

MANUAL

OF

OPERATIONS

PRESBYTERY OF DES MOINES
November 10, 2015

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Manual of Operations

Presbytery of Des Moines

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

Purpose

We want people to function to the full limit of their personal ability and inclination as powerful and responsible members of, or commissioners to, Presbytery. This manual shall maintain an up-to-date record of Presbytery approved policies and have wide distribution so that all presbyters, without recourse to oral tradition or laborious search of records, shall have the rightful power that comes from knowing policies and procedures and full opportunity to exercise their responsibility to follow and participate in changing them.

Scope

In light of its purpose, this manual shall be inclusive of all policies and procedures, except those contained in the *Book of Order* or in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (2011) that may be needed by a presbyter in the full scope of his or her involvement in the life of the Presbytery.

Editing and Publication

It shall be the responsibility of the Stated Clerk/General Presbyter of the Presbytery, and with access to full services of the Presbytery Office and office staff, to edit, publish and continually update this manual. The Stated Clerk shall include only items approved by the Presbytery, but may reorganize and reword for clarity. There shall be no routine review and approval of the Stated Clerk's manual wording and organization. Unless the Presbytery shall act to change wording of or in a particular section, the contents of the Manual as determined by the Stated Clerk shall be understood as the action of Presbytery. The power of Presbytery to change the Manual's wording shall not be used to change policy or procedure. Changes of policy or procedure shall be made using appropriate parliamentary processes with the manual simply reflecting changes made.

Distribution

This manual shall be easily accessible on the Presbytery website: www.dmpresbytery.org . Hard copies will be available upon request. A small mailing fee may be required for requests for more than five copies at one time.

Partners

May serve as support and/or mission units.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Committees and Commissions

Budget and Finance Committee

The committee consists of 6 members, one being the Moderator, and at least 2 of the members should have professional training in accounting. Membership for this committee should be sought from all areas of the Presbytery for better representation of all church sizes and situations.

The committee will meet a minimum of 6-times per year—additional meetings may be called by the Moderator. Membership and duties of the Committee will be as defined in the *Bvlaws* of the Presbytery. Article VIII. The Committee will follow the following time line: (Approved August, 2014)

A. September:

- Committee and task force moderators are contacted for budget requests for following year.
- General mission pledge forms are sent to churches.

B. October: Budget & Finance Committee meets

- The figures received from the committees and task forces are plugged into the budget. If we haven't received a request, we either use last year's amount or base next year's number on what it looks like they will actually use in the current year.
- We plug in the salary recommendations from Personnel.
- We estimate what mission giving from the local churches will be for the coming year, based on the current year and overall trends.
- We then look at the difference between estimated income and what we have in the budget for expenses. If expenses are more than income we do a couple of things:
 1. We adjust what the committees and task forces have requested and reduce the amount if we think we can.
 2. We try to identify other revenue sources that would help to bridge the gap.
- Looking at our income needs, we decide what to recommend to Presbytery for the following year's per capita.
- Based on all that information, we finalize the income and expense budgets and per capita amount to propose to Presbytery in November.
- Before the Presbytery meeting, one representative of each will meet to go over the budget:
 1. Leadership Council
 2. Personnel Committee
 3. Budget & Finance Committee

C. November: Budget & Finance Committee meets; Presbytery meets.

- Deadline for mission pledges – November 1.
- Budget & Finance Committee meets to put in final mission pledge numbers.
- If general mission pledge forms are not received, reminder notices will be sent. If pledges are not received, figures from prior year's pledge will be used.
- We present the income and expense budgets to Presbytery.
- After the Per Capita amount for the following year is approved at the Presbytery meeting, Per Capita invoices will be sent out.

The Committee will be responsible for the oversight of the current year's budget. The Treasurer of the Presbytery will have authority to serve as comptroller. The Committee will establish and monitor an investments program for the Presbytery. Presbytery committees will have control of their budgets and can adjust line items as needed. All Changes are to be reported to the Budget and Finance Committee.

Nominating Committee

General membership and duties:

These are found in the *Book of Order*, Section G-3.0111. The committee is composed of three teaching elders, three male ruling elders, and three female ruling elders.. Membership should represent as broad a representation from all regions of the Presbytery as possible so as to share names of those within their area who might be contacted about serving on the various committees and task forces of Presbytery, Synod and GA.

1. The committee will meet a minimum of 4-times per year – additional meetings may be called by the Moderator.
2. A Member from the Committee on Representation will regularly attend these meetings.
3. The Nominating Committee shall be constituted as and in conformity with the *Bylaws* of the Presbytery, Article VIII. The duties of the Nominating Committee shall be fulfilled as described in the *Bylaws* of the Presbytery, Article VIII.
4. The Nominating Committee shall cooperate with the Committee on Representation in order to achieve as nearly as possible a fair and balanced constituency of the Presbytery membership, serving the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. The Nominating Committee shall make a conscientious, deliberate effort to secure persons to serve on the Committee on Representation who fulfill the racial, ethnic, minority requirements of the *Book of Order*.

Membership on Committees:

If a committee member is absent without excuse from three committee meetings per year, the moderator of that committee may request that the member be relieved of duty and replaced. A written request must be submitted to the Stated Clerk to present for action at the next Presbytery meeting. Upon approval, the Nominating Committee will follow regular procedures for filling an unexpired vacancy. If a committee member is unable to attend meetings for an extended period of time, a leave of absence for up to one year may be requested. The Leadership Council may appoint an interim member to serve during the absence. If, after one year, the member is still unable to return, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement to be elected by the Presbytery. Any interim member is eligible for election to such a post provided that the regular restrictions on length of term do not prevent it. If the member is the moderator of the committee, the member should resign that position. The Leadership Council may name the replacement for moderator. The period that the member is absent from the committee shall be calculated as though the member had not been absent in determining the eligibility of the member.

Personnel Committee

The Committee consists of five members. The committee will meet four (4) times per year or at the call of the Moderator. The General Presbyter will be the staff resource to this committee.

Membership:

1. There shall be five members, including one male teaching elder, one female teaching elder, one female ruling elder and one male ruling elder on the Committee. The fifth member will be a ruling elder
2. Persons to fill vacancies shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for election by Presbytery.

Every effort will be made to elect members who have experience and expertise in management, human resources management, and/or governing body operations and knowledge of employment policies, procedures, benefits, compensation, and law, and who have a high regard for the need for confidentiality.

3. Meetings shall meet four (4) times per year, and/or at the call of the Moderator, or by call of 2/3 of the committee

Duties:

1. Oversee conditions of employment, policies, practices, procedures, compensation, and benefits for all paid and volunteer staff, except for elected officers of Presbytery.
2. Consult with Presbytery staff, committees and/or members regarding placement and performance of staff, conditions of employment, compensation and benefits, personnel policies, procedures and practices, and maintaining confidentiality where appropriate.
3. Develop, review, and revise written policies, procedures, and practices, and present to Presbytery for adoption when appropriate.
4. Oversee implementation of personnel policies, procedures and practices, and AA/EEO guidelines.
5. Oversee staffing and schedule a yearly meeting with each staff person to discuss, counsel, and/or advise regarding conditions of employment, work performance, supervision, and other issues and mutual concerns, except for elected officers of Presbytery.
6. Oversee annual performance appraisal and development program that includes review and update of position descriptions and work objectives, written evaluations, and personal consultation, except for elected officers of the Presbytery.
7. Review and update compensation and benefits programs annually. Present recommendations for staff salary adjustments to Presbytery for approval.
8. Review and update General Presbyter's position descriptions and work objectives, no less than annually.
9. Recommend additions and/or deletions of staff positions to Presbytery for approval.
10. Consult with Treasurer and the Budget and Finance Committee regarding salary adjustments and the costs of benefits and their impact on the budget
11. Prepare and recommend the annual personnel budget to Leadership Council.
12. Meet and consult with Leadership Council on personnel matters involving staffing and staff relationships with the Council and/or other committees no less than quarterly, providing information and reports as is appropriate.
13. Provide information and reports to Presbytery.
14. Maintain confidential records, reports, and files.

Access to the Committee:

1. Employees of Presbytery, members of Presbytery committees, members of Presbytery and elders in active service shall have confidential access to the Personnel Committee.
2. Records of the committee are confidential and are available only to the Personnel Committee and appropriate staff members.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Membership and duties are defined in the *Book of Order*. The Committee shall also be guided by the “Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry” published by the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A.). There will be seven (7) members, with one being the Moderator. All “Regions” within the Presbytery should be represented. The Committee will meet a minimum of 4 times per year - additional meetings may be called by the Moderator.

Policies and Procedures of the Committee will be found in the *Preparation for Ministry Manual* developed by the Committee and approved by the Presbytery. (This document appears as an Appendix at the end of the *Manual of Operations*.)

Considerations:

Financial Aid: The Committee recognizes that seminary and theological training is a time of financial stress for the candidate and inquirer. It is the Presbytery’s position that we will aid and help the candidate in every way possible to reduce the financial hardship for the candidate. Individual congregations and the candidate’s own congregation should and can be solicited for financial aid. The Presbytery will receive special offerings at services of installation and ordination for the purpose of Seminary Scholarships for our candidates.

The Swan Fund: This fund is administered by the Presbytery of Des Moines. Persons seeking funds from the Swan Fund should consult with the Committee. Grants and gifts from this fund are distributed on an irregular basis. Candidates may apply for aid from this fund on an annual basis. Grants are made on the basis of funds available.

The Omaha Seminary Fund: Loans are available from the Omaha Seminary Fund. These loans will be forgiven if the recipient engages in ministry within the Synod of Lakes and Prairies or the state of Missouri.

Annual Retreat: The Committee conducts an annual retreat for Committee members, inquirers, and candidates. This retreat is usually held on the first weekend of June. Annual consultations are held at the time, and attendance is mandatory. Expenses for all participants are paid by the Committee, including travel to and from the retreat.

Professional Vocation Evaluations:

After a prospective inquirer has been taken under care of the Session and before meeting with the Committee to be received as an inquirer, he/she will be required to undergo psychological evaluation. The candidate will normally undergo evaluation at the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center. The cost of this evaluation is split between the Committee and the local session.

A candidate may undergo evaluation and counseling at the North Central Ministry Development Center in Brighton, Minnesota, or Midwest Career Development Center in Chicago in lieu of the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, or another regional career center. If the candidate chooses to attend a career center, the cost will be borne by the candidate and local session, and the Committee.

Committee on Representation

Membership: Guidelines in the *Book of Order*, Section 6-3.0103

There shall be one business meeting as early as possible in the calendar year with the time and place chosen for the convenience of and with the cooperation of the members of the committee. A secretary’s permanent notebook shall contain a record of actions in all business meetings. A permanent file of racial/ethnic and handicapped members in the churches shall be made and in the keeping of the current Committee on Representation moderator. Identifying information concerning racial/ethnic and handicapped church members shall be obtained in so far as possible from the annual reports of the churches to the Presbytery Stated Clerk. Follow up information must be obtained by the members of the Presbytery Committee on Representation.

