

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS DURING VACANCY AND AFTER

(This page is designed to provide brief answers to frequently asked questions when pulpits are to become vacant, are vacant and when a pastor has been called. Complete information may be obtained from the liaison appointed by the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry or from the General Presbyter.)

WHEN PULPITS ARE TO BECOME VACANT

1. *Who should be notified when the pastor has announced his/her resignation?*
The General Presbyter.
2. *What happens next?*
Presbytery will appoint a moderator for your session and a liaison from the Committee on Ministry who will meet with your session. The liaison will be available to answer your questions about the process for finding an interim pastor or stated supply pastor.

WHEN PULPITS ARE VACANT

1. *Does the church have to pay Vacancy Dues to the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (USA)?*
Yes. You may access the Board of Pensions for complete information at www.pensions.org or by contacting your liaison or General Presbyter. (See COM Manual page F8)
2. *Who is responsible for securing someone to fill our pulpit?*
The Session or a committee of its choosing.
3. *What is the Approved Preaching List?*
A list of ministers, commissioned lay pastors and others who have been approved to preach in congregations in our presbytery.
4. *Where may I find a copy of the Approved Preaching List?*
The list may be accessed through the Presbytery's website or through your liaison.
5. *May we ask someone who is not on the Approved Preaching List to fill our pulpit?*
Yes. (See Policy on Pulpit Supply During Vacancy, COM Manual page F18)
6. *What is the approval process for someone to be placed on the Approved Preaching List?*
For applicants who are not members of Albany Presbytery, applicants must be interviewed, provide a statement of faith, discuss their methodology of sermon preparation and agree to a reference check (See COM Manual page B7)
7. *May a minister of another denomination fill our pulpit?*
Yes. However, the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry must first interview the applicant who must provide a statement of faith, discuss his/her methodology of sermon preparation and agree to a reference check by the Committee on Ministry.
8. *May a minister of another denomination celebrate the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper?*
It depends on the minister's denomination and approval must be obtained by the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry.
9. *May a member of our congregation fill the pulpit during the vacancy? Is there a limit to the number of times an individual may fill the pulpit during the vacancy?*
Yes. (See Book of Order G-6.0304 for duties of elders; COM Manual pages F18, F6 and F7)

10. *Is there a limit to the number of times an individual may fill the pulpit during the vacancy?*
Yes. (COM Manual pages F18, F6 and F7)
11. *May an elder of the congregation celebrate the Lord's Supper when there is no interim pastor or stated supply pastor?*
Usually not. However, there is a provision in the Book of Order that provides for that in specific cases with the approval of Presbytery through the Committee on Ministry.

WHEN A PASTOR HAS BEEN CALLED

1. *When should the Service of Ordination and/or Installation occur?*
The Call process is not completed until the ordination and/or installation occurs. Therefore, it is recommended that the service should be scheduled within the first 45 days of the pastorate. It is important to coordinate with the Moderator of Presbytery to ensure her/his availability to officiate. (See COM Manual pages A2 – 1-4)
2. *How is the Administrative Commission to ordain and/or install the pastor selected?*
The COM liaison will help the candidate in the process.
3. *Who should be included on the Administrative Commission to ordain and/or install the pastor?*
The membership of Administrative Commissions is determined by the Book of Order, Form of Government. The Commission must have seven members (4 elders and 3 ministers or the reverse) and not more than one of the elders from any one church. (See Book of Order G-9.0504b(3) and COM Manual pages A2 – 1 and F15 – 2)
4. *Do members of the Administrative Commission have to be members of Albany Presbytery?*
Yes. However, non-members may participate in the service. (See COM Manual pages F15 – 2 and A2 – 1-4)
5. *Should the COM liaison be included on the Administrative Commission to ordain and/or install the pastor?*
That has been the usual practice.