families. By administering the benefits plan and the assistance program, the board of pensions manifests the concern of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for the well-being of its servants and their families. When the board considers assistance requests, it evaluates each application individually

including the applicant’s financial, health and social needs. All applicants for these programs must complete the appropriate forms that may be obtained from the assistance and retirement housing office. The assistance programs are discretionary programs. The Board of Pensions reserves the right to amend or terminate any of the programs, including the eligibility rules, at any time. While specified dues support the carefully defined benefits offered to members, funds for the assistance program come from other sources, including the Christmas Joy Offering, gifts, legacies directed to the board of pensions and income from endowments.

### Shared Grant for Excess Medical Expenses\*

*Administered by the Board of Pensions*

Some shared grants are occasioned by medical and hospital expenses which are beyond the major medical coverage of the pensions and benefits plan and beyond the ability of an individual or family to pay. These differ from other shared grants only in the cause of the emergency need, but the following guidelines are to be used in determining need:

1. Recipients are expected to assume as much of the expense as is reasonably possible. The

recipient’s portion should be at least 2% of the annual earned income (in the case of an active Minister of the Word and Sacrament), unless this amount has been paid by the recipient as part of a major medical claim.

1. Where the recipient has discretion over the frequency and duration of treatment (and therefore of costs), the recipient should contribute an amount sufficient to discourage over-utilization. This is particularly true in various types of on-going therapy.
2. All payments allowable under the major medical provisions of the Board of Pensions Plan, Medicare, other insurance, and professional or courtesy discounts should be applied to the need before a shared grants is requested.
3. In order to discourage excessive medical fees, medical expenses should be reviewed in the light of scheduled amounts allowed by Medicare and other standards for determining usual,

customary and reasonable fees in the recipient’s geographical area.

1. Recipients normally are asked to submit medical bills (which will be returned) so that the board may assist in this review and assure payment of eligible expenses under major medical provisions of the Presbyterian Board of Pensions Plan.

# Section 9:Commission on Ministry and Certified Christian Educators

Homestead Presbytery shall provide for the support of certified Christian educators and certified associate Christian educators and the certification process as outlined in the *Book of Order* G‐2.11.

### Specific Responsibilities\*

Homestead Presbytery, through the Commission on Ministry shall provide the following support to Certified Christian Educators:

* + 1. A service of recognition at the time of certification [G‐2.1102].
    2. Minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators [G‐2.1103b].
    3. Access to the Committee on Ministry [G‐2.1103b].
    4. Provide privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its meetings [G‐2.1103b].

Certified Christian educators are required to:

1. Fulfill the Homestead Presbytery Boundary Training requirements as found in Section 2.6c
2. To abide by the Homestead Presbytery “Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy.” (Section 2.6b)

### Minimum Compensation for Certified Christian Educators\*

The minimum total annual effective salary for certified Christian Educators and certified associate Christian Educators is 50% of the current year’s median salary as determined by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Effective salary includes:

* + 1. Salary
    2. Health Savings Accounts, Flexible Spending Accounts or other similar plans, whether through a salary deduction or otherwise.

In addition, the church should consider:

1. Vacation and leaves of absences as detailed in Section 7.5.
2. Continuing education requirements as detailed in Section 7.4a.
3. Reimbursements for expenses incurred as part of duties, as detailed in Section 7.3f.
4. Certified Christian educators may already have health benefits in place through other avenues, however if the CCE does not, churches are encouraged to consider at minimum Board of Pension health insurance or its equivalent.

Certified Christian educators are required to submit a report of their terms of call to the COM annually.

# Section 10: Commission on Ministry and Commissioned Pastors

The Commission on Ministry of Homestead Presbytery shall provide for the support of commissioned pastors as outlined in the *Book of Order*, G‐2.10.

### Certification Process\*

Training for those interested in commissioned pastoral service shall be overseen by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

### Process for being Commissioned to Limited Pastoral Service\*

Once a ruling elder has been certified by the CPM as ready to be commissioned to limited pastoral service in a validated ministry, and a validated ministry requests such a person to serve, the ruling elder will follow the steps outlined in 2.5a, 2.5b and 2.5c, which covers background checks, reference checks, and examination for employment, and in 5.2d, which covers the process for a session seeking a commissioned pastor.

If a ruling elder seeking to be commissioned has been received training in another presbytery and has not been commissioned before in Homestead Presbytery, the CPM in coordination with the COM will present the ruling elder to be examined by the Presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction [G-2.1002]. The presbytery only needs to examine the ruling elder once. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions specified in G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery. (G- 2.1002)

When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of a ruling elder to serve a congregation, it shall commission the ruling elder to pastoral service as designated by the presbytery, employing the questions contained in W-4.04. (G-2.1003)

Once commissioned, commissioned pastors are required to:

1. Fulfill the Homestead Presbytery Boundary Training requirements as found in Section 2.6c
2. To abide by the Homestead Presbytery “Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy.” (Section 2.6b)

### Relationship with the Local Congregation\*

The session shall, in consultation with the COM, create a temporary position and write a job description that is acceptable to the COM. The COM is responsible to determine whether a person qualified to serve as a commissioned pastor is suitable to the particular situation.