When a racial/ethnic or handicapped person joins a church during the year, the church is requested to supply pertinent information regarding that person within a month to the Committee on Representation either through the moderator of the Committee on Representation or to the Presbytery Stated Clerk. An annual report (Section A) of goals and results must be submitted to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery prior to the first Stated Meeting of the year for approval and comments by the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk will forward Section A of this report to the Synod Committee on Representation. Section B of the report of the Presbytery Committee on Representation shall be completed and forwarded to the Synod Committee on Representation by the Moderator of the Presbytery Committee. The moderator of the Committee shall keep committee members informed as to developments resulting from the work of the committee. It is understood that members of the committee promote racial understanding and racial good will within the church and the larger community.

Permanent Judicial Commission

Membership and duties are defined in the *Book of Order*, D-4.0000. The Presbytery shall elect from the ministers and elders subject to its jurisdiction a Permanent Judicial Commission, and appoint a convener for the Commission.

Membership:

1. The Commission shall consist of four teaching elders and three ruling elders elected by the Presbytery.
2. The term of office shall be six years.
3. No person, having served a full term of six years, shall be eligible for reelection until 4 years have passed since the completion of their term..
4. The Commission shall elect from its members a moderator and a clerk.

In all cases and proceedings the Commission shall be governed by the Form of Government and Rules of Discipline.

Stewardship and Mission Interpretation Committee

The Stewardship and Mission Interpretation Committee consists of six members. Each member serves a three-year term. Each class will have two members.

The duties of the Committee are:

1. Promote and interpret the mission of the presbytery, synod and General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
2. Educate the presbytery regarding the meaning of stewardship and identify resources for local congregations in stewardship education and programs.
3. Seek funding for the mission of the presbytery, the synod and the General Assembly of the PC (U.S.A.)

Sexual Misconduct Response Team

1. A Sexual Misconduct Response Team shall be a Standing Committee of the Presbytery of Des Moines. The Response Team shall follow the guidelines as set out in the Sexual Misconduct Policy of our Presbytery to work with and be available to the accuser, the accused, the alleged victim (if not the same person as the accuser), the families involved, the congregation, co-workers of the parties involved, and the governing body or entity.
2. The Response Team shall report to the Congregational Reconciliation Task Force.
3. The Response Team shall be composed of seven members to serve in staggered terms of three years

each. Four of this team are to be women.

4. One of the Team members must be a legal consultant, one a trained mental health professional and one an insurance consultant
5. Members shall be nominated by the Presbytery's Nominating Committee.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Councils

Cottage Grove Presbyterian Mission Center Covenant Council

The foundational purpose for this Council has three parts:

- Plan for and oversee the use of the Cottage Grove Presbyterian Mission Center
- Rehabilitate the building to make it safe, clean and useable
- Fundraise for that purpose

The Council is to be made up of interested and responsible people who will design and develop the shape and direction of the Mission Center's mission and to lead it to become financially self-sustaining.

The Council is to be collaborative – promoting community support. It will be made up of people interested in this work. The main initial task is to develop income sources. Representatives for both within and without the Presbytery are involved in the work of the Mission Center.

Leadership Council

The Leadership Council shall report in writing at each stated meeting of the Presbytery every action it takes. Its decisions shall be immediately operative wherever power has been conferred, but may be reviewed and reversed by Presbytery.

Membership:

1. Nine elected members; Moderator of Presbytery, Vice Moderator of Presbytery, Immediate Past Moderator of Presbytery
2. The elected members will serve three terms, and no one may serve more than six consecutive years.
3. The General Presbyter will serve on the Leadership Council in an advisory role with voice and without vote.
4. The Leadership Council will have particular responsibilities in the areas of visioning, guiding the presbytery, and taking actions on behalf of the presbytery between meetings of the presbytery.
5. Leadership Council members will act as liaisons to the committees, task groups, task forces and entities of the presbytery.
6. The Leadership Council will provide training for all of its members.
7. The Leadership Council will meet six times a year including an annual planning/visioning retreat.

Duties/Responsibilities of Leadership Council:

Visioning:

1. Develop, communicate and shepherd the ongoing vision, strategy and design of the Presbytery.
2. Plan for new church development and redevelopment, and make recommendations to the presbytery for new churches.

Leadership:

1. Relate to groups of the presbytery in an empowering style. Each member of the Leadership Council

will serve as a liaison to one or more committees, task groups, task forces or entities of the Presbytery, staying in regular communication with their assigned groups, reporting news to the Leadership Council, responding to concerns and offering guidance as needed.

2. Respond to ministry opportunities in relation to the Presbytery's vision.

Administrative:

1. Oversee the operations of the Presbytery between meetings.
2. Develop plans for crisis management, and respond to crises when they arrive.
3. Review and recommend changes to the Presbytery's *By-Laws* and *Manual of Operations*.
4. Oversee the implementation of the policies in the *Manual of Operations*.
5. Act as the trustees of the presbytery in conjunction with the legal officers of the corporation.
6. Nominate individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee.
7. Appoint and dissolve administrative commissions with the exception of those related to ordination and installation.
8. Report at least annually to the Presbytery about the work of the Leadership Council.
9. Report at each regular meetings of the Presbytery every action it takes. Its decisions shall be immediately operative within the scope of its authority but may be reviewed and reversed by the presbytery.
10. Appoint and dissolve task groups.
11. Develop and submit a budget for the Leadership Council's work.
12. Act as the Board of Directors of the Presbytery Corporation and perform the functions and duties of directors under the Iowa Non-Profit Corporation Act. Deeds, mortgages and leases for an initial stated period of five years or more shall be executed by the Moderator or Vice Moderator in their capacities as President or Vice President of the corporation and countersigned by the Stated Clerk in his/her capacity as Secretary of the Corporation. Other instruments affecting real estate not amounting to a conveyance, mortgage or lease for at least five years may be executed by any one of said officers. In each instance the corporate seal of the corporation shall be affixed. Report corporate action to the Presbytery.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Task Forces and Task Groups

Camping and Youth Ministry Task Force

Membership:

Shall be recommended by the Leadership Council and appointed by the Presbytery

Duties:

Appoint co-opted members to serve on the task force.

Provide a program of outdoor ministries for the churches in the Presbytery by:

- a. Setting the dates and locations of the camping program
- b. Securing directors and counselors
- c. Choosing the curriculum
- d. Training the directors and counselors
- e. Doing the publicity
- f. Evaluating the camping program
- g. Investigating new and innovative camping programs

Provide for Presbytery-wide youth ministry activity through:

- a. Enabling and guiding the work of the Presbytery Youth Council.

Compassion, Peace and Justice Task Force

Membership

Shall be recommended by the Leadership Council and appointed by the Presbytery

Duties:

- Appoint co-opted members to serve on the committee.
- Seek to equip local congregations and sensitize their members to the Gospel's call for God's people to promote social justice and peace through education and advocacy.
- Initiate and organize social action programs within the Presbytery, regional partners (as requested) and assist local churches in developing their social ministries.
- Coordinate ongoing programs and evaluate Presbytery programs and projects.
- Suggest tactics and strategies for involvement in social action ministry.
- Act as agent of the Presbytery in ecumenical social action programs when authorized by the Presbytery.
- Oversee special offerings: i.e., Peacemaking, Rural Harvest, etc.

CROSS Ministries Board

CROSS Ministries is an outreach ministry of the Presbytery. It is a provider of social services including a homelessness prevention program, a food pantry, a personal hygiene pantry, and various other outreach efforts serving the needs of low-income and no-income people.. CROSS Ministries has as its mission 1)to prevent homelessness and to provide food and other basics to people in need; 2) to advocate for changing social, economic and political systems which perpetuate poverty and oppression; and 3) to create a vision of justice and provide educational opportunities to churches, organizations and the community concerning the plight of the poor.

CROSS Ministries will operate under its own Board. This Board will be elected by the Presbytery.

Memorandum of Understanding

CROSS Ministries is a provider of social services including a homelessness prevention program, a food pantry, a personal hygiene pantry, and various other outreach efforts serving the needs of low- and no-income people. CROSS Ministries has its mission 1) to prevent homelessness and to provide food, and other basics to people in need; 2) to advocate for changing social, economic, and political systems which perpetuate poverty and oppression; and 3) to create a vision of justice and provide educational opportunities to churches, organizations, and the community concerning the plight of the poor.

This Memorandum of Understanding is between CROSS Ministries and the Presbytery of Des Moines, who agree as follows:

1. As of the 16th day of August, 2014 CROSS Ministries, an outreach ministry of Cottage Grove Presbyterian Church will be an outreach ministry of the Presbytery of Des Moines. CROSS Ministries, under the auspices of the Presbytery of Des Moines, will operate under its own Board elected by the Presbytery, so as to avail itself of funding from, within the Presbyterian Church as well as from additional sources. The federal and state non-profit legal status of CROSS Ministries will be moved from Cottage Grove Presbyterian Church to the Presbytery of Des Moines. This Agreement shall continue indefinitely until terminated upon the giving of thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.
2. CROSS Ministries will receive and administer all funds that CROSS Ministries uses to carry out the outreach ministry. CROSS Ministries will send all required acknowledgments to donors of tax-deductible contributions, and will submit all required grant reports.
3. CROSS Ministries will select, make employment decisions and/or enter into consultant contracts with, and supervise all persons who perform compensated services for the outreach ministry. The Executive Director of CROSS Ministries will be the head of CROSS staff. The Executive Director will be reviewed at least annually in consultation with the Personnel Committee of the Presbytery.
4. CROSS Ministries will maintain outreach ministry funds in one or more bank accounts separate from the Presbytery of Des Moines bank accounts.
5. CROSS Ministries will keep and maintain accurate, complete, and separate outreach ministry records in accordance with standard accounting principles, showing all outreach ministry assets, liabilities, income, and expenditures. CROSS Ministries will submit regular financial reports and a copy of the annual audit to the Presbytery.

6. CROSS Ministries will be financially responsible for 1) the salary of the Executive Director and CROSS Ministries staff, 2) the cost of the Executive Director's health insurance and pension through the Presbyterian Board of Pensions and the health insurance costs for other CROSS Ministries staff as applicable, and 3) outreach ministry expenses associated with homelessness prevention, the food pantry, and related direct assistance programs for at risk households.

7. This Memorandum of Understanding contains the entire agreement of the parties, superseding any prior written or oral agreements between them on the same subject matter. Any change, modification, or waiver must be in writing and signed by both parties.

