

SELECTING AN INTERIM PASTOR/INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR*

National Capital Presbytery – Committee on Ministry Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC)

Approved by CTC, fall 2014; last update, 11/22/16

Step	Responsible Party
1.0 Presbytery is notified that the installed pastor is leaving.	Pastor or Clerk of Session
1.1 Co-Chairs of Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC) are notified.	COM Administrator
1.2 The Session and the congregation are notified by letter of the pastor’s departure.	Pastor
1.3 A COM liaison is appointed.	Liaison Coordinator, with Co-Chairs
1.4 Arrangements are made for a member of the CTC to meet with Session regarding the vacancy period and selection of an Interim Pastor. Links to materials are sent to Pastor or Clerk before the Session meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for Interim Ministry • How to Find an Interim Minister • Interim Minister Contract • Former Pastors’ Policy • Letter to Pastor re Former Pastors’ Policy • Letter to Congregation re Former Pastors’ Policy 	CTC Co-Chair and/or COM liaison
2.0 CTC Transitions meets with the Session. The search for an interim pastor may begin, in consultation with CTC, after the pastor has informed the Presbytery and congregation of his/her intention to leave the position. Depending on the length of time between the pastor’s announcement and his/her departure this may enable the interim to be in place soon after the pastor has departed the congregation. See Steps 5-9 below. In the meeting with the Session the following information is shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance and purpose of interim period 	CTC Co-Chair, plus another member of CTC if possible, such as the COM liaison

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to find an interim, goals for the interim period, characteristics of a good interim • Options and implications for advertising through website and Church Leadership Connection (CLC) • Compensation guidelines • General Presbyter’s role in recommending candidates and vetting candidates prior to interviewing • Former pastors’ policy and letters 	
<p>3.0 Congregation dissolves the pastoral relationship in a duly called congregational meeting. If the departing pastor is a solo pastor, he/she needs to arrange for another teaching elder to moderate the congregational meeting. If the congregation (rather than the pastor) requests the dismissal of the pastor, the Session asks the Stated Clerk to appoint a moderator of the meeting.</p>	<p>Session, Pastor, Congregation, Moderator</p>
<p>3.1 Presbytery is notified ASAP that the congregation has approved the motion to dissolve the relationship and requests Presbytery concurrence.</p>	<p>Clerk of Session</p>
<p>3.2 It is helpful (though not necessary) to have a CTC representative present at the above congregational meeting to present the elements of the Former Pastors’ Policy. (The timing of presenting the Former Pastors’ Policy to the congregation depends on how close the congregational meeting is to the pastor’s termination date. If his/her departure is several months away, this notification may take place nearer to the pastor’s departure.)</p>	<p>Representative from CTC</p>
<p>3.3 Prior to the Pastor’s departure, the Clerk of Session obtains the signed copy of the Pastor’s Covenant and Pastor’s Dissolution Agreement and mails them to the Stated</p>	<p>Clerk of Session & Pastor</p>

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Clerk.	
3.4 CTC Co-chairs are notified of results of congregational meeting.	COM Administrator
3.5 Upon the Pastor’s departure, the Former Pastor’s Letter is sent to the Clerk of Session to be sent to the entire congregation. This letter is sent by the Clerk of Session after the pastor’s departure.	COM Administrator & Clerk of Session
4.0 COM concurs in the dissolution of the pastoral relationship on behalf of the Presbytery.	CTC Co-Chair/COM Chair
4.1 Concurrence of dissolution of pastoral relationship is placed on the agenda of the next CTC meeting. CTC acts on behalf of Presbytery and COM to dissolve the pastoral relationship.	
4.2 Session and Pastor are notified of the concurrence.	COM Administrator
5.0 Session selects Interim Search Committee (ISC) and sets compensation package for Interim Pastor.	Session
5.1. ISC is usually elected by Session; sometimes the church personnel committee is designated. ISC should have 3-5 members; at least one member should be on the Session. It is recommended that the chair be on the Session.	
5.2 ISC requests preliminary review of proposed compensation package for compliance with Presbytery policies.	ISC
5.3 Proposed compensation package is reviewed for compliance with Presbytery policies, is approved, and ISC chair is notified.	COM Administrator

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<p>6.0 ISC drafts position description and MIF, if applicable, in consultation with the Session, General Presbyter, and COM Transitions Team.</p> <p>6.1 ISC drafts an Interim Pastor position description, specifying duties and responsibilities of interim, whether full- or part-time, desired starting date, salary and benefits, accountability and supervision, and ISC contact information.</p> <p>6.2 If a nationwide search is desired, ISC also drafts MIF for posting on CLC. <i>It is helpful for the draft MIF to be sent to COM Administrator for preliminary review before submitting it for Session approval. (See Step 7.3.)</i> MIF is approved by Session.</p> <p>6.3 ISC drafts a position vacancy notice, based on the approved position description, suitable for posting on NCP website.</p> <p>6.4 Position description, compensation package, vacancy notice, and MIF, if applicable, are approved by Session.</p> <p>6.5 Position vacancy notice is emailed to COM Administrator and CTC Co-Chairs.</p>	<p>ISC & Session</p>
<p>7.0 Interim Pastor position vacancy is advertised.</p>	
<p>7.1 Position vacancy notice for NCP website is reviewed and approved. Vacancy notice is forwarded to NCP Director of Communications for posting.</p>	<p>CTC. Co-Chair</p>
<p>7.2 Position vacancy notice is posted to NCP website. ISC contact person is informed of posting.</p>	<p>Director of Communications</p>
<p>7.3 If applicable: 7.3.1 MIF is reviewed and approved.</p>	<p>CTC Co-Chair</p>

