

Clerks' Tip of the Month *Different Kinds of Pastors*



In doing the Session Records Reviews this year, I got a lot of questions concerning the new Salary Report Form and on the pastor's terms of call. I now realize that if, like me, you have been in one church for a long time and only had one type of pastor, you might not know that there are different types of pastors and different procedures for each type. In my case, my church has always had a called and installed pastor—so I didn't know about "stated supply" pastors. Now, because of my job as stated clerk, I do know—and I will let you in on the difference.

You have a called and installed pastor if your congregation elected a Pastor Nominating Committee to search for and bring someone to the congregation for election. The presbytery approves the call. The pastor is then installed by the presbytery at a special service at your church. The pastor's compensation is embodied in "terms of call" on which the congregation votes. The term of service is indefinite (except in the case of a "designated pastor" who could have, say, a one to three-year term). To end the pastorate, the presbytery "dissolves" the relationship, either upon the request of the congregation or the pastor or by presbytery action. Every year the congregation approves any change (or that there will be no change) in the terms of call at the annual meeting. The pastor is a member of the session and moderates the session.

Your church has a "temporary pastoral relationship" when your session contracts with a Minister of Word and Sacrament to be the pastor. Often this arrangement is called "stated supply." There is no PNC, no congregational vote, and no installation. The presbytery also approves the contract, which is for one year or less, but which is renewable. The contract approved by the session and presbytery provides that the pastor will moderate the session. But the pastor is not a member of the session. The pastoral relationship ends when the contract lapses and is not renewed.

Whether your congregation enjoys a permanent (called and installed) or a temporary (interim, transitional, short term, stated supply) pastoral relationship the presbytery via the Committee on Ministry approves the terms of call or the contract. In addition to the initial approval process, we also ask all churches to submit as a minimum, a Salary Report Form each year. In a given year, if the only change to the terms of call or the contract relates to compensation, only the Salary Report Form is required in the presbytery office. If there have been changes affecting duties, hours, or other matters, the terms of call or contract itself should be sent as well to the COM Administrator (cramm@thepresbytery.org) for approval at the time the session votes on a contract or the congregation votes on the terms of call.

If you have a tip you think others could use or a topic you would like information on, please let me know at scoe@thepresbytery.org.

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