- MOU for CROSS Ministries and the Presbytery of Des Moines
- Adopted 6/17/14 by CROSS Ministries Board
- Approved 7/25/14 by Presbytery of Des Moines Leadership Council
- Amended 8/16/14 by Presbytery of Des Moines

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Task Forces and Task Groups

Ministry Task Forces

Moderators Task Force

- Coordinates efforts between the following Task Forces:
 - Church Professional Task Force
 - Congregational Health Task Force
 - Congregational Reconciliation Task Force
 - Congregational Transition Task Force
- Facilitates communication and information-sharing among and Task Forces
- Ensures duties of each task force are completed in a timely manner
- Communicates with the Presbytery regularly on the activities of the Task Forces

This Task Force's membership will consist of the moderators from each of the Task Forces. This Task Force will meet monthly and whenever situations warrant. The Task Force may request the presence of any presbytery staff or officer for advisory assistance. There will be a fifth member of this Task Force who will serve as Moderator of the Task Force. This person will be nominated by the Presbytery Nominating Committee and will not be a member of any of the task forces.

Church Professional Task Force

- Approves individuals seeking to be on the Pulpit Supply List for the presbytery
- Approves individuals seeking to transfer membership to the presbytery but not accepting a call
- Identifies and organize continuing education opportunities for church professionals
- Makes recommendations to the Presbytery in regards to annual compensation for Teaching Elders and Certified Christian Educators including minimal standards
- Conducts annual compensation package surveys for other church professionals to be shared with the presbytery and personnel committees.
- Reviews and approve validated ministries, members-at-large and Certified Christian Educators

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than five. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Moderators Task Force.

Congregational Health Task Force

- Conducts biennial visits with congregations
- Contacts churches every month for update and determine how each church is doing

- Refers specific needs and concerns to the appropriate task force or other Presbytery groups
- Administers, coordinates and evaluates special funds requests for mission projects for the Presbytery
- Meets with the Teaching Elder or Commissioned Ruling Elder at least once a year or upon request

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than nine. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Moderators Task Force.

Congregational Reconciliation Task Force

- Deals with difficulties within congregations as they arise
- Mediates conflict between Sessions, Congregations, and Teaching Elders
- Makes requests to the Presbytery Leadership Council for Administrative Commissions when warranted
- Counsels with Sessions and Congregations regarding inappropriate conduct.
- Makes referrals to the Presbytery Pastors
- Makes recommendations in regards to dissolution of relationships

This task force will have a membership of no fewer than seven. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Moderators Task Force.

Congregational Transition Task Force

- Approves terms of dissolution between Teaching Elders and congregations
- Works with Sessions as they determine next steps when Teaching Elder transitions
- Works with Session/PNC in creating appropriate MIF and/or job description
- Works with Session/PNC in creating terms of call
- Assists Session/PNC in interview process
 - Oversees equal opportunity employment action
 - Interviews candidates
- Debriefs search committees
- Holds exit interviews with persons leaving positions

This task force will have a membership of no less than five. It will elect its own moderator who will serve on the Moderators Task Force.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Task Forces and Task Groups

Older Adult Ministries Task Force

The Older Adult Ministries Task Force consists of at least four members. One of these persons shall serve as Moderator of the Task force.

Goals of the Task Force are:

- Establish e-mail communication with newly formed or already functioning older adult ministry groups in churches or churches who hear he call to form one, and gathering contact information with these groups.
- Provide information pertinent to the ministry of older adults
- Provide for interaction of ideas and combining programs between area churches

Worship Task Group

Membership

The Worship Task Group is made up of at least four members, one of whom is the Moderator of the Task Force. The Moderator is appointed by the Leadership Council. Other persons may be recruited to participate in the Task Group's work.

The main work of the Task Group is to plan and carry out worshiping opportunities during the meetings of the Presbytery. Themes for these services may be developed by the Task Force or, when helpful, suggested by presbytery entities or members.

Specific tasks are:

- Develop theme
- Develop liturgy
- Recruit leaders, including preacher and musicians
- Plan bulletin and coordinate printing of it with the Presbytery Office Manager

Bill and Overtures Task Group

This Task Group will consist of the Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder Commissioners from the previous and upcoming General Assemblies.

- a) This Task Group shall:
 - Consist of the ruling and teaching elder commissioners of the previous General Assembly. The Leadership Council shall appoint the Convener.
 - Receive from the Stated Clerk all bills and overtures coming from and going to General Assembly, Synod, or local church sessions.
 - Make recommendations to Presbytery for action.

Task Groups

1. Task Groups deal with a specific task to be carried out or accomplished over the long term within the Presbytery.
2. Task Groups will be created by the Leadership Council which will define its task, determine its size, name its moderator and membership, and set a timetable for the completion of its work. Ordinarily most members will not be part of the Leadership Council. Task Groups will report regularly and will make recommendations to the Leadership Council. Budgets for Task Groups must be approved by the Leadership Council.
3. The Planning Task Group is appointed by the Moderator of the Presbytery. The primary work of the Planning Task Group is to work in consultation with the local sessions and Presbytery committees in determining the future short-term (three years) goals for the Presbytery's mission and program. After compiling and reviewing data from the local sessions, Presbytery committees, Presbytery leaders and staff, the Task Group forms suggests goals and objectives for the Presbytery's adoption.
 - a) The Planning Task Group functions on a three-year cycle and meets the final year of the previous three-year cycle. The Task Group may function for its task as needed by the Presbytery until the next planning period begins. The Planning Task Group is comprised of five persons: two ruling elders and two teaching elders, plus a moderator. These five persons will be representative of the Presbytery program and mission concerns, rural and city ministries, and all concerns put forth by the Committee on Representation.
 - b) The Planning Task Group is staffed by the General Presbyter.

Restriction

No judicial business shall be referred to the Leadership Council.

Substitute Representation

If the Moderator of a committee cannot be present at a meeting, he/she shall appoint a substitute from the committee's membership.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Appointed Position

Hunger Action Enabler:

The Hunger Action Enabler is called to serve the Presbytery as an educator, motivator and facilitator of hunger action. The goal is to enable congregations and other groups within the church to gain the knowledge and skills to sustain a long-term commitment to hunger action. The HAE also connects with ecumenical, government and social service agencies to receive information and, where needed, to recruit assistance from the churches in the Presbytery. The HAE works closely with the Compassion, Peace and Justice Task Force. The HAE is accountable to the Presbytery through the Personnel Committee. Part of the HAE's compensation is provided by the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Crisis Communication Plan

I. Rationale

The Presbytery of Des Moines consists of people and systems - elected staff, support staff, congregations, minister members and the wider Presbyterian community. This crisis communication plan has been developed to facilitate the work and mission of the Presbytery of Des Moines during a crisis. Such a plan, and being able to carry out its intent, allows the Presbytery to:

- Reinforce its role as a caring and compassionate organization
- Enable sensitive and timely responses
- Assign communication responsibilities
- Enhance staff communication skills when relating to and working with media and other audiences
- Minimize potential liabilities

Preparing for the response to a crisis before one occurs minimizes stress and confusion for the staff while maximizing competence, courtesy and personal care for those involved and the community as a whole. Further, this crisis communication plan helps assure that crucial information is delivered with as much accuracy and timeliness as possible under the circumstances.

The intent of this plan is to not compromise nor detract from the mission of the Presbytery but rather to support the integrity of ministry which the Presbytery is called to provide. Implementation of this plan is to be accomplished in ways, which demonstrate truth, fairness, concern and pastoral care for all involved.

This crisis communication plan is designed to assist the Presbytery staff in a crisis situation involving some aspect of the Presbytery, e.g., the Presbytery staff, the community or the greater church. As a partner in ministry, the Presbytery also stands ready to assist congregations and subsidiary and affiliate corporations when a crisis arises within their settings. In doing so, the Presbytery will apply the principles in this crisis communication plan.

II. Goals

- The Presbytery will try to reach out in a coordinated manner to those impacted by a crisis and respond to the media with promptness, accuracy and on a continuing basis, as needed.
- Throughout a crisis the Presbytery will seek to maintain the integrity of the church and the effectiveness of the Presbytery's ministry.
- The Presbytery will attempt to use any crisis situation as an opportunity to witness as the church, and will seek to minimize negative publicity.
- The Presbytery will manage the flow of information in ways designed to limit stress and prevent misunderstandings.
- The crisis communication plan will be carried out with openness, truthfulness, accessibility and responsiveness.

III. Possible Crises

Possible crises that the Presbytery of Des Moines staff, congregations and subsidiary and affiliate corporations could encounter fall into several categories. The following categories and examples are noted in an attempt to

anticipate the kinds of crises that are possible and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. They are offered in order to reduce the element of surprise and to better prepare for dealing with them.

- A. **Natural disasters** Examples: flood, tornado, fire, blizzard, windstorm, and earthquake
- B. **Human caused disasters** Examples: epidemic, wildfire or fire by arson, burglary of the Presbytery of Des Moines office
- C. **Terrorist acts, demonstrations, violent deaths or injuries** Examples: bomb threat, explosion, hostage situation, threat against staff, acts of war, demonstration against the Presbytery of Des Moines action, staff or member injured, killed or death by suicide
- D. **Criminal or legal crises** Examples: staff, member, volunteer, church and/or vendor charged with a crime, sexual harassment, lawsuit or wrongful termination action brought against the Presbytery of Des Moines
- E. **Personnel crises** Examples: resignation by or firing of staff or member, staff or member hospitalized, staff or member accused of sexual misconduct
- F. **Pastoral crises** Examples: situations involving ministers which demand further follow-up beyond the Ministry Task Forces, minister charged with crime, minister killed or death by suicide
- G. **Perception crises** Examples: misunderstanding by a congregation, Presbytery members, or the public of a Presbytery of Des Moines position or action
- H. **System crisis** Examples: office computer system failure, building or office blackout
- I. **Financial crises** Examples: embezzlement by staff member or volunteer at Presbytery or church, failure of bank that holds Presbytery funds, sharp drop in the Presbytery of Des Moines income
- J. **Positive crises** Examples: over-registration for a Presbytery event causing housing and parking problems, Presbytery receives large, unrestricted bequest
- K. **Denominational crises** Examples: churches within the Presbytery submit dissolution forms to cut ties with denomination over a General Assembly vote, Presbytery receives a pledge for a large bequest, however the donor is not able financial to donate the funds

IV. Crisis Team

The crisis team will consist of:

1. General Presbyter/Stated Clerk
2. Director of Communications
3. Presbytery Moderator
4. Moderator of Moderators
5. Moderator of Leadership Council
6. Presbytery's legal counsel (if needed and invited)

Any one of the staff may convene the crisis team. In the event all members of the team are unavailable, the Synod will implement the Synod's plan.

When appropriate to a particular crisis, upon recommendation from the crisis team, the crisis coordinator will invite others to join the crisis team. (For example: Moderator of the Committee on Preparation of Ministry; additional legal counsel).

The names and contact information for persons currently holding these offices and for other Presbytery staff are

found in the Presbytery Directory, online at: <http://dmpresbytery.org/who-we-are/staff-directory> or in the homes of the Presbytery staff, Moderator of Moderators, and the Synod.

V. Communication Strategy

When the Presbytery faces a crisis, the following communication strategy will be employed at the direction of the crisis team, so as to implement a coordinated response.

- A. The crisis team will convene immediately upon learning of a crisis or in anticipation of a crisis.
- B. The crisis team will gather facts about the crisis and immediately analyze the situation, drawing upon other resources as necessary to complete the analysis. The situation analysis includes, but is not limited to, the scope of the situation, any legal implications, the public's perception and other related events (past and future).
- C. Within the first two hours, the crisis team will identify pastoral needs and develop the key message(s) to be conveyed during the crisis. The key messages allow the Presbytery to present its particular viewpoint on the information that is released. To the extent possible, the key message(s) will downplay any negative while proactively promoting any positive.
- D. The crisis team will assign staff to carry out specific duties, as necessary. Duties might include, but are not limited to: pastoral concerns, gathering information, notifying families and others involved, dealing with emergency officials, communicating with volunteers and staff, and notifying the insurance company.
- E. The crisis team will appoint:
 - (1) a crisis coordinator
 - (2) a spokesperson for the Presbytery
 - (3) a media coordinator.

Ordinarily the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk will serve as crisis coordinator and as the spokesperson. Alternatively, the Presbytery Moderator or the Moderator of Leadership Council may fill the role as crisis coordinator.

- F. Using the media guidelines provided in **Section VI**, the crisis team will determine the means and frequency of communication with internal and external audiences, including the media. The notification process will then commence.
 - (1) The internal audiences include: Presbytery of the Des Moines staff, Presbytery officers, the Presbytery Leadership Council, the Ministry Task Forces, and other appropriate Presbytery of Des Moines entities; Synod of Lakes and Prairies staff; presbyteries within the synod; leadership of subsidiary and affiliate corporations; and the Presbytery clergy, elders and other lay leaders of the congregations in the Presbytery.
 - (2) The external audiences include: the staff of other governing bodies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council of the PC(USA); the Presbyterian News Service; ecumenical and community leaders within the Presbytery's bounds and general media. (The Director of Communications will maintain general media in the media markets within the Presbytery.)
- G. The crisis team will convene and brief the Presbytery staff as soon as practical. The crisis team also will see that appropriate communications are made with the other internal audiences as soon as possible.

- H. Using the media guidelines provided in **Section VI**, the spokesperson will be the primary speaker on the Presbytery's behalf. This allows the Presbytery's point of view to be heard clearly and unambiguously. There will be situations where others might be asked to speak publicly to certain aspects of a crisis. When appropriate, the spokesperson, in consultation with the crisis team, will select these people. Those additional persons speaking on behalf of the Presbytery will communicate fully with the crisis team before and after acting in this role.
- I. To maintain readiness for communication with internal and external audiences, the Director of Communication is responsible for keeping current the internal rosters and the external rosters identified in **Part F of the Communication Strategy (Section V)**.
- J. The crisis team will draft and make available upon request an official statement regarding the crisis.
- K. Space within the Presbytery office and/or elsewhere will be identified by the crisis team for its use in carrying out the crisis communication strategy.
- L. The crisis team will follow the crisis communication strategy until the crisis is over, at which time the crisis team will carry out a post-crisis evaluation.

VI. Media Guidelines

The following media guidelines will be followed so that the crisis communication plan can be implemented effectively.

- A. Ordinarily, the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk is the spokesperson for the Presbytery.
- B. The Director of Communications will be responsible for maintaining a biography and photo of each Presbytery staff and member as well as a lexicon of church terminology and appropriate fact sheets, which may be provided to the media.
- C. During a crisis, the Director of Communications ordinarily will serve as media coordinator. As such, this associate will serve as a facilitator, acting on requests for information and comments, providing the media with logistical support, checking information for correctness before its release, and monitoring the media for accuracy.
- D. The Presbytery Office Manager, with communication responsibilities, will act as assistant to the media coordinator in maintaining a media log throughout the crisis. The log will include a listing of all media calls received, issues raised by the media, and media coverage of the crisis.
- E. The Presbytery Office Manager, with communication responsibilities, also will be responsible for keeping copies of all documents prepared and distributed to internal and external audiences throughout the crisis and will maintain a file of final reports.
- F. Depending upon the particular crisis and time constraints, the crisis team will make appropriate use of communication tools such as in-person contact, telephone, fax, e-mail, website, newsletters, regular mail, and express services.
- G. Whenever practical, communications with both internal and external audiences are to contain the key message(s) identified by the crisis team.
- H. Relating to the media in a cooperative manner is an important element of the crisis communication plan. The crisis team, especially the spokesperson, needs to follow these basic principles in maintaining positive media relations that the media channeling coordinator has established:
 - Be accessible and accommodating to the media.
 - Avoid delaying responses to media requests, unless absolutely necessary.

- Answer all questions directly and briefly as possible, in a straightforward manner.
- Respond to questions factually and not in a reactionary or defensive manner.
- Do not argue with reporters, and never speak “off the record”.
- Avoid speculation and allocation of blame.
- Provide supplemental information in the form of fact sheets.
- Do not use church and ecclesiastical jargon without a clear definition/explanation.

When an answer is not available, explain the reason and offer to respond within a specific time frame.

VII. Training

The Presbytery Coordinating Council will arrange for crisis team members to receive training designed to enable them in carrying out the assigned responsibilities of this crisis communication plan.

VIII. Regular Meetings of Crisis Team and Review of Plan

The crisis team will be convened quarterly by the General Presbyter/Stated Clerk in order to review and update the crisis communication plan, as needed. At these meetings it also will be the responsibility of the crisis team to engage in risk and issues analysis and determine potential crises scenarios, i.e.: What aspects of the Presbytery’s ministry are susceptible to adverse publicity? What future events and situations in the life of the Presbytery might create a crisis?

IX. Practice

While all crises include an element of surprise, and while it is difficult to anticipate the range of potential crises, which might occur, regular review and rehearsal of this crisis communication plan will ensure greater ease and efficiency of operation at the time an actual crisis occurs. Therefore, the crisis team will test and rehearse the crisis communication plan at least once each year.

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Family Leave Guidelines

Maternity Leave Recommendation

In addition to other benefits, a minister is entitled to maternity leave in the period immediately preceding and/or following the arrival (birth, adoption, or guardianship) of a child as follows:

- a. The minister should normally apply for the leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child, specifying the amount of leave time desired.
- b. The leave can be for up to six months. The leave may include a period in advance of the expected arrival of the child, and some may be taken after the child has arrived. The leave normally should be unbroken except for any periods of absence due to medical reasons.
- c. The first six weeks will be at full pay. Additional compensated leave may be negotiated between the pastor and the church.
- d. Benefit coverage will continue during the entire leave, with the cost of benefits paid by the church.
- e. Upon completion of maternity leave, the minister will be entitled to return to her position. The position will not be filled during the leave except on a temporary basis.

Paternity Leave Recommendation

In addition to other benefits, a minister is entitled to paternity leave in the period immediately preceding and/or following the arrival (birth, adoption, or guardianship) of a child as follows:

- a. The minister should normally apply for the leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child, specifying the amount of leave time desired.
- b. The paternity leave shall be for two weeks at full
- c. Benefit coverage will continue during the entire leave, with the cost of benefits paid by the church.
- d. Upon completion of paternity leave, the minister will be entitled to return to his position. The position will not be filled during the leave except on a temporary basis.

Family Leave Recommendation

Because of our church's commitment to family caring and recognizing that each of us is involved in a lifetime of meeting family needs, we recommend a "Family Leave policy" beyond vacation to be used for whatever family reasons, be it crisis or celebration. Let this be three days per year, non-accumulative.

Approved by the 384th Stated Meeting, March 18, 1989

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Presbytery Meetings and Schedule

Meetings of Presbytery shall be conducted as authorized and directed by:

- (a) *The Book of Order*
- (b) *The Bylaws* of the Presbytery
- (c) *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, 2011
- (d) *This Manual of Operations*

Committees:

Ecclesiastical Committees (Governance) report directly to Presbytery. Task Groups are created by and appointed by the Leadership Council and report to the Leadership Council. A Task Force is elected by the Presbytery and reports to the Presbytery. (A Task Force may ask to come to Council for discussion.)

All main motions, which have not been previously printed and distributed, shall be presented in writing to the Moderator and the Stated Clerk before action is taken on the floor of Presbytery. (The Stated Clerk will provide forms for this purpose.) Requests for new business to be brought before the Presbytery shall be given to the Moderator and/or the Stated Clerk before the start of the session at which it is to be introduced and/or considered. Expenditures and disbursements from ALL funds shall be accountable and reported to the Presbytery and/or the Leadership Council by the committee, task group or task force, or the individual(s) charged with the oversight and the responsibility of the fund.

In the event that the Moderator is unable to preside at any meeting or function of the Presbytery, the Vice Moderator will preside. If that person is unable to preside, the Moderator of the Leadership Council will preside. If that person is unable to preside, the Stated Clerk will preside.

Meeting Schedule:

- **February** – 2nd Saturday
- **May** – 3rd Tuesday
- **August** – 3rd Saturday
- **November** – 2nd Tuesday

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Duties of Presbytery Officers

Moderator

It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preside over the deliberations of Presbytery, constitute Presbytery with prayer, appoint a parliamentarian for his/her term of office, appoint temporary committees unless otherwise provided for in the Bylaws, serve as a resource person for Presbytery's committees, task forces, and task groups, and perform such other duties as are provided in the *Manual of Operations*.

Vice-Moderator

It shall be the duty of the Vice Moderator to preside over the Presbytery at the request of the Moderator. Unless the Vice Moderator has served as a Commissioner to General Assembly within the last two meetings of the Assembly, it shall be the duty of the Vice Moderator to be a Commissioner to General Assembly.

It shall be the duty of the Vice Moderator to provide an orientation prior to each Stated Meeting of Presbytery for new commissioners to the meeting.

Stated Clerk

1. The duties of the Stated Clerk shall be those which ordinarily fall upon the office under the provisions of the Form of Government and the *Manual of Operations*.
2. The Stated Clerk shall be responsible for the preparation of a true and accurate record of the proceedings Presbytery and may appoint, with Presbytery approval, such assistants as the Stated Clerk deems necessary.
3. The Stated Clerk shall report annually to the Synod and General Assembly statistics and information required by the Synod and General Assembly.
4. The Stated Clerk shall conduct the annual review of the minutes and records of each Session and report his/her findings to Presbytery. The Clerk may name person(s) to assist him/her with the review.

Treasurer

1. The treasurer shall be a bonded custodian of all funds and securities of Presbytery; shall receive disburse funds of the Presbytery; shall present a full and accurate account of all funds and securities annually to the Presbytery; and shall provide an accounting for each regular meeting of the Leadership Council.
2. All of the Treasurer's accounts shall be audited annually by a certified public accountant and the report of said auditors shall be submitted to the Presbytery.
3. The Treasurer shall file a copy of the annual audit with the Treasurer of Synod no later than four months after the close of the accounting (fiscal) year.

Evaluation

There shall be an evaluation every three years of the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer by the Moderating Team, the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the Presbytery, the Moderator of the Council, the Moderator, or a representative, of the Personnel Committee, with a report to be submitted to the Presbytery Nominating Committee.

Terms of Office

Three-Year-Terms

All persons elected to one of the Governance Committees will serve for a three-year term. One may be re-nominated and serve a second three-year term, but after six (6) years, one must be off of the committee for at least one year before being elected again.

Task Forces & Task Groups

All persons appointed to Task Forces or Task duration of the project or assignment, and then their service will be done.

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Personnel Policies

Introduction

These policies do not constitute a contract. Their terms are implemented in accordance with the *Constitution* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Calls to Ministers of Word and Sacrament are contractual and may only be changed in consultation with the Presbytery.

These policies may be withdrawn or changed at any time without notice by actions of the Presbytery of Des Moines upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee. A decision of the Presbytery on the interpretation or application of these policies shall be final and binding on all employees. All previous policies and procedures, to the extent that they are inconsistent with this document, are hereby revoked.

Staff members may resign their employment at any time and for any reason, and the Presbytery reserves the same right regarding the discontinuation of an individual's employment.

Theology of Employment

The Presbytery of Des Moines, a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is a community of faith called into being by God's grace in Jesus Christ, "...known by its convictions as well by its actions." (G-2.100b)

The Presbytery's personnel system is designed to reflect the continuing mission concerns of the Presbytery, including program and budgetary decisions.

Scope and Application of the Personnel

The personnel policies are established by the Presbytery with regard to all staff including those employed by the Presbytery, elected officials and volunteer staff members. The Presbytery commends these policies to its congregations.

Development and Administration of Personnel Policies and Procedures

The Presbytery is responsible to provide for:

- **Equal Employment Opportunity:** An employment plan consistent with the principles of inclusiveness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- **Compensation:** To develop and administer a process of job classification and compensation.
- **Reimbursement of Expenses:** To develop and administer a process for the reimbursement of staff related expenses.
- **Continuing Education:** To develop and administer a process of continuing education consonant with the needs of the Presbytery, and the career goals of the employee.
- **Benefits:** To provide employee benefits consonant with the goals and financial capacity of the Presbytery.
- **Staff Concerns and Problems:** To establish and administer a procedure for resolving job related problems.
- **Distribution:** To provide to each employed and elected staff members a copy of the Presbytery's personnel policies, and to provide guidelines for all volunteers.

1. Basic Policies

- 1.1 **Inclusiveness:** The Presbytery resolves to be an employer consistent with the principles of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1.2 Drug and Alcohol Dependency: The Presbytery recognizes that alcoholism and other drug dependencies are a significant problem with a potential for causing severe effects to the Presbytery's work force. Staff members are expected to perform their jobs efficiently, safely and in a professional business-like manner. Therefore, it is the Presbytery's intent to provide a drug-free, smoke-free, healthful, safe and secure work environment.

1.3 Sexual Harassment:

1.3.1 The 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.

1.3.2 All sexually harassing conduct in the workplace, whether committed by supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, is prohibited. Such conduct includes:

- a. Making unwelcome sexual advances or request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical contact of a secular nature, a condition of an employee's obtaining employment, or their continuing said employment; or
- b. Making submission to or rejecting of such conduct the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee; or
- c. 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.

1.3.3 Staff members 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 the individual supervisor, they may speak with any executive or administrative staff person, the Moderator of the Presbytery's Personnel Committee, or the Moderator of the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Response Team.

1.3.4 Any staff members who have been found by the 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.

1.4 Other Types of Harassment:

1.4.1 The Presbytery prohibits harassment in any form by its staff members based on factors of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability.

1.4.2 Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct which is insulting or intimidating, has the effect of interfering with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

1.4.3 It shall be the responsibility of each staff member to maintain an environment which is free from such harassment and to report incidents of conduct which he or she believes to constitute such harassment.

1.4.4 Staff members who believe they have been the subjects of harassment described in Section 1.5.2 should report the alleged act immediately to their supervisor. If they do not feel comfortable

talking to the individual supervisor, they may speak with any executive or administrative staff person, the Moderator of the Presbytery's Personnel Committee, or the Moderator of the Presbytery's Sexual Misconduct Response Team.

- 1.4.5 Any staff member who has been found by the Presbytery, after appropriate investigation, to have harassed another employee, agent of any other governing body, or volunteer, will be subject to appropriate sanctions, depending upon the circumstances, from a warning in his or her personnel file up to and including termination.

1.5 Conflict of Interest:

- 1.5.1 No employee shall accept any gift, gratuity, grant, service, or any special favor from any person, persons or businesses which provide or receive goods and services or which seek to provide or receive goods and services from the Presbytery. However, minor courtesies such as luncheons, dinners or similar arrangements in connection with business discussions may be received.
- 1.5.2 In addition, if an employee is called upon to participate in a decision in which the interests of the Presbytery conflict with his or her personal interests, the employee should abstain from participating in the decision.
- 1.5.3 Full-time employees who hold other paid positions should ensure that such outside employment will not interfere with their performance of their duties or produce a conflict of interest in the pursuit of those duties. Any question regarding this should be reviewed with their supervisor.
- 1.5.4 All employees shall avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, special interest, or any other inappropriate conduct. If an employee discovers that he or she may be in a position of conflict, he or she shall immediately report this conflict to his or her supervisor.

1.6 Confidentiality and Security of Presbytery Records:

- 1.6.1 It is the policy of the Presbytery that employees are required to protect organizational records entrusted to them or accessible to them against unauthorized access, loss, or destruction. These records include all written and/or computerized information produced by and for the Presbytery.
- 1.6.2 Employees may be assigned records or computer accounts identified by their personal names; however, the documents and information produced or stored in these and all records and accounts remain the property of the Presbytery.

2. Employment Categories and Terms

- 2.1 **Executive and Administrative Staff:** Executive and administrative staff are elected by the Presbytery for an indefinite term in accordance with the provisions of the *Form of Government* and in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Presbytery.

In addition to an annual personnel review there shall be a comprehensive review at least every five years.

- 2.2 **Program Staff:** Program staff members are hired by the Personnel Committee in consultation with the committee, task force or task group for which the program staff person might work, for an indefinite term, and are confirmed by the Presbytery. In addition to an annual review there shall be a comprehensive review at least every five years.

- 2.3 **Support Staff:** Support staff members are hired for an indefinite term by the General Presbyter when

authorized to fill the position by the Personnel Committee. There shall be an annual personnel review of all support staff persons.

2.4 Part Time Employees: Employees hired on a part-time basis will be subject to the same general conditions and expectations as full-time employees. Length of service benefits will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. Holidays will apply in accordance with their regular work schedule.

2.5 Volunteer Staff: Volunteer employees will be subject to the same general conditions and expectations as full-time employees. Holidays will apply in accordance with their regular work schedule.

3. Position Descriptions

All positions will be described in a position description, which shall be reviewed periodically.

4. Initial Evaluation Period

4.1 Support staff shall be employed for an initial evaluation period of three months. Executive, administrative, and program staff shall be employed for an initial evaluation period of six months. During this period the employee may be terminated if it is determined by the supervisor that work performance or the relationship between the employee and the employer will not develop satisfactorily.

4.2 At the end of the initial evaluation period, a review will be held and a written copy placed in the personnel file.

5. Credited Service

For the Presbytery of Des Moines, an employee's total credited service for the purposes of the implementation of personnel policies shall include service on the staff of any Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) governing body (or its predecessor), or service with a denomination with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in correspondence, or ecumenical body if that service is authorized by an agency or governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Such crediting of service will be irrespective of any break of service with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) governing bodies (or their predecessors).

However, for purposes of salary administration, the employment anniversary date is the date of their transfer to, promotion from within, or employment by the Presbytery.

6. Working Hours

6.1 The Presbytery observes a forty (40) hour work week, not including lunch periods, for full-time non-exempt staff. The work week begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends at 12:00 midnight Saturday.

6.2 The Presbytery observes a five-day work week for exempt staff.

7. Salary Administration

7.1 Salaries for executive, administrative and program staff positions will be determined on the basis of uniform factoring. Initial placement within a salary range should reflect a judgment of the qualifications and experience of the person relative to the position requirements. An employee will normally start at a salary no higher than the mid-point range for which he or she is employed.

7.2 Wages for support positions will be determined on the basis of a classification system that is consistent with systems used in areas where the person is employed.

- 7.3 Salary ranges and wage scales will be reviewed annually in light of changes in the Consumer Price Index.
- 7.4 Ordinarily, any salary adjustments will be effective January 1 of each year.
- 7.5 The Presbytery seeks to equalize, as nearly as possible, the compensation of ordained clergy and non-ordained executive, administrative, and program staff necessitated by the advantages tax law provides in exempting housing allowances from the taxable income of clergy. For each eligible staff person the Presbytery shall purchase a non-forfeitable annuity, using an amount comparable to the tax saving represented by the housing allowance modified by the Social Security payments made on behalf of non-ordained employees.
- 7.6 All honoraria received having to do directly with the work of the Presbytery shall be turned in to the Presbytery. Honoraria received for services not related to the position description may be retained by the staff person.

8. Benefits

- 8.1 **Social Security:** The employee's share is withheld from the wages of non-ordained staff. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament are considered self-employed for Social Security purposes and are responsible for the payment of their self-employment contributions.
- 8.2 **Benefits Plan:** Employees who are ministers of the Word and Sacrament will be enrolled in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Other employees will have the option of participation in the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or in an alternative benefits arrangement. The Presbytery will pay the dues for the Benefits Plan, or an equal amount for an alternative benefits arrangement.
- 8.3 **Workers' Compensation:** Workers' Compensation Insurance is provided to all employees according to the provisions of Iowa law.
- 8.4 **On-the-Job Travel Accident Insurance:** An employee's personal accident insurance is considered the primary insurance for on-the-job travel. The Presbytery's policy will be considered secondary.
- 8.5 **Unemployment Insurance:** Presbytery employees are excluded from unemployment compensation insurance pursuant to Iowa statute.
- 8.6 **Moving Expenses:** Moving expenses will be negotiated at the time of employment.
- 8.7 **Housing Loans:** Executive, administrative and program staff may be given assistance in the purchase of a home through a loan by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies through a second mortgage or a bridge loan in accordance with guidelines established by the Synod.
- 8.8 **Holidays**
- 8.8.1 There shall be eleven paid holidays per year: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and two other days to be designated by the General Presbyter at the beginning of each year.
- 8.8.2 When a holiday falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or regular day off, it will be observed as a holiday on the nearest working day before or after the holiday.

