

**TENTMAKERS IN SEATTLE PRESBYTERY**  
**May 20, 2003**  
**Report from the Committee on Ministry**

**Tentmaking ministry** in the Presbytery of Seattle has been recognized as a form of ministry since January, 1990, when Guidelines were first approved. Twelve **tentmaking positions** have been approved since then, five of which are in current terms today. Since 1990, we have ordained eight candidates to tentmaking ministry positions.

The Committee on Ministry asked this task group to review **tentmaking issues** and propose adjustments to the 1990 Guidelines that would provide more clarity in the definitions and processes used to call a **tentmaking minister** thereby strengthening this important category of pastoral leadership. The new guidelines would be recommended to Presbytery for their approval.

There is no guidance about tentmaking in the Book of Order. Helpful resources about this form of ministry are available from the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers and the Committee on Ministry Handbook of the General Assembly. Presbyteries are, therefore, empowered to develop criteria and guidelines for tentmaking ministries that suit the needs of their congregations.

**CURRENT CONCERNS ABOUT TENTMAKING IN SEATTLE PRESBYTERY**

1. **Clarity of understanding regarding the various pastoral positions** – tentmaker, designated, stated supply, interim, permanent call – when is a tentmaker appropriate as opposed to a ½ time pastor / associate pastor, or a designated pastor/associate pastor? Would Sessions be helped with resources that better articulate when is each appropriate?
2. **Concern about lack of search process** – the current guidelines allow for a tentmaker call to be approved without meeting the requirements of a full search (AAEEO). How is the *congregation* providing for open and honest discernment of the person God is calling if the person they are choosing is well-known to them and they have not considered others?
3. **Concern about ordaining a candidate to a tentmaker position without a call process** – how has the *candidate* provided for open and honest discernment to hear God's call to them if they have worked in/with this congregation and desire to stay on rather than search / continue to search for other calls
4. **Concern that permission to call a person to a tentmaker position without public announcement or search process** denies the opportunity for others in the presbytery to know of the opening and to apply for the position. Seattle Presbytery is blessed with a large number of minister members at large, specialized clergy, honorably retired clergy and certified candidates seeking calls who might be interested in tentmaking opportunities.
5. **Concern for the tentmaker's well being** – that the position does not place undue burden or take advantage of the minister in the amount of time worked or in remuneration.

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**Guidelines 2003**

**WHAT IS TENTMAKING MINISTRY IN SEATTLE PRESBYTERY?**

A **tentmaker** is a minister of Word and Sacrament who divides his or her working hours between two or more vocations, one in service to the church, the other/s in some work or activity that provides the minister's supportable income (other activities may be homemaking, child rearing, or retirement).

A **tentmaking position** is a called and installed, less than half time, pastoral position for a term of up to three years, renewable. Because the tentmaker minister will also have another vocation, the tentmaking ministry shall be no more than 20 hours per week. It may not be converted to a permanent position without permission from the Presbytery.

**WHY TENTMAKING?**

Tentmaking ministry provides a valuable service to churches who are financially unable to acquire pastoral leadership and pay full benefits:

- May enable smaller churches to call qualified pastors for part time ministry, even if they cannot afford to pay presbytery minimums
- May enable middle-sized churches – too large for a full time pastor, but not large enough for two pastors, to call a part-time associate
- May help to get less than part time pastors to communities where new churches might be planted (i.e. Northpoint type projects launched by a congregation)

### **TENTMAKING MINISTRY CONCERNS**

- That the needs of the church will be met by this ministry
- That the congregation understands its role as a "tentmaking congregation" – providing support and understanding for the tentmaking pastor, helping avoid over extension in their other vocation/s
- That the tentmaking pastor is able to manage the demands of each position and avoid over extension
- That the requirements of one position will not adversely affect the performance of the other position
- That there will be satisfaction in each position the tentmaker holds
- That the congregation will find the secular vocation acceptable

