

New Castle Presbytery Calling a Designated Pastor

Book of Order

G-2.0504a: Installed Pastoral Relationships

The installed pastoral relationships are pastor, co-pastor, and associate pastor. A teaching elder may be installed in a pastoral relationship for an indefinite period or for a designated term determined by the presbytery in consultation with the congregation and specified in the call.

Designated Pastor, Designated Co-Pastor, Designated Associate Pastor

A designated pastor is called and installed for a specified term of not less than 2 years nor more than 4 years. Candidates for the position of Designated Pastor may be provided to the congregation's Pastor Nominating Committee by the Committee on Ministry. In consultation with the Committee on Ministry a congregation may: 1) renew the relationship for another term, 2) call the Designated Pastor as Pastor, or 3) dissolve the relationship at the end of the term.

Process for Calling a Designated Pastor (or Associate Pastor)

Potential advantages are: shorter time line; commitment by congregation only for designated term. Potential disadvantage: fewer candidates to evaluate.

1. When a pastoral transition is announced, the Clerk of Session contacts the Committee on Ministry and Congregations (COMC). COMC will provide assistance during the process, including an orientation and consultation regarding options for future pastoral leadership. COMC will appoint liaisons to work with the congregation during the search process.
2. Possible reasons/rationale for calling a Designated Pastor/Designated Associate Pastor:
 - a. When the congregation needs to transform its future direction in ministry and transitional leadership is needed for longer than the typical Interim Pastorate.
 - b. When the session and COMC wonder if financial trends indicate that a full-time pastorate is still feasible for the congregation. The designated contract period permits the session and the designated pastor to work towards building sustainable financial health, but also permits termination of the pastorate at the end of the contract period if warranted without contracting severance responsibilities.
 - c. When the congregation needs to engage in transforming conflict and to develop new systems that are rooted in resilience and health.
3. If the Session discerns that the congregation will best be served by a Designated Pastor, it shall request that COMC concur with this determination. The Session shall also empower the church's nominating committee to recruit nominees for the DPNC.. If COMC approves, the Session shall call a congregational meeting for the purpose of educating the congregation about Designated Pastoral relationships and for the

congregation to vote on whether or not to proceed with calling a Designated Pastor and to elect a Designated Pastor Nominating Committee (DPNC or DAPNC)

4. The DPNC creates a Ministry Information Form (MIF) and a position description for a Designated Pastor. The MIF and position description are presented to Session for approval and then forwarded to COMC for final approval.
5. The DPNC reviews the PIFs, conducts interviews, and selects the candidate.
6. When the DPNC identifies a finalist to whom they wish to extend a call, the candidate shall meet with COMC for a suitability interview. If the way be clear, the DPNC can continue the process with the candidate, negotiating terms of call and securing the approval of COMC.
7. The DPNC then requests that Session call a congregational meeting to receive the report of the DPNC and to act on their recommendation.
8. On the day of the congregational meeting, the candidate shall preach for the congregation. Following worship, the congregation receives the report of the DPNC and votes. If the congregation elects the candidate, the Presbytery shall act on the call at its next meeting (or next COMC meeting), welcome the candidate, and arrange for a service of installation.
9. The call is for 2 to 4 years, after which time the congregation in consultation with COMC may choose to renew the relationship for another term, elect the Designated Pastor as Pastor, form a new search committee to seek a new pastor, or the position may be eliminated.
10. The designated pastorate can have a number of endings -- all of which can be appreciated as ways that God helps move congregations and pastors forward in faithfulness and service. Regardless of the outcome, the designated pastorate should end with expressions of appreciation for growth that has occurred during the transitional time.