9. Vacation With Pay

- 9.1 A vacation with pay is provided for all regular employees. Vacations are not cumulative. Earned vacation days not used in the calendar year will be forfeited, except when special provision has been

made by the General Presbyter, or the Personnel Committee in the case of the General Presbyter.

9.2 Full-time executive, administrative and program staff are entitled to four weeks (24 working days) vacation per calendar year. Full-time support staff, following their initial evaluation period, are entitled to an annual vacation computed according to the following:

employment less than one year	10 working days, pro-rated beginning the first full year through
the fourth year	10 working days per year beginning the fifth year through the
ninth year	15 working days per year beginning the tenth year 22 working days per year

In the twenty-sixth year of credited service (*Section 5*) and annually thereafter, all staff will be granted twenty-seven working days of annual vacation.

9.3 Ordinarily, vacation should be taken in blocks of time whenever possible.

9.4 Specific vacation dates shall be determined in advance in consultation with the employee’s supervisor.

10. Leave with Pay

10.1 **Military Leave:** Time off for Military Reserve duty as required by law shall be allowed.

10.2 **Marriage:** Up to three days shall be granted to an employee who has been employed by the Presbytery for at least one year for that employee’s marriage.

10.3 **Jury Duty:** Time off for jury service shall be allowed. For up to a maximum of two weeks per year the Presbytery will pay the difference between the individual’s normal and customary pay less whatever the individual receives for jury duty.

10.4 Parental Family Leave:

10.4.1 Parental leave should normally be requested of the supervisor, and approved by the General Presbyter or the Moderator of the Personnel Committee, by the employee at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child. The request should specify the amount of leave time desired, for a maximum of three months, which may include time before or after the expected birth or adoption of the child. If both parents are on the Presbytery payroll, only one parental leave may be granted. However, leave may be shared by the two parents.

10.4.2 The employee will be compensated at the rate of 60% of his or her monthly pay rate according to the following schedule:

employment less than one year	no paid leave
beginning the first year	one month
beginning the second year	two months
beginning the third year and thereafter	three months

Benefit coverage (except vacation, and sick leave accrual) and credited service will continue during the entire leave with the cost of benefits being paid by the Presbytery. Any salary increase action for which the employee may become eligible in the course of the leave will be effective upon return to employment.

10.4.3 Upon completion of parental leave, the employee will be entitled to return to his or her position if not eliminated due to a reduction in force, in which case the provisions of *Section 15* would apply. The position will not be filled during the leave except on a temporary basis.

10.5 **Health and Medical Leave:** Employees are entitled to up to ten working days of sick leave each calendar year, cumulative up to ninety days. Health and Medical leave during the first year of employment will be prorated according to length of employment. 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.

10.6 **Emergency Leave:** A maximum of five days per year shall be allowed for emergency leave arising out of the death of an immediate member of the family. In the event of serious illness or other emergency related to an immediate member of the family, such leave may be allowed by the General Presbyter of the Moderator of the Personnel Committee.

11. Leave Without Pay

Employees may be granted leave without pay, for example: jury duty beyond two weeks and excess parental leave. Benefits defined in *Section 8* may be continued at the employee's own expense, but paid leave benefits, e.g. vacation, sick leave or holidays will not accrue during this period. The leave is subject to the approval of the Personnel Committee upon recommendation of the General Presbyter.

12. Continuing Education

12.1 Continuing education benefiting the employee and the Presbytery shall be encouraged. Employees are to submit plans for continuing education to their supervisor for consideration. Such leave is solely at the discretion of the Presbytery Personnel Committee.

12.2 Annual study leave with pay and assistance for expenses for continuing education may be granted by the General Presbyter according to the following schedule: for executive, administrative, and program staff – up to two weeks; for support staff, up to one week. With the approval of the General Presbyter, study leave may be accumulated up to six weeks for executive, administrative and program staff, and up to two weeks for support staff. In the case of the General Presbyter approval shall be by the Personnel Committee.

12.3 After five years of continuous employment by the Presbytery, executive, administrative and program staff may apply to their supervisor and the Personnel Committee for an extended study leave with full pay up to a three month period. Such application will include a written plan of study, with clearly defined goals. If granted, the extended study leave may be combined with earned vacation within a particular year.

12.4 After completion of an extended study leave a written report will be required.

13. Procedures for Addressing Employee Concerns and Problems

The Presbytery shall provide a procedure for attempting to resolve job related problems.

14. Unsatisfactory Performance and Involuntary Termination

14.1 Occasionally, an employee's behavior or work performance is unsatisfactory. When this arises, normally the employee's supervisor will meet with the employee in an effort to improve the unsatisfactory behavior or performance. However, the Presbytery reserves the sole right to determine whether disciplinary action should occur and the nature and extent of the discipline to be imposed.

This process may include verbal warning(s), suspension or termination, all in the sole discretion of the Presbytery. In this connection, the Presbytery reserves the right to bypass one or more of the options set forth above. While it is not possible to list every type of behavior that might be deemed a problem, the following list includes examples of behavior which may result in discipline up to and including termination:

Unsatisfactory performance, insubordination, neglect in the care and use of Presbytery property and funds, unexcused absence and/or repeated tardiness, moral turpitude, violation of Presbytery personnel policies, falsification of timekeeping records, reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, threatening violence in the workplace, sexual or other unlawful harassment, possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace.

The examples cited above are for illustration only and shall not be considered as comprehensive or limiting the Presbytery's right to administer discipline in its sole discretion.

- 14.2 In the event of involuntary separation, the General Presbyter, in consultation with and upon approval of the Personnel Committee, will terminate any program or support staff employee. Notification of termination will be thirty calendar days for program staff and fourteen calendar days for support staff. Pay in lieu of notice may be given.
- 14.3 In the event of the involuntary separation of the executive or administrative staff of the Presbytery the implementation of the procedures contained in Section G-9.0700 of the *Book of Order* will lodge with the Personnel Committee. Notification of termination will be ninety calendar days, or until other employment is secured, whichever is shorter.

15. Reduction in Force

- 15.1 Reduction in force, because of the discontinuance of a project or retrenchment in budget or for other circumstances arising out of no fault of the employee, is at the sole discretion of the Presbytery.
- 15.2 Written notice of such reduction will come from the Presbytery Moderator after consultation with the Personnel Committee. At least six months' notice shall be given. Should reemployment take place before the expiration of the notice period, salary payment will continue, offset by any pay received by the employee during this period.
- 15.3 When notice is given, severance allowance will be given in relation to length of service with the Presbytery as follows:

less than one year of service	two weeks
one year but less than four	four weeks
four years but less than five	six weeks
five or more years	eight weeks plus a week's salary for each year over five years to a maximum of twelve weeks
- 15.4 Pay in lieu of six months' notice may be given if so determined by the Presbytery. Normally severance allowance will not be granted to an employee who receives pay in lieu of the six-month notice. Vacation time accrued shall be honored with time or pay at the time of severance.

16. Voluntary Termination of Employment

- 16.1 Employees wishing to terminate their employment with the Presbytery should submit a written resignation to their supervisor, indicating the reason for terminating employment as well as the last day he or she expects to work.

- 16.2 A minimum of thirty calendar days' notice is requested of executive, administrative and program staff, and fourteen calendar days' notice of support staff.
- 16.3 The supervisor upon receipt of a resignation, in consultation with the Presbytery Personnel Committee Moderator, should arrange for an exit interview with the employee, placing in that person's personnel file the resignation letter and a summary of the exit interview. This interview shall take place before the employee's completion of service.
- 16.4 In the instance of the resignation of the General Presbyter, the resignation letter shall be submitted to the Moderator of the Presbytery, with a copy to the Moderator of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Presbytery Moderator, is responsible for the exit interview.
- 16.5 Pay will be granted for accrued vacation if notice is given.

17. Disability

Disability is considered to be a temporary separation due to mental or physical inability to function on the job. The decision to recommend a disability leave shall be made by the Personnel Committee in consultation with the General Presbyter or, in the case of the General Presbyter, the Synod Executive. It shall be based upon the recommendation of a physician, or physicians, and subject to approval by the Presbytery.

18. Death in Service

When the death of a member of the Presbytery staff occurs, the spouse, or dependents, shall receive a separation allowance. The amount shall be equivalent to the salary (including any housing allowance) of the deceased for thirty days from the time of death.

Approved November 10, 1999
Revised August 17, 2002

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Separation Ethics Guidelines

Guidelines When Pastorates End

Background

The pastoral relationship is very important, often deeply personal, and in some cases, lifesaving to people in a congregation. This relationship evolves through study, teaching, preaching, administering the sacraments of Baptism and Communion, weddings, funerals, being present in crises, and praying with and for members of the congregation. With the leadership of a congregation and particularly with the elders, the pastor works to encourage the people in the worship and service of God, equipping them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world. In all of these dimensions of the pastoral relationship, there are the elements of trust, confidence, admiration, affection, fondness, caring, and love.

The ending of the pastoral relationship is often a trying and traumatic experience for both the pastor and the congregation. It always means change and transition for both. One of the functions of both the Church Professional Task Force and Congregational Transition Task Force is to support congregations and pastors as they attempt to minister effectively during the time of transition. With guidance from the *Book of Order* and our Presbyterian traditions, the following guidelines offer specific assistance to all parties involved.

These guidelines define ethical behavior for pastors moving to another parish (whether in the community or a distance away), for pastors retiring, those beginning a new pastorate, and for the Sessions and congregations dealing with pastoral separation.

These guidelines on separation ethics shall be given to:

1. The departing/retiring pastor at the session meeting at the time the separation is announced,
2. The incoming pastor at his/her initial interview with the Congregational Transition Task Force,
3. The congregation when there is a pastoral change. Excerpts should be printed in the church's paper or bulletin under the signature of the Congregational Transition Task Force.

The Ethical Principles of Separation

It is inappropriate for a congregation's former pastor to engage in any pastoral activities which intrude on the current pastor's call without a specific invitation from that pastor, including returning to former calls/congregations to provide pastoral services. Pastors shall not foster informal relationships which harm the ministry of the current pastor or pastors in parishes they have formerly served.

