

APPENDIX E

NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERY'S POLICY ON VALIDATED SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES

E.1001 General Definitions and Policies

The Book of Order, G-2.0503, provides for categories of membership for Ministers of Word and Sacrament within a presbytery. Further, G-2.0503(a) and G-3.0306 provide general criteria for validated ministries served by Minister of Word and Sacrament members of a presbytery. In accordance with these principles, New Castle Presbytery (THE PRESBYTERY or the Presbytery) has established the following general and specific requirements for validating the ministries of Minister of Word and Sacrament members who are not serving in pastoral positions related to a particular member congregation or are not members of the Presbytery staff. Hereafter such ministries are designated in this appendix as Specialized Ministry/Ministries and Minister of Word and Sacrament member(s) so serving as Specialized Minister(s).

In understanding the scope of validated Specialized Ministries, it should be noted that the Book of Order, G-3.0306, states that a presbytery may designate Ministers of Word and Sacrament to work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Such fields of work thus may also include, but are not limited to, pastoral counseling, campus ministry, service as missionaries or consultants, and other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church.

A Specialized Ministry in the Presbytery is to be carried out in accountability both to the Presbytery and to other organizations, agencies or institutions. Accountability to the Presbytery normally is achieved by the filing of a Specialized Minister's Report annually with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery and a periodic face-to-face interview with the Committee on Ministers and Congregations (COMC). Specialized Ministers who do not report their work annually or participate in the interview process may be re-designated by the COMC as at-large members of the Presbytery. Because of the requirement of "accountability to other organizations, agencies, or institutions," a Specialized Ministry request or report that does not clearly describe accountability to a supervisor, a board of directors, etc., will not be approved.

A Specialized Minister is to be a responsible participant in the life of the Presbytery and to participate in the life of a member congregation of the Presbytery (G-2.0503(a)). Parish associate relationships, where they exist, or similar relationships with member churches, are encouraged for Specialized Ministers, and Specialized Ministers are commended to the attention of pastors and sessions for positions of this type.

E.2001—The Process

An ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament who wishes to serve, or to be received, as a Minister of Word and Sacrament member of the Presbytery on the basis of her/his service in a Specialized (non-parish-based) Ministry shall communicate the same to the chairperson of the COMC. The chairperson or designate will then send a copy of the policy set forth in this appendix along with a request for a written explanation of how her/his proposed ministry meets the Presbytery's criteria for validation as a Specialized Ministry. This response will be referred to the COMC and appropriate Presbytery staff for consideration.

If the COMC declines to validate a proposed Specialized Ministry, or decides to withdraw an approval previously given, the Minister of Word and Sacrament may appeal the decision to the Presbytery. The Presbytery's decision will determine and settle the matter except for the right of the Minister of Word and Sacrament to access the judicial process of the PC(USA). A Minister of Word and Sacrament who has been