

**SECURING PASTORAL LEADERSHIP FOR IMMIGRANT WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES**  
**National Capital Presbytery – Committee on Ministry**  
**Congregational Transitions Commission**

*Approved by CTC, 10/01/15; last update, 06/23/16*

Worshipping communities comprised of immigrant populations in National Capital Presbytery (NCP) seek pastoral leadership that is sensitive to the culture and language of their home countries. In many cases, these pastors are not members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA).

This procedure applies to immigrant worshipping communities (fellowships, new church developments, and chartered congregations) who wish to invite pastors that are not affiliated with the PCUSA to serve their congregations. In most cases, NCP will expect these pastors to become permanent minister members of the presbytery, following the COM-approved process.

This procedure draws on existing polity and policy:

- To support these congregations in securing appropriate pastoral leadership
- To protect the congregations served
- To ensure the pastor’s accountability to the Presbytery
- To assist pastors in achieving full membership in the PC(USA) and National Capital Presbytery, as appropriate

Step	Responsible Party
<b>1.0 The congregation’s leadership meets with representatives of CTC and CDC to discuss plans for securing pastoral leadership. The procedure outlined in this document is reviewed and plans are made for moving forward. The congregation’s leadership endorses the process.</b>	Representatives of CTC, CDC, and the congregation’s session or leadership
<b>2.0 The congregation identifies a non-PCUSA pastor to serve them. In many cases, the pastor will be from another country and will require a religious worker visa to enter the U.S.</b>	

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2.1 For chartered congregations, or congregations seeking to be chartered, the pastor is usually identified through a search process overseen by the Committee on Ministry Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC).	PNC and CTC
2.2 For congregations that are not chartered, the pastor is identified through informal and formal networks within the immigrant community, with guidance from CTC and the Church Development Commission (CDC).	PNC, CDC, CTC
<b>3.0 The leadership provides the General Presbyter with a resume of the preferred candidate. The resume should include the candidate’s contact information, education, ordination, and work history, and up-to-date contact information for the ordaining body.</b>	Congregation’s session or leadership group
<b>4.0 The General Presbyter reviews the resume to determine basic educational requirements; conducts a reference check with the ordaining body to ensure that the candidate is in good standing; and, to the extent possible, conducts a criminal background check.</b>	General Presbyter
<b>5.0 Having obtained the needed clearance, the General Presbyter sends an introductory letter to the candidate. The letter requests written acknowledgement of the receipt of and willingness to comply with the following enclosed documents:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• this procedure</li> <li>• <i>NCP Code of Ethics</i></li> <li>• <i>NCP Sexual Misconduct Policy and Administrative Leave Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>NCP Policy to Receive Ministers from Other Denominations</i></li> </ul>	General Presbyter
<b>6.0 Upon receipt of the written acknowledgment, the General Presbyter informs the leadership of the congregation and the candidate that they may begin the process of</b>	General Presbyter

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<b>applying for a religious worker visa, if applicable.</b>	
<b>7.0 The congregation and Presbytery work to move forward in the process.</b>	
7.1 Presbytery and Office of General Assembly staff members provide assistance with the visa application.	NCP and OGA staff
7.2 CTC/CDC appoint a liaison to serve as a conduit of information between the congregation and NCP.	CTC and CDC
7.3 CTC approves the compensation package and contract (required for the visa Employment Letter).	CTC
<b>8.0 The pastor is granted the appropriate visa and travels to the United States.</b>	
8.1 The congregation informs NCP that the pastor has arrived in the U.S.	Congregation’s Session or leadership group
8.2 As soon as practicable, CTC schedules a face-to-face meeting with the pastor; key leadership from the congregation; CDC, CTC, and CPM committee members; and Presbytery staff. The purpose of the meeting is to welcome the pastor, make introductions, begin to form relationships with NCP leadership, and discuss the process of becoming a minister member of NCP.	CTC
<b>9.0 Stated Clerk grants the pastor permission to labor within the bounds, pending membership in the presbytery. The pastor is permitted to administer the sacraments, perform weddings and funerals (as allowed by state laws), but not moderate the Session. Stated Clerk will appoint an interim moderator, as needed.</b>	Stated Clerk

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<b>10.0 COM Examinations Team conducts a preliminary examination to consider basic theological fit. If the examination is sustained, CTC votes to receive the pastor as a temporary member (<i>Book of Order, G-2.0506</i>)*.</b>	COM Examinations Team
<p>10.1 As a temporary member of the presbytery, the pastor would be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend NCP Healthy Boundaries training within one year of beginning service;</li> <li>• Attend Presbytery meetings regularly;</li> <li>• Enter the NCP process for receiving ministers of other denominations, as appropriate, within a time period agreed upon by CDC and CTC;</li> <li>• Be accountable to the Presbytery (<i>Book of Order, G-2.0502</i>)</li> </ul>	Pastor
<b>11.0 CTC and CPM coordinate and oversee their respective roles in the process for receiving ministers from other denominations.</b>	CTC and CPM
11.1 Upon completion of the process, CTC approves the reception of the pastor into NCP.	CTC
11.2 Pastor is welcomed at a subsequent NCP meeting and allowed to make a brief statement on his faith journey.	Pastor, General Presbyter
<b>12.0 The congregation and its leadership is expected to:</b>	Congregation

\* 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 provisions of the Formula of Agreement (*Book of Order, Appendix B; G-5.0202*), when the minister has satisfied the requirements of preparation for such service established by the presbytery's own rule.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the pastor in meeting the Presbytery’s expectations</li> <li>• pay the pastor according to NCP compensation requirements</li> <li>• submit a contract with the pastor for CTC approval on an annual basis</li> </ul>	
<p><b>13. 0 The Presbytery is expected to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide oversight and collegial support to the pastor</li> <li>• pray for the pastor and the congregation</li> </ul>	NCP

\* Copy the Administration to COM & CTC Co-Chairs on all the email correspondence.

**Authority:**

**Book of Order:** \* G-2.0506 Temporary Membership in Presbytery for a Period of Service, 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:** Code of Ethics for Clergy and Other Church Professionals; Sexual Misconduct Policy; Administrative Leave Policy; Examination Policy; Policy to Receive Ministers from Other Denominations; Policy on Laboring Within and Without the Bounds.

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