Saying Goodbye to Accept a Call a Distance Away

When a pastor accepts a call to ministry a distance from the congregation which she or he is leaving, the opportunity for contact with members of the former congregation is quite limited, often non-existent. However, there frequently arise certain circumstances which pose questions for the departing pastor as to what is appropriate and what can be most helpful to the congregation and the interim and following pastors. It is always incumbent upon the departing pastor to make sure that parishioners know that her or his relationship with the congregation will come to an end. It is important that parishioners understand that this change of relationship is necessary in order that the congregation be free, in all respects, to make the adjustments necessary for changes of leadership, interim, and permanent, without the departing pastor's influence.

Saying Goodbye But Remaining a Neighbor

When a pastor says goodbye and remains nearby, there are particularly sensitive aspects of separation which require careful attention on the part of the departing pastor.

The experience of pastors and congregations over the years has led many to believe that when a pastor ends a ministry with a congregation, it is best for the pastor to move out of the community. However, this is not always possible or advisable. Thus, it is particularly important when a departing/retiring pastor remains in proximity to the former congregation, that he/she be sensitive to the needs and responsibilities of the new pastor. The departing/retiring pastor should not be a part of the worship or fellowship life of the congregation except upon the initiative and invitation of the installed pastor and Session. If such an invitation is extended, normally it should not occur until the installed pastor has had an opportunity to establish relationships with the congregation.

When One is Elected Pastor Emeritus

When a pastor retires, the congregation may bestow upon him or her the title of Pastor Emeritus. The provision is no longer in the *Book of Order*, but may still be approved by the Church Professional Task Force as follows:

When any pastor or associate pastor retires, and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue an association in an honorary relationship, it may, at a regularly called congregational meeting, elect him or her as pastor emeritus or emerita, with or without honorarium, but with no pastoral authority or duty. This action shall be subject to the approval of presbytery, and may take effect upon the formal dissolution of the pastoral or associate pastoral relationship or any time thereafter.

The purpose of electing one as pastor or associate pastor emeritus is to show evidence of a long and loving, mutually caring pastoral relationship. It is the congregation's way of saying to the church-at-large and to the world that they love this person and are thankful for his or her time with them.

However, the pastoral relationship has been dissolved. The relationship of pastor to people has ended and there is not expectation of the person to be present with the congregation because of the election. All expectations related to the former pastor of a congregation apply to a pastor emeritus.

Conduct Responsibilities

"Separation Ethics" implies certain values which are important to consider during the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Such values include:

- Effective leadership
- Congregational health and stability
- The growth of pastor and members in dealing with the pain, the problems, and the possibilities of separation
- The ability of the session and congregation to move positively and effectively toward the next phase of their life together.

This material addresses the conduct and responsibilities of the pastor, session, congregation, and the Church Professional Task Force of the presbytery. Since the pastor is the one in the professional leadership role, the pastor has the responsibility for making sure that the separation is planned and carried through with foresight and effectiveness.

Responsibilities of the Departing Pastor

To the congregation:

When the date has been set for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the departing pastor must take the lead in preparing the congregation for the separation in order to avoid confusion on the part of the members in the days ahead.

It is incumbent upon the departing pastor to make sure that parishioners know that his/her relationship with the congregation will come to an end. It is important that parishioners understand that this change of relationship is necessary in order that the congregation be free, in all respects, to make adjustments necessary for changes of leadership, interim and permanent, without the departing pastor's influence.

A letter should be sent to the congregation spelling out clearly the matters below, which are part of the separation and transition. A sermon might also contain references to the approaching separation and speak to these matters. In casual conversation one-on-one or in groups, in public presence, in newsletters, in all contacts with people of the congregation, it is important that these matters be communicated and every effort made to have them understood. These matters are:

- That all pastoral and professional relationships and responsibilities of the pastor with the congregation will end as of the effective date of the dissolution.
- That the pastor will not be involved in any way in the selection process of either the interim pastor or the next installed pastor. Neither will he/she be involved in any way with the selection of any search team or pastor nominating committee.
- That the pastor, after leaving, will not become engaged in conversations with church members or staff which, in any way, offer opinions or criticism about the life of the congregation or the performance of the interim or any subsequent installed pastors. (An exception to this rule: if a former pastor receives a call regarding the former congregation from a potential candidate looking for opinions, references, and input about the congregation. In this case, it is acceptable and appropriate for the former pastor to speak freely.)
- That any desire on the part of members of the congregation for the departing pastor to participate in congregational life or services should be discussed not with the departing pastor, but with the interim pastor (or session moderator) or subsequent installed pastor.
- That the departing pastor may participate in a wedding, funeral, or baptism of the congregation after the date of dissolution only by invitation of the session and moderator.

Note: This ethic prohibits a former pastor from saying, "Of course, I'll officiate at your wedding (funeral, baptism, etc.) if your pastor asks me." It also prohibits a communication to the present pastor that "I am going to be in town and plan to visit John Doe. I hope this is all right with you," or any other similar verbal or written statement. **These statements compromise the present pastor, making it difficult for him/her to say or do anything but agree to the involvement of the former pastor.**

To individual members of the congregation:

It is important that it be made clear that the *pastoral relationship* will come to an end. This does not mean that *friendships* must come to an end. Friendships are priceless and are to be preserved, but there is a special responsibility on the part of the departing pastor to prevent friendships from becoming confused with the pastoral relationship. The pastoral functions of counseling, pastoral calling, conducting weddings, funerals, or baptisms are not appropriate, unless asked to do so by the moderator of session and the session. Neither is rendering of opinions about the ministry of the former church or its pastor appropriate. **It is the departing pastor's responsibility to see that this *really* happens.**

If the former pastor receives a request to return to the congregation for a particular occasion, it is important for her/him to remind those making the request that the present pastor or moderator of the Session is the one through whom the request should initially be made.

In instances when a church endures a long period of time without an interim or called pastor, the temptation for the former pastor to remain connected and provide pastoral care is particularly strong. Never-the-less, for the health of the congregation, the pastor must continue to follow these separation guidelines.

In any social context, where the former pastor is with friends or other members of the former congregation, it is the responsibility of the former pastor to be sure that he/she voices no criticism or evaluative comments about the new leadership of the congregation. It is not appropriate for the former pastor to comment on the “state of the congregation” or to be involved in any way in the selection of a successor, once she/he has departed.

To the remaining staff/personnel of the church:

The former pastor has a responsibility to the remaining staff and personnel of the church at least in the following ways:

- To prepare them for the separation that will occur.
- To encourage them to receive and welcome the interim pastor and the next installed pastor.
- To make clear that he/she will not be available for counsel or advice regarding the life and work of the church.

To the interim and subsequent installed pastors:

The former pastor has a responsibility to the interim pastor (or session moderator) and to subsequent installed pastors to make sure that any requests that come to him/her for services in the former congregation be redirected by the requesters to the interim pastor or installed pastor.

The former pastor should make every effort to be supportive of his/her successor. Pastors should encourage persons who might contact them with concerns about their successor to address them to their new pastor or the Session or the Congregational Transition Task Force. Pastors should not draw conclusions about their successor or interpret their behavior and words. They should encourage openness and opportunities for growth.

It is important that, when any request comes to the former pastor, she/he be in touch with the current pastor to let it be known what contacts have been made and that the request was redirected to the current pastor. This is a courtesy which is important to be extended to the current pastor. There should be no pastoral functions of any kind performed by the former pastor without the prior invitation or request of the current pastor and session.

Responsibilities of the Session

To the departing pastor:

Following the pastor’s decision to request dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the session can give support and encouragement to the pastor in the implementation of the decision. This can be done by assisting the pastor in interpreting the meaning of the end of the pastoral relationship to the congregation and, it need be, to the wider community. The session should ask the departing pastor to utilize leave-taking liturgies in worship to help the congregation understand and accept the transition.

As a caring expression of closure, it is appropriate for the session to arrange for an occasion when the congregation and pastor may formally say goodbye.

When a pastor departs due to conflict in a congregation, the session, in cooperation with the Congregational Transition Task Force representatives, shall negotiate a suitable dissolution agreement and recommend its adoption to the congregation and to the Congregational Health Task Force acting for the Presbytery of Des

Moines. Since pastors do not qualify for unemployment compensation, this agreement will include a continuation of salary, housing, pension and major medical payments for a minimum of three months, with a normal agreement covering six months. Consideration may be given to length of tenure. This shall apply when there has been no previous dissolution agreement.

When the pastor begins a new call or is employed in a full-time or equivalent position, before the agreement has lapsed, all compensation will cease. If the pastor accepts a part-time position before the agreement has lapsed, compensation will be reduced in an amount equal to the new salary received. All financial support stops after the agreement has expired.

To the congregation:

The session will want to be sensitive to the feeling of loss experienced by members of the congregation while demonstrating through their actions the meaning of the end of the pastoral relationship.

Additional session leadership may be needed in the transition period so that worship, congregational life, and fellowship may continue.

The session can help the members of the congregation by encouraging them to see this time as an opportunity for growth and change. It can be a time for listening to individuals and groups in the congregation. It can be a time for examining present life, ministry, and service, and to be open to new possibilities. It is important that the congregation be prepared for change and for new pastoral leadership.

With the help of Congregational Transition Task Force, the session should interpret the role of the Task Force during the transition period. This will involve the naming of a session moderator, the process of obtaining an interim pastor, and the process of calling an installed pastor.

Responsibilities of the Church Professional Task Force and the Congregational Transition Task Force

To the departing pastor:

Upon learning of the pastor's intention to resign or retire, a representative of the Congregational Transition Task Force shall meet with the pastor to discuss these guidelines. An exit interview will be conducted by the Task Force before or at the time the pastor departs.

During times of stress or conflict, the Church Professional Task Force will assist the pastor in obtaining any necessary counseling and/or help in searching for a new position.

To the session and congregation:

A Congregational Transition Task Force representative will be present at the meeting of the session when the pastor announces his or her resignation. The meeting will include informing the session fully of these guidelines, orienting the session to the transition process and answering questions. A Congregational Transition Task Force rep will also be present at the meeting of the congregation when the pastor requests concurrence in his/her plans to leave, to inform the congregation of the process for obtaining subsequent pastoral leadership.

When a congregation plans to elect a retiring pastor as Pastor Emeritus, the information in the document that covers that process will be sent to the congregation, and a Church Professional Task Force rep will be offered to interpret the process, if desired.

To the interim and next installed pastors:

It will be important for the Congregational Transition Task Force to review these guidelines with the interim pastor and the next installed pastor and to be available for counsel should any difficulties arise regarding relationships with the former pastor.

Timetable and Guidelines for Resigning Pastors

When should the resignation be announced?

Resignation occurs when a pastor is moving his/her ministry to another location or a different form of ministry. Under normal conditions for leaving a parish, six to eight weeks' notice is adequate. This will allow sufficient time for tying up loose ends and for saying goodbye.