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7.3.2 A hard copy of the MIF, signed by ISC chair and Clerk of Session, is mailed to COM Administrator.	ISC Chair & Clerk of Session
7.3.3 ISC uploads MIF to CLC, using passwords provided by COM Administrator.	ISC Chair
7.3.4 CTC approval of MIF is attested to online, using password provided by COM Administrator	CTC Co-Chair
7.3.5 ISC Chair is notified of COM approval of MIF; online attestation by Clerk of Session is requested.	COM Administrator
7.3.6 Clerk of Session attests to Session approval of MIF online, using password provided by COM Administrator	Clerk of Session
7.4 Position description is sent to interim pastors' mailing list to solicit applications.	COM Administrator
7.5 Position, if requested, may be matched by Church Leadership Connection (without an MIF) with pastors who have indicated an interest in interim pastorates. This search must be requested of CLC by the General Presbyter.	ISC Chair & General Presbyter
8.0 ISC continues its work, culminating in selection and recommendation of a finalist for session approval.	
8.1 Executive Presbyter is contacted for recommendations on local candidates.	ISC Chair
8.2 PIFs/resumes are received and evaluated.	ISC
8.3 Names of candidates the ISC wishes to interview are submitted to COM Administrator for General Presbyter's clearance.	ISC
8.4 General Presbyter conducts presbytery Exec2Exec checks for candidates who are not members of NCP and provides personal reference for those that are members of NCP.	General Presbyter
8.5 ISC is notified of results of checks. Permission to interview granted, as appropriate.	COM Administrator
8.6. Final candidates are considered by listening to sermons, checking references,	ISC & Session

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<p>conducting interviews, and hearing candidates preach. ISC chooses a finalist and negotiates contract. (Please note: NCP strongly prefers that an interim pastor whose membership is outside NCP become a minister member of NCP. His/her start date on the contract will be delayed until membership requirements are satisfied – that is, the successful completion of the COM examination. In this case, the proposed contract should indicate that the start date is pending the successful completion of the COM examination.) ISC submits proposed contract to COM Administrator and CTC Co-Chairs for preliminary review.</p>	
8.7 Proposed contract gets preliminary OK.; ISC informed.	COM Administrator
8.8 ISC presents proposed contract to Session for approval. The ISC must make it clear to the Session that the identity of the finalist must not be revealed until (1) the finalist has successfully completed the examination process, (2) the CTC has approved the contract, and (3) the finalist has given permission for his/her identity and background to be made public	ISC & Session
8.9 Approved contract is signed by the Clerk and sent to COM Administrator.	Clerk of Session
9.0 Presbytery formally approves the contract.	
9.1 <u>NCP requires that an interim pastor whose membership is outside NCP become a minister member of NCP.</u> If such a pastor has a reason to remain a member of another Presbytery that is compelling to the COM, the pastor must be given permission to labor within the bounds. See policy on <i>Laboring Within and Without the Bounds</i> on the NCP website (COM Documents).	
9.2 <u>If pastor is from outside NCP and is moving membership to NCP,</u> he/she may not begin work until the entrance exam is passed and the contract is approved by the CTC. Please note the impact of this situation on the contract’s start date. <i>See Examination Policy on NCP website (COM Documents).</i> In certain unique circumstances pastor may begin work earlier than the examination and approval of contract, with COM approval	CTC Co-Chair

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9.3 Contract approval and presbytery membership for Interim Pastor, if applicable, are placed on the next CTC agenda. If an expedited approval is required, an electronic vote may be taken by the CTC prior to the next stated meeting.	CTC Co-Chair
9.4 Affirmative vote of contract and membership request are reported to Interim Pastor and the Clerk of Session. The final contract is signed by Stated Clerk on behalf of COM, and the final copy is sent to the church (along with a letter from Presbytery staff) and a copy is placed in the Presbytery files. Pastor is cc'd on that correspondence. With the consent of the new Interim Pastor, the Session/PNC may share the identity and information about the new candidate with the congregation.	COM Administrator & Stated Clerk
9.5 Ask the Director of Communications to take down the job posting from the Presbytery website, and the COM Administrator to contact CLC to take down the MIF, if applicable.	CTC Co-Chair
9.6 If applicable, Interim Pastor is placed on presbytery agenda for welcoming and remarks.	Stated Clerk
9.7 After the installed pastor leaves, the Former Pastor Letter, signed by COM Chair, General Presbyter, and Stated Clerk and printed on NCP letterhead, is sent to Clerk of Session for distribution to the congregation.	COM Administrator
10.0 Interim Pastor begins work.	
10.1 If interim is new to NCP, notify the facilitator of the Interim Support Group and new Interim Pastor about the Interim Support Group.	COM Administrator
10.2 If interim is new to NCP, the CTC Co-Chairs provide an orientation to the Presbytery, COM, CTC, and the expectations of interims. A copy of the Intentional Interim Ministry Manual is provided.	CTC Co-Chairs
10.3 When the Interim Pastor has been in place for about a year, send a letter reminding him/her of the next steps (elect PNC; we meet with Session; etc.)	CTC Interim Pastor Coordinator

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* *COM Administrator and CTC Co-Chairs need to be copied on all the email correspondence.*

Authority:

Book of Order: G-2.0503 (Categories of Membership); G-2.0504 (Pastoral Relationships); G-3.0303 (Relations with Sessions); G-3.0307 (The Presbytery: Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to Teaching Elders and Congregations)

NCP Policies: A Handbook for Pastor Nomination Committees and Sessions of Churches Seeking Pastors; and A Handbook for PNC Liaisons); Intentional Interim Ministry Manual; Pastoral Categories Policy; EEO/AA Policy and Supplement (NCP); Background Check Policy; Compensation and Personnel Policies for Pastors; Code of Ethics for Clergy and Other Church Professionals; Policy on Examination Process

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