

Process for Pastoral Transition
Presbytery of St. Augustine
December 17, 2019

When Pastor Desires to Dissolve Relationship (Installed, Stated Supply, or Commissioned Ruling Elder):

1. The Pastor informs the Chair of the Member Preparation and Call Commission and the stated clerk.
2. The pastor informs session.
3. Pastor/session coordinate a communication to the congregation.
4. Once the announcement is made, an individual or small team designated by the commission will schedule a meeting with the session to discuss the process for church transition including options for pastoral service going forward.
5. The session calls a congregational meeting to approve dissolution of call.
6. Member Preparation and Call Commission votes to approve dissolution of call.
7. Commission representatives conduct exit interviews of pastor and session.

*See section below - "*When Pastor Retires.*"

Interim Pastor Process (Installed Solo or Head of Staff):

1. The church will call an interim pastor during the transition between installed pastors pursuant to a contract approved by the pastor, the session, and the commission. The interim pastor shall be accountable to the session and to the commission.

2. The interim shall have at least Week One of interim training from an approved organization and shall ordinarily transfer membership to the Presbytery of St. Augustine if not already a member.
3. Ordinarily the compensation for an interim pastor is between 80 and 100 percent of the compensation of the last installed pastor. In all cases the compensation for a full-time interim position must meet the presbytery minimum guidelines
4. The interim pastor will work with the session as it conducts a mission study appropriate to the particular congregation.
5. The interim pastor shall be a resource to a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) but ordinarily shall not be present at meetings after the initial orientation. The interim pastor shall not influence or interfere with the PNC's work.
6. The commission may make an exception to the interim pastor requirement by/when when special circumstances make it appropriate in light of the mission needs of the congregation. In order to demonstrate the exception, the session must propose to the commission a carefully considered alternative transition plan that the commission determines is well suited to the congregation's particular situation.
7. The interim pastor will provide at least quarterly updates to the commission.

Interim Pastor Process (Installed Associate)

The church will consult with the commission as to whether an interim associate pastor should be called after an installed associate pastor's relationship is dissolved.

Pastor Nominating Committee Process:

1. Before nominating a PNC, the session will make a written request for the commission's approval. The request shall be signed by the clerk of session and the moderator.
2. Ordinarily the church shall have conducted a mission study before the PNC is elected and will provide the study to the commission.
3. A PNC shall not be elected before the departing pastor leaves the position. The commission may make an exception when special circumstances make it appropriate in light of the mission needs of the congregation. In order to demonstrate the exception, the session must propose to the commission a carefully considered alternative transition plan that the commission determines is well suited to the congregation's particular situation.
4. The PNC will receive training and orientation from the stated clerk and a presbytery liaison assigned by the commission. Its work will reflect a spirit of inclusiveness and a genuine openness to pastoral leadership by men or women of all ages, races, and ethnicities.
5. The commission will support the PNC as it searches for a new stated supply pastor and will assist it with resources and communication regarding the open position.
6. Mindful of the strict confidentiality of its work, the PNC will provide regular updates to the session and the congregation.

Stated Supply and Commissioned Ruling Elder Process:

1. The commission will support the session as it searches for a new stated supply pastor and will assist with resources and communication regarding the open position (examples: presbytery classifieds, pulpit supply list, ideas on when to use the Church Leadership Connection).

2. When a candidate is found and agrees to the terms of call, the session shall present the candidate to the commission for approval and transfer of membership if applicable. The request from the session will include the proposed contract, which will use as an outline a form recommended by the commission.

When Pastor Retires:

1. Before announcing an upcoming retirement to the session and the congregation, the pastor is encouraged to communicate with the Board of Pensions and the chair of the commission and stated clerk.
2. The pastor should carefully consider when to share the retirement date, sharing first with the session and then with the congregation in a written communication appropriate to the circumstances.
3. The session is encouraged to establish a transition team that will help ensure a smooth process, including planning and recommending pastoral leadership after the date of retirement.
4. The commission will take action to approve the retirement on behalf of the commission.

Dissolving an Installed Position:

After dissolution of an installed pastor relationship, a congregation may determine that it can no longer support an installed position for financial reasons or otherwise. In that case, it should contact the chair of the commission and the stated clerk to discuss the process for confirmation by the congregation and approval by the commission. The commission will assist the congregation in determining other forms of pastoral leadership that will support the mission needs of the church.