### **TENTMAKING DEFINITIONS & PARAMETERS**

#### **A "tentmaker" is:**

- One who divides the week's working hours between two or more positions, one in service as a minister of Word and Sacrament in a congregation (or ministry defined by the presbytery as valid) (G-11.0403), and the other in a secular vocation. (A secular vocation may include homemaking, child raising, and/or retirement.)
- One whose Call to ministry :
  1. complies with the pastoral responsibilities listed in of G-6.0202b and the ministry criteria of G-11.0403
  2. is fully defined and documented in a position description and covenant format approved by presbytery.
  3. provides for an annual performance review with the session
  4. involves a work schedule of no more than 20 hours per week
  5. may not be compensated beyond 2/5ths of the Presbytery's minimum compensation
  6. is for a limited term, not to exceed three years
  7. may be renewed for additional terms after an evaluation process with the Committee on Ministry

#### **A "tentmaking position":**

- provides a valuable service to churches who are financially unable to acquire pastoral leadership and pay full benefits
- is a called and installed, less than half time, pastoral position for a term of up to three years, renewable. Because the tentmaker minister will also have another vocation, the tentmaking ministry shall be no more than 20 hours per week.
- must be advertised at least within the bounds of the Presbytery. If there is a candidate for the position who is currently working in the congregation as an intern or staff person, the parameters of the Committee on Ministry's "Policy and Procedures Regarding Internal Candidates" will apply.
- compensation may be as little as no remuneration but no more than 2/5ths of the minimum salary requirements set by the presbytery for pastors. Reimbursement for expenses should always be considered.
- may not be changed in terms of the call, including position description, time parameters, and/or salary, without the approval of the congregation and the Committee on Ministry and the concurrence of Presbytery
- may not be changed to a permanent position without an evaluation process with the Committee on Ministry, and approval of Presbytery.

### **STEPS TOWARD ESTABLISHING A PART TIME TENTMAKER POSITION**

1. Session determines that there is a need for ministerial services. If the need can be met by less than half time pastoral care, a tentmaker designation may be appropriate. Refer to the Types of Pastoral Leadership Chart to help with discernment.
2. The Session confers with Committee on Ministry regarding their ministerial need and next steps in the process. If

the Session has a candidate in mind for the position, that situation is made clear.

3. If the position is new, the Committee on Ministry must recommend that Presbytery establish the new position, contingent upon the congregation's approval of the new position.
4. The Committee on Ministry grants permission to the Session to call a congregational meeting to elect a PNC to fill the position.
5. The newly elected PNC works with materials provided by the Session to write the job description, person description and a brief Church Information Form to be used to advertise the position within the Presbytery. Once the Session has approved the CIF it is forwarded to the Committee on Ministry for approval.
6. PNC advertises the tentmaking position at least within the bounds of the Presbytery and considers applications of candidate/s for the position.
7. If there is a candidate for the position who is currently working in the congregation as an intern or staff person, the PNC and the candidate must meet with the Committee on Ministry in fulfillment of the requirements of the "Policy and Procedures Regarding Internal Candidates".
8. PNC notifies Session when they have selected a candidate for the position. Terms of the call, length of the call, and a Covenant Agreement are negotiated between the PNC and the candidate for approval by the congregation.
9. Session calls a congregational meeting to approve the call to the candidate.
10. Congregation votes to approve the call on the terms presented.
11. Clerk of Session notifies Committee on Ministry of the congregation's action. Members of the PNC will be asked to appear before the committee to prosecute the call.
12. Committee on Ministry votes to concur and recommends that Presbytery approve.
13. Plans are approved for the ordination and/or installation of the new tentmaker.
14. Three to four months prior to the end of the tentmaker term, the Committee on Ministry will engage in an evaluation process with the Session and the tentmaker. This process will assist the parties in decisions regarding renewal of the term.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A)  
**Pastoral Call**  
**(For Pastor, Tentmaker or Associate Pastor, Tentmaker)**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church (USA), PIN \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Church) (City/State)

belonging to the Presbytery of Seattle (PIN 030/632), being well satisfied with your qualification for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls you,

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

to undertake the office of

\_\_\_\_\_

of this congregation, beginning \_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_ year term, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

We covenant with you our support and encouragement, as together we seek to serve the Lord, who calls us to ministry in every aspect of life. The goals, duties, and working relationship agreed upon between us is as follows:

That you may be free to devote the agreed time to this ministry of the Word among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you as follows:

In its concern for the welfare of its ministers and congregations, the Presbytery will provide an evaluation process near the end of this term for use in discerning issues of renewal for another term.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Moderator of the Congregational Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the Committee on Ministry Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stated Clerk of the Presbytery Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minister Date \_\_\_\_\_