

**Pastoral Relationships for Teaching Elders Serving in Congregations**  
**National Capital Presbytery**

*Approved by CTC 10/5/2017; Approved by COM 10/17/2017*

**Book of Order Provisions**

The *Book of Order* defines two categories of pastoral relationships for teaching elders serving congregations. These categories are installed pastoral relationships and temporary pastoral relationships. (G-2.0504; see Appendix)

- a. Installed pastoral relationships are Pastor, Co-Pastor, and Associate Pastor, and typically have indefinite terms. However, an installed pastor may be called for a designated term, as determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation. Such positions are known as Designated Pastor (or Designated Co-Pastor or Designated Associate Pastor). Designated relationships may be renewed for an additional designated term, dissolved, or changed to an indefinite call, with the approval of the presbytery and congregation. (G-2.0504a)
- b. The *Book of Order* states that “titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery.” (G-2.0504b)
- c. The *Book of Order* also states that an associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation (G-2.0504a) and that a teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor (G-2.0504b). A presbytery may, however, determine that its mission strategy warrants exceptions to the eligibility restrictions. The exceptions require a three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present and voting. (G-2.0504c).

**Pastoral Relationships in National Capital Presbytery**

The Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC) of National Capital Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry is commissioned to work with congregations and sessions seeking installed and temporary pastoral leadership. CTC provides guidance on the search processes to sessions and search committees and reviews and approves all terms of call for installed positions and contracts for temporary pastoral positions on behalf of the presbytery.

**1. Installed Pastoral Relationships**

A **Pastor, Co-Pastor, and Associate Pastor** is a teaching elder elected by the congregation for an indefinite term following an open search by a representative pastor nominating committee (PNC or APNC) elected by the congregation. Following election by the congregation and approval of the call by presbytery, the Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor is installed to the position by the presbytery.

- a. Installed positions may be full-time or part-time.
- b. Installed pastors have voice and vote in session meetings.
- c. The session must meet presbytery's minimum compensation requirements. Board of Pensions participation is required, to include pension, major medical, and death and disability benefits.
- d. When a congregation has two Pastors serving as Co-Pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as Pastor.
- e. The relationship of an Associate Pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a Pastor.
- f. An Associate Pastor shall be supervised by the Pastor, and may moderate session and congregational meetings at the request of the Pastor.
- g. The Associate Pastor is not eligible to be the next installed Pastor or Co-Pastor of that congregation. See National Capital Presbytery's eligibility restrictions in [\*Policy on Changes in Pastoral Roles within a Congregation\*](#), approved September 20, 2016.

**A Designated Pastor, Designated Co-Pastor, and Designated Associate Pastor** (hereafter referred to as Designated Pastor) is a teaching elder called and installed for a specified term of not less than 2 years nor more than 4 years. All candidates for a Designated Pastor position shall be initially vetted by a team of teaching and ruling elders appointed by the COM Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC). The congregationally-elected Designated Pastor Nominating Committee shall consider only those candidates cleared for review by the vetting team. At the end of the designated term, a congregation may, with the approval of the CTC, renew the relationship for another term, call the Designated Pastor as Pastor, or dissolve the relationship at the end of the term.

- a. The positions may be full-time or part-time.
- b. The presbytery ordains candidates to these positions.
- c. Designated Pastors have voice and vote in session meetings.
- d. Designated Associate Pastors are supervised by the Pastor and may moderate session and congregational meetings at the request of the Pastor.
- e. The session must meet presbytery's minimum compensation requirements for these positions. Board of Pensions participation is required, to include pension, major medical, and death and disability benefits.

## **2. Temporary Pastoral Relationships**

Temporary pastoral positions are contract relationships in which a session has negotiated a term and range of services with a teaching elder member of the presbytery. All teaching elders serving in this capacity shall pass the presbytery examination process and be received as teaching elder members of the National Capital Presbytery prior to service.

### **Interim/Transitional Pastor**

An Interim/Transitional Pastor (or Interim/Transitional Associate Pastor) is a teaching elder invited by the session with the approval of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission to

fulfill defined pastoral duties *for a specified period of time while the church is seeking (or intending to seek) an installed Pastor or installed Associate Pastor.*

- a. The Interim/Transitional Pastor is expected to work with the congregation on the developmental goals of the Interim/Transitional period, preparing the congregation for a healthy relationship with the next installed pastor.
- b. The Interim/Transitional Associate Pastor will work collaboratively with the head of staff to determine appropriate Interim/Transitional goals that the Interim/Transitional Associate Pastor is expected to work on with the congregation.
- c. The initial contract shall not exceed twelve months at a time. With the approval of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission, it may be renewed for a minimum of six months at a time. When a contract renewal beyond two years is requested, the session must provide significant reasons for the extended length.
- d. The position may be full-time or part-time.
- e. The Interim/Transitional Pastor may moderate session and congregational meetings. The Interim/Transitional Pastor has voice in session meetings, but has no vote.
- f. The Interim/Transitional Pastor is required to participate in the Interim/Transitional Support Group sponsored by the presbytery and to submit regular reports to the COM Congregational Transitions Commission on the congregation's progress on the developmental goals of the Interim/Transitional period.
- g. The presbytery does not ordain candidates to this position.
- h. The session must meet presbytery's minimum compensation requirements. Board of Pensions participation is required, to include pension, major medical, and death and disability benefits. A session and Interim/Transitional Pastor (or Interim/Transitional Associate Pastor) may request an exemption from the Board of Pension requirement based upon the adequacy of any coverage the Interim/Transitional Pastor has from another source.
- i. The Interim/Transitional Pastor may not be considered for the installed position. See National Capital Presbytery's eligibility restrictions in [\*Policy on Changes in Pastoral Roles within a Congregation\*](#), approved September 20, 2016.

### **Stated Supply Pastor**

A Stated Supply Pastor (or Associate Stated Supply) is a teaching elder invited by the session with the approval of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission to fulfill defined pastoral duties *for an indefinite period of time in a church that is not seeking an installed pastor for the position.*

- a. The contract shall not exceed twelve months at a time. With the approval of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission, it may be renewed annually.
- b. The position may be full-time or part-time.
- c. A Stated Supply Pastor may, with presbytery's approval, moderate session and congregational meetings. The Stated Supply Pastor will have voice in session meetings, but no vote.
- d. A candidate may be ordained to a Stated Supply Pastor position, but will not be installed.

- e. The session must meet presbytery's minimum compensation requirements. Board of Pensions participation is required, to include pension, major medical, and death and disability benefits. A session and Stated Supply Pastor (or Associate Stated Supply) may request an exemption from the Board of Pension requirement based upon the adequacy of any coverage the Pastor has from another source.
- f. Associate Stated Supply Pastors shall be supervised by the pastor serving as Head of Staff, and may moderate session and congregational meetings at the request of the Head of Staff.
- g. After three years, the session may initiate a request to the COM Congregational Transitions Team to convert the Stated Supply or Associate Stated Supply position to an installed position, following established procedures which include a congregational discernment process and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the presbytery.

### **Short-Term Supply Pastor**

A Short-Term Supply Pastor is a teaching elder secured by the session with the approval of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission to fulfill defined pastoral duties *on a short-term basis when there is no pastor or the pastor is unable to perform pastoral duties.*

For example, a Short-Term Supply Pastor could fulfill pastoral duties during the gap between a pastor's departure and the arrival of the Interim/Transitional Pastor. Or, a Short-Term Supply Pastor could fulfill pastoral duties while a Pastor is unable to perform his or her duties during a sabbatical or in the event of illness or other situation.

The session shall seek the counsel of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission before securing a Short-Term Supply Pastor.

- a. A Short-Term Supply Pastor may, with presbytery's approval, moderate session and congregational meetings. The Short-Term Supply Pastor will have voice in session meetings, but no vote.
- b. The position may be full-time or part-time.
- c. The session must meet presbytery's minimum salary requirements.
- d. The presbytery does not ordain a candidate to this position.

### **Other Relationships**

An **Organizing Pastor** is a teaching elder called by the presbytery to serve as pastor to an emerging community of faith which may become a constituted congregation under the direction of the Church Development Committee (CDC) and with the required permission of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC). In the absence of a session, this person may be given defined authority otherwise reserved for a session, under the oversight of the Church Development Committee.

- a. A candidate may be ordained to this position.

- b. While an open search for an Organizing Pastor is preferable, language and cultural requirements may occasion the CDC and the CTC to agree to waive an open search requirement.
- c. At the time that the congregation is constituted, the new church may, with the approval of the presbytery, call the Organizing Pastor as its first installed pastor, without being required to elect a pastor nominating committee and conduct a pastoral search; or alternatively, it may choose to elect a PNC and conduct a pastoral search.

A **Parish Associate** is a specialized minister (a pastoral category which includes validated, honorably retired, and at-large members) who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches in keeping with ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. National Capital Presbytery's policy on parish associates is found in the [Policy on Parish Associate Relationships](#).

## Appendix

### *Book of Order Provisions concerning Pastoral Relationships*

#### *G-2.0504 Pastoral Relationships*

When teaching elders are called as pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor of a congregation they are to be responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commends the gospel to all persons and that communicates its joy and justice. They are responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for celebrating Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and for praying with and for the congregation. With the ruling elders, they are to encourage people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying; to participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision-making life of the congregation, and its task of reaching out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole. With the deacons they are to share in the ministries of compassion, witness, and service. In addition to these pastoral duties, they are responsible for sharing in the ministry of the church in councils higher than the session and in ecumenical relationships.

#### *G-2.0504a. Installed Pastoral Relationships*

The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A teaching elder may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the 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 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-2.0504b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships*

Temporary pastoral relationships are approved by the presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. 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 teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the presbytery. A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

*G-2.0504c Exceptions*

A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a teaching elder currently called as an Associate Pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor, or a teaching elder 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.