There shall be a written contract between the commissioned pastor and the local session, covering remuneration and expected duties (Appendix 5C). The level of remuneration shall meet the minimum salary requirements for commissioned pastors (Section 10.5), pro-rated for percentage of time contracted for.

COM shall review the commissioned pastor contract annually, and evaluate the effectiveness of the

relationship in accordance with G‐2.10. COM shall revoke the commission of any commissioned pastor who does not abide by the provisions of the job description or whose work is deemed inadequate to meet the needs of the particular congregation or the presbytery.

### Minimum Salary Requirements for Commissioned Pastors\*

The minimum total annual effective salary for commissioned pastors is 50% of the current year’s median salary as determined by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Effective salary includes:

1. Salary
2. Health Savings Accounts, Flexible Spending Accounts or other similar plans, whether through a salary deduction or otherwise.

In addition, the following provisions also apply:

1. Vacation and leaves of absences as detailed in Section 7.5.
2. Continuing education requirements as detailed in Section 7.4a.

The church should also consider reimbursements for expenses incurred as part of pastoral duties, in which case the provisions in Section 7.3f apply.

Commissioned pastors may already have health benefits in place through other avenues, however if the commissioned pastor does not, churches are encouraged to consider Board of Pension health, pension, and death and disability benefits.

Commissioned pastors are required to submit a report of their terms of call to the COM annually.

### Supervision and Mentoring

The COM shall designate a minister of the Word and Sacrament as a mentor and supervisor for each commissioned pastor. The mentor/supervisor and commissioned pastor will ordinarily meet monthly, and shall meet no less than quarterly. A report will be submitted to the COM annually.

If the commissioned pastor has not been authorized to moderate session meeting, COM shall appoint the mentor/supervising pastor to be the moderator. The mentor/supervisor shall be in regular contact with the COM liaison.

The commissioned pastor’s failure to relate appropriately to the mentor/supervisor may be grounds for revoking the commission.

### The Mentor/Supervising Pastor

The mentor/supervising pastor is the primary resource for the ongoing study of a commissioned pastor working in a commissioned position. Commissioned pastors encounter situations and circumstances which require consultation with a pastor who has more extensive preparation and experience.

Mentor/supervising pastors must be willing to share of themselves to help the individual realize his/her call to ministry as a commissioned pastor. Consequently, the mentor/supervising pastor must be a person who can develop collegial relationships and establish trust and confidence with the commissioned pastor.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) shall appoint a mentor and supervisor who is an ordained minister of the Word and Sacrament for the purpose of supervising and mentoring a commissioned pastor (CP) in the ministry of the congregation they are commissioned to serve.

The Supervising Pastor shall:

* + 1. Serve as moderator of the session of the congregation being served by the CP, if the CP has not been appointed moderator of session. With COM’s approval, the supervising pastor may invite the CP to moderate portions of a session meeting, in the interest of ongoing training, as long as the supervisor is present for the meeting. The invitation shall be noted in the session’s minutes each time the CP moderates*.*
    2. Be in regular contact with the CP, making appropriate time for communication. Ordinarily they shall meet once a month. Meeting in person is preferred. At minimum they shall meet in person quarterly.
    3. Be part of the yearly review of the CP, meeting with the session, COM, and CP: reviewing meeting times, mentor/CP relationship, work accomplished, goals and objectives, continuing education and relationship with congregation and session. For the CP this would be the COM’s meeting for the annual review and the renewal of the commission (G-2.1001).
    4. Complete the annual report of the CP, mailing a copy to the COM.
    5. Provide spiritual, emotional, and practical support to the CP.
    6. Be involved in making recommendations for continuing education for the CP.
    7. Where possible, observe the CP in areas of commissioned responsibilities, for example preaching, teaching, visitations, and administration of the sacraments.
    8. Contact the COM liaison when and if there are any concerns regarding the CP.

# Section 10 Appendices

### Appendix 10A: Mentor/Supervising Pastor Annual Report

Date:

Commissioned Pastor:

Church or Project being served:

Mentor/Supervisor:

COM Liaison:

1. Did you have ongoing contact with the CP during the year? Describe.
2. Describe the CP’s grasp of ministry, listing strengths and weaknesses.
3. Briefly describe the CP’s relationship with the session and church.
4. Would you recommend this person to be appointed to serve as session moderator in the future? Why or why not?
5. What continuing education did the CP engage in last year?
6. Do you have any recommendations for the continuing education of CP?
7. What work has been accomplished during the past year?
8. What goals and objectives were met and which ones were not? Explain.
9. What goals and objectives have been selected for the coming year?

Other comments:

Signed:

Mentor/Supervisor

Date: