

Presbytery of Albany

Policy on Designated Pastor Positions

Preface (G-14.0501e)

A designated pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) is a minister of the 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 the vote of the congregation. The relationship shall be established by the presbytery. Such a pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) shall be nominated by the congregation's pastor nominating committee only from among those designated by the committee on ministry of the presbytery. The congregation and minister both must volunteer to be considered for a designated term relationship. Such a call may be established only with the prior concurrence of the committee on ministry of the presbytery. The terms of the call shall be approved by the presbytery. The minister shall be installed by the presbytery.

Policy

A session may seek approval by the committee on ministry for a designated pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor(s) as follows:

1. When the session is under care of an administrative commission.
2. When the session demonstrates that it has a need for a pastor, associate pastor or co-pastor(s) and it cannot predict adequate financial resources to compensate the individual(s) beyond a two-year period.
3. When other special circumstances warrant consideration by the committee on ministry, such as plans for a church to merge with another congregation, etc.

Process for the Designated Pastor Search

The presbytery's committee on ministry is the primary searching body for a designated pastor. Prior to any action by the committee on ministry, the church seeking a designated pastor shall gather data on its present condition and discern its future by engaging the congregation to examine and prepare a report on the following:

- Congregational identity
- Tasks of the church
- Organizational characteristics
- Pastoral roles and styles
- Worship
- Church programs
- Congregational participation
- Demographic information
- Finances
- Concerns

The church shall elect a pastor nominating committee who will then prepare a Church Information Form (CIF). The session and the committee on ministry shall approve the CIF. The committee on ministry will then use the CIF in the search process. The committee on ministry will complete the search and forward 3 – 5 of the “designated” Personal Information Forms to the church’s pastor nominating committee for selection of a designated pastor.

Activities During the Term of the Designated Pastor

The COM will initiate reviews with the designated pastor and session as follows:

1. After the first year.
2. Six months prior to the end of the term.

Options at the End of the Designated Pastor’s Term

Section G-14.0505e of the Book of Order allows for the designated pastor to become the installed pastor under the conditions as follows: “If there has been an open search process conducted by the committee on ministry and after two years of the designated pastor relationship, upon the concurrence of the committee on ministry, the designated pastor, and the session, acting in place of the pastor nominating committee for the single purpose of calling the designated pastor as pastor, a congregational meeting may be held to call the designated pastor as pastor. The session, with the concurrence of the committee on ministry, may call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee to conduct a full pastoral search or to prosecute the call to the designated pastor to become pastor. The action of the congregation shall be reported to the presbytery. If the congregational action is affirmative, the presbytery, after voting to approve the new pastoral relationship, shall install the designated pastor as pastor.”

If reasons for having a designated pastor at the church still exist at the end of the term, the session and the committee on ministry may choose, with the concurrence of the designated pastor, to renew the two to four-year term.