

# CHURCHES IN TRANSITION WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY OF BALTIMORE

The departure of a minister and the search for a new one is a stressful time in the life of any congregation. The Presbytery, through the Committee on Ministry, seeks an open and supportive partnership with the Church. The purpose of this partnership is to provide guidance during the period of transition and help in securing the best and most appropriate pastoral leadership for the future.

## PHASE 1: DISSOLUTION OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP

*During this period the pastoral relationship is dissolved.*

*The departing minister and the session follow these steps in approximately this sequence:*

Session, EP, COM Chair informed of a new call, retirement, or other change in status	Minister
Liaison appointed	COM
Meeting with Session	EP, COM Liaison
Phase One Document given to Clerk	
“Norms for a Healthy Transition”	
“Policy Regarding Former Pastors:/A General Statement of Underlying Principles” signed	
“Board of Pensions Issue” is explained.	
Congregational meeting date set to request Presbytery to dissolve the relationship	
Dissolution agreement approved by Session and Liaison	
Moderator of Session Appointed	COM Liaison
List of supply preachers and responsibility for maintenance of worship	COM Liaison
Session may request decision regarding the need for a Mission Study	
Session may begin the Interim Search Process (see Phase 2)	
Letter sent to the Congregation which includes the “Norms”	Minister
Congregational Meeting	
The request and terms of dissolution are approved	
Congregation told of the steps in calling a minister	COM Liaison
Pastoral relationship dissolved	COM/Presbytery
Celebrations of the ministry are held at both worship and at other times	Session
Member Change Form sent by minister	Minister
Exit Interview	COM Liaison

## PHASE 2: PREPARING FOR THE SEARCH

*During the period the session will be asked to accept greater responsibility for the ministry of the church, hire an Interim Minister, complete a Mission Study, elect Pastor Nominating Committee and create a Church Information Form.*

Second Meeting with Session	COM Liaison
Phase 2 Document given to Session	COM Liaison
Session encouraged to read about Interims and the Pastoral Call	
Decision made regarding Mission Study and when PNC may be formed	
An exemption from creating a Mission Study may be granted when the current Mission Study is less than three years old	
Set budget for PNC	
Interim Search Process Explained	
 Interim Search	
Interim Search Committee Created	Session      Interim
Minister Position Description created	Session
Receive three names of possible Interims	COM Liaison, EP
Session hires candidate recommended by Committee	Session
Approve Interim Minister contract and receive Presbytery approval	Session/COM
 Church's Mission and Ministry Study and Statement (if required)	
Session determines whether it or a Task Force will complete the study	Session
Study group contacts Associate Executive Presbyter regarding Percept Study	
Session and COM approves study	Session/Liaison
 Pastor Nominating Committee is formed	
COM Approval for PNC granted	COM Liaison
Recommendation on PNC size (7 is a good number)	Session
Date set for Congregation's Election of PNC	Session
Nominees for Committee solicited by church's Nominating Committee	Nominating
Congregation meets and elects PNC	Congregation
PNC Meets with COM representatives and elects leadership	PNC
Resources shared including:	
Searching for a Pastor in a Presbyterian Way	
On Calling a Pastor (PDS# 72214-03-004)	

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## PHASE 3: THE PNC SEARCHES FOR AND CALLS THE MINISTER

*During this period, the Pastor Nominating Committee will receive Personal Information Forms, evaluates candidates and issue a call to the finalist.*