Giving notice of more than eight weeks can make for an inordinately long period for everyone concerned having to hold onto grief feelings prior to the final termination, not unlike a prolonged period between a death and the funeral service. However, too short a time between the announcement and the departure is unfair to all affected, especially the congregation. The time after a pastor announces her/his intention to move is a period of extremely important pastoral care, by the pastor to the congregation, and by the congregation to the pastor and family.

Whom should be told, and in what order?

1. Notify the Stated Clerk/General Presbyter and the Congregational Transition Task Force Moderator. They shall maintain confidentiality and will assist/advise in whatever ways are needed.
2. Share the news with your session before sharing it with others in your church or community. Ask them to call a Congregational Meeting to concur with the resignation.
3. The pastor should announce his/her resignation officially and personally at a public worship service. Be positive and open in your announcement.
4. The *Book of Order* requires that you notify the Congregational Transition Task Force and/or the Presbytery Office in writing of your resignation and the congregational action concurring with your request. The pastor must receive concurrence from the Congregational Task Force before moving from the parish.

Timetable and Guidelines for Retiring Pastors

The Board of Pensions suggests that the process of retiring begin six to nine months before the anticipated date of retirement, and so six months' notice to the congregation would be appropriate.

Ministers anticipating retirement should request the booklet, *Information for Members Planning to Retire*, from the Board of Pensions. Up to five years before retirement, you should send a request for a pension quote to the Board of Pensions, as well as a request for Social Security benefits quote to the local Social Security office.

Presbytery must certify retirement to the Board of Pensions. Prior to Presbytery action, Church Professional Task Force will consider the application for retirement. Allow enough time to assure the application can be acted on in a timely manner. The Board of Pensions suggests requesting a retirement application at least ninety days prior to retirement, but a longer time may be wiser. Also, if you elect one of the joint survivor options, the appropriate form must be submitted to the Board at least three months prior to the retirement date.

Six to nine months before the anticipated retirement date, you should contact the local Social Security office to begin the application process for benefits.

Additional Guidelines for Retiring Pastors who Remain in the Community

1. A former pastor who chooses to remain in the area in which he/she has served as pastor needs to deal realistically with his/her own needs for fellowship and church life apart from the former congregation.

2. You and your spouse can be most helpful to your successor and family being accepted in their new situation. You and your family can also be the most difficult problem your successor and family must face. Be sensitive to them and help them in any way you can.
3. A former pastor should refrain from pastoral functions and not accept any position of leadership in his/her former church, nor attend meetings of the session, deacons, or trustees unless invited by the session and moderator of session.
4. A former pastor should not officiate at any sacraments, weddings, funerals, or other functions involving members of his/her former church, or within its properties, unless invited by the session and moderator of session.
5. An invitation to officiate or perform pastoral functions in a former parish is an opportunity to demonstrate your support and loyalty to your successor. Offer to assist rather than officiate. Avoid any functions or requests which will isolate or exclude your successor from the people God has called him/her to serve.
6. A former pastor should avoid formal or informal participation in, or comment on, the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee.
7. If there are options for church membership and participation in another congregation, it is recommended that the former pastor and family become active in the work and worship of another congregation. Remaining in the same congregation can lead to tensions and difficulties which no one intends, but which may not be avoidable.
8. To facilitate the transition by the date of dissolution, the pastor should remove all of his/her personal items from the church and manse (if one is provided). This includes books, apparel, and papers/files. Any keys to the church or property should be given to the person/committee designated by the session to handle church property.
9. Arrangements for payment of any monies due to the pastor (salary, annuities, expenses, etc.) or repayment of any monies owed the church by the pastor shall be made by the effective date of dissolution.
10. The new pastor can do much to prevent difficulties arising because of the presence of a former pastor. The new pastor should remember that the ties that bind the members of a congregation to a former pastor have been forged through the unique experience of the pastorate. The new pastor should recognize that the congregation's affection for the former pastor as an individual does not prevent the development of bonds with the new pastor. The new pastor should refrain from any criticism of the former pastor. This is a time for the possibility of new life and vitality in the church.

Helpful *Book of Order* references:

Pastor – Dissolution of relationship

Pastor – Former pastor's pastoral services

PRESBYTERY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Policy

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Requirements

In July, 2005 three provisions were added to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the Form of Government which require officers of the church to report knowledge gained of harm or risk of harm of physical or sexual abuse of a minor.

Specifically, the provisions read as follows:

G-6.0204b. *A minister of Word and Sacrament shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-6.0204a; or (2) she or he reasonably believes that there is a risk of future physical harm or abuse.*

G-6.0304b. *An elder shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge, gained in the course of service to the church, of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of privileged communication; or (2) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.*

G-6.0402b. *A deacon shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge, gained in the course of service to the church, of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of privileged communication; or (2) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.*

These provisions of the *Book of Order* attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For ministers of word and sacrament, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a minister to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care.

For elders and deacons, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed as a result of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

Ministers of Word and Sacrament have a duty under the *Book of Order* to report to both ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities when they have knowledge of harm or risk of harm of the physical abuse, neglect and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity.

The exception to this duty is when the knowledge is gained within a confidential communication. The *Book of Order* defines the confidential communication that must be held in confidence by a minister as all information revealed to the minister in the course of providing pastoral care and all information relating to the exercise of pastoral care. There is an exception to the exception and that is when the minister reasonably believes that there

is a risk of imminent bodily harm to any person or a risk of future physical harm or abuse to a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity the minister may voluntarily reveal the information.

At this time, we do not have an interpretation as to which ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities must the ministers report their knowledge. Within the ecclesiastical context, presumably any information should be reported to the individuals who have responsibility for the pastoral care of the victim and their family members and to the individuals who have the responsibility for discipline if the perpetrator is either a member, employee or volunteer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). If the perpetrator is a member of the PC(USA) any reporting would be made to the clerk of session for members, elders and deacons or to the stated clerk for ministers of word and sacrament. If the perpetrator is an employee or volunteer, the report should be made to the supervising entity of the employee or volunteer. The congregation or the governing body may have a sexual misconduct policy that provides a guide as to who is the appropriate person within the church to receive such a report. Within the civil context, any information should be reported according to state law.

The PC(USA) does not have an authoritative interpretation as to the definition of “knowledge of harm” or “knowledge of risk of harm”. The person who is trying to determine whether they have a duty to report, will have to use a reasonable determination as to whether the child has been harmed or is at risk of the above harms.

The PC(USA) General Assembly has not interpreted the terms: physical abuse, neglect, sexual molestation or sexual abuse within this provision. The person who is trying to determine whether they have a duty to report, will have to use a reasonable determination as to whether the child has been harmed or is at risk of the above harms.

The 1993 General Assembly passed a Sexual Misconduct Policy in which child sexual abuse is defined: “Child Sexual Abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. No upper age limit for child sexual abuse has been given in this policy because the age of adulthood varies from state to state. The upper age limit is intended to be that recognized in the state in which the act was committed.”

The 2001 General Assembly passed a policy Turn Mourning into Dancing: A Policy Statement on Healing Domestic Violence in which physical abuse is defined as the use of brute force, such as hitting, biting, kicking, slapping, burning or scalding, to damage a person’s body. The weapon may be a fist, a knife, a gun, or other object.

The PC(USA) does not have an authoritative interpretation of the terms: a minor or an adult who lacks the mental capacity. It is reasonable to presume that “mental capacity” is limited to the mental capacity to consent to sexual conduct. Since the age of adulthood varies from state to state, the term “minor” will presumably vary according to the law of the state until the PC(USA) had defined this provision in this context.

Elders and Deacons

Elders and Deacons have a duty under the *Book of Order* to report to both ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities when they have knowledge gained in the course of service to the church of harm or risk of harm of the physical abuse, neglect and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity.

The exception to this duty is when the knowledge is gained within a “privileged” communication. The Assembly intended to provide an exception for a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient that may be granted certain confidential privileges under state law. Since it is probable that the secular definition of “privileged” will vary from state to state, the term “privileged” is deliberately left undefined in the church constitution.

There is also an exception for knowledge gained outside of service to the church. This acknowledges that officers of the church may have access to knowledge gained outside of service to the church that may result in

the individual having conflicting professional confidentiality issues. This exception acknowledges those potential conflicts of interests. However, to date the PC(USA) does not have a definition of “service to the church” for the purposes of this provision. The service may be limited to when the officer is specifically doing work approved by and commissioned by the church, or it may be defined broadly as whenever there is the appearance that the officer is engaged in “service for the church.” The officer who is trying to determine whether or not they have a duty under the *Book of Order* to report any knowledge of abuse is advised to make a reasonable determination whether there is a reasonable risk of future harm, whether the information was gained while the officer was in service to the church, and whether there is a secular legal duty to report.

If elder or deacon gains knowledge during the course of service to the church her duty to report may not be limited to knowledge of risk of future physical harm or abuse, but also when she has knowledge of past harm related to physical abuse, neglect and/or sexual molestation of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity.

The PC(USA) does not have an authoritative interpretation as to the definition of “knowledge of harm” or “knowledge of risk of harm”. The person who is trying to determine whether they have a duty to report, will have to use a reasonable determination as to whether the child has been harmed or is at risk of the above harms.

The PC(USA) General Assembly has not interpreted the terms: physical abuse, neglect, sexual molestation or sexual abuse within this provision. The person who is trying to determine whether they have a duty to report, will have to use a reasonable determination as to whether the child has been harmed or is at risk of the above harms.

The 1993 General Assembly passed a *Sexual Misconduct Policy* in which child sexual abuse is defined: “Child Sexual Abuse includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. No upper age limit for child sexual abuse has been given in this policy because the age of adulthood varies from state to state. The upper age limit is intended to be that recognized in the state in which the act was committed.”

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The PC(USA) does not have an authoritative interpretation of the terms: a minor or an adult who lacks the mental capacity. It is reasonable to presume that “mental capacity” is limited to the mental capacity to consent to sexual conduct. Since the age of adulthood varies from state to state, the term “minor” presumably will vary according to the law of the state until the PC(USA) has interpreted it in this context.

Clerks of Session, Stated Clerks and Governing Body Staff

The new provisions to the *Book of Order* make it mandatory for any officer of the church to report any knowledge of harm or risk of harm of a minor to the ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities. There are exceptions to this duty that are described above. The General Assembly has not issued an authoritative interpretation of the term “ecclesiastical authority”.

All members of governing bodies should be aware of any sexual misconduct policies adopted by the governing body that defines the appropriate reporting procedure. If the perpetrator is a member of the PC(USA) the reporting procedure would be according to the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. So that any reporting would be made to the clerk of session for allegations against members, elders and deacons or to the stated clerk for allegations against ministers of word and sacrament. If the perpetrator is an employee or volunteer, the report should be made to the supervising entity of the employee or volunteer.