

Designated Pastor Steps to Establish
Barbara Ranta, 11/20/2003 - 11:22 AM

STEPS TOWARD ESTABLISHING A DESIGNATED PASTOR / ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION

G-14.0502e defines a Designated Pastor (and associate pastor) as a minister of Word and Sacrament approved by the Committee on Ministry to be elected for a term of not less than two years nor more than four years by vote of the congregation.

The following steps will help Sessions and Designated Pastor Search Committees proceed through the process.

1. After reviewing G-14.0501e, the Session consults with the Committee on Ministry seeking concurrence that there is a need for designated ministerial services. Situations where a designated pastor or associate pastor may be appropriate are those where particular pastoral skills are needed to address particular congregational needs. These may include sensitive situations, often after a crisis or conflicted situation, in a redeveloping church situation; testing a new strategy for the parish; or to assess the viability of a new position.
2. The Committee on Ministry must recommend that Presbytery establish the designated position if it is new, or concur with the recommendation to change to a designated position if a vacancy is being filled. This action is contingent upon the congregation's approval of the designated position.
3. The Committee on Ministry grants permission to the Session to call a congregational meeting to elect a PNC to fill the designated position. AAEEEO Form #1 is completed.
4. The newly elected PNC works with materials provided by the Session to write the job description, person description and a Church Information Form, which is submitted to the Committee on Ministry and used by them to locate pastor candidates with the needed skills for the designated position. The CIF should clearly articulate 4-6 tasks that are critical for the congregation to accomplish during the designated term and the specific pastoral skills that will be needed to help accomplish those tasks.
5. Personal Information Forms of all candidates for the designated position must be approved by the Committee on Ministry (G-14.0501e).

6. The PNC notifies Session and the Committee on Ministry when they are ready to recommend a candidate for the position. If the candidate is a member of another presbytery, an exam is arranged with the Committee on Ministry. Terms of the call and the length of the designated term (minimum of 2 years, maximum of 4 years) are negotiated between the PNC and the candidate for approval by the congregation.
7. Session calls a congregational meeting to approve the call to the candidate.
8. Congregation votes to approve the call on the terms presented.
9. Clerk of Session notifies the Committee on Ministry of the congregation's action and forwards the signed call papers to the Presbytery office. Members of the PNC will be asked to appear before the Committee on Ministry to prosecute the call. AAEO Form #2 is completed and reported.
10. Committee on Ministry votes to concur with the congregation's call and recommends that Presbytery approve.
11. Plans are approved for the ordination and/or installation of the designated pastor / associate pastor.
12. The Committee on Ministry, the designated pastor, and the Session will engage in an evaluation and discernment process beginning 6 months prior to the end of the designated period. The relationship may be extended for another term or, if there has been an open search process, converted to an installed pastoral relationship. If the term is not extended or converted, the position may be reclassified as an Interim position while a pastoral search process proceeds.

The Chair of the Committee on Ministry, as well as the COM liaison assigned to work with your PNC, and/or the COM Staff person, are available for consultation at any point throughout this process.