First Meeting of Pastor Nominating Committee	
PNC organizes itself (Chair, corresponding and recording secretary)	PNC
Create email account for PNC	
Normal meeting date, time, and place determined	
Who will communicate with congregation and how often	
Work assignments for completing Church Information Form	
Issues Discussed by COM Liaison	COM Liaison
Phase 3 Document and other denominational resources	
Church Leadership Connection (demonstrate web site and matching process)	
Church Information Form	
Theological background of call discussed	
Need for worship, prayer, fellowship, and discernment discussed	
Use of internet and email and creation of mailbox for this purpose	
Importance of confidentiality expressed	
Describe Factoring system and compensation package	
Mission Study and Statement provided	Elder
Complete Church Information Form	PNC
Review with COM Liaison to set Factor for position	COM Liaison
Receive Feedback from COM regarding completed Form	COM Liaison
In consultation with Session develop compensation range for position	Session/Liaison
Seek Session approval of Church Information Form	PNC
Seek COM approval of Church Information Form	Interview Team
Posting Position	
Presbytery (Coordinator of Information Services) issues PIN	PNC
Church Information Form is put on the PCUSA Web site	PNC
Decision to advertise in church publications and Presbytery web site	PNC
The Search Begins	
<i>Review of PIF's</i> (Personal Information Form)	
Request Church Leadership Connection to do matching	PNC
Develop a process for reviewing submitted Personal Information Forms	PNC
Create process for reading and reviewing	
Develop filing system and system for acknowledging receipt of Forms	
Develop packets on the church that you will send to candidates	
Report status of search to Congregation	PNC
<i>Review of Sermon Tapes</i>	
Narrow the field of candidates	
Determine continuing interest of candidates	
Request sermon tapes from candidates that are of interest	
<i>Conduct Phone Interviews</i>	
Identify limited group of candidates that are of interest to the Committee	
Send packets of information about the church and community	PNC
Create standard list of questions to ask each candidate	PNC
Conduct phone interviews	PNC
Consider inviting Liaison to first phone interview to give feedback on process	
Conduct reference checks	PNC
Report status of search to Congregation	PNC
<i>Conduct Onsite Interviews</i>	
Identify up candidates that will be invited for onsite interviews	PNC
Request EP to do Governing Body Reference Checks	PNC/EP
Consider secondary reference checks after permission is granted by candidate	PNC
Create plan for interviews of candidates and questions that will be asked	PNC
Report status of search to Congregation	PNC

Invite remaining candidates to visit with the Committee	
Arrange for neutral pulpits to hear the person preach	COM Liaison
Conduct 1-2 day interviews	PNC
Consider if distance means that COM should interview candidate while present	PNC/Liaison
Call is Issued	
COM informed of the finalist	COM Liaison
PNC issues call to finalist	PNC
Presbytery Interview Team meets with finalist (PNC representatives attend meeting)	COM Liaison
Terms of Call and start date are negotiated	PNC
PNC meets with Session to inform them that a call has been issued and accepted	PNC
Terms of Call are agreed to by Session	PNC/Session
Date of Congregational meeting is set	Session/PNC
Candidate is introduced to the Congregation	
PNC sends our letter and/or brochure describing the candidate	PNC
Other opportunities to meet the candidate are agreed upon	PNC
Candidate conducts worship	PNC/Interim
Congregation meets and votes on the Candidate	Congregation
Call Form Signed by all parties following the meeting and sent to Stated Clerk	Moderator
Set date for Installation	
Interim minister has exit interviews	Session/ COM
Church Leadership Connection and other candidates informed of call	PNC
Call Forms sent to candidate's Presbytery	Stated Clerk
Welcome Letter 1 sent	EP

## **PHASE 4: THE NEW MINISTER JOINS THE CONGREGATION**

*During this period the congregation prepares for and then welcomes the new minister as they begin their new ministry together*

PNC Plans for welcome for new minister	
PNC agrees to gather periodically with the minister during the first year	PNC
PNC helps find and/or prepare housing for minister's arrival	PNC
PNC discusses how to help meet needs of children and spouse (if they exist)	PNC
PNC Secures Phase 4 Document	PNC
First Week	
One week with no obligations may be offered to reduce stress of moving into home/office	Session
Special worship and fellowship elements are designed for first Sunday	Session
Welcome Letter II sent and phone call	EP
First Month	
Date for installation is set and commission is created in consultation with COM	Minister
Presbytery welcome packet given at lunch with EP	EP
Service of Installation planned	Minister
Invitations sent to churches and posted on Presbytery web site	Minister
Minister introduced to Presbytery at next meeting	COM
Minister assigned support/mentor for one year	COM
Minister attends four welcoming events presented by COM	COM
PNC and Session Personnel Committee meets quarterly during first year to provide feedback	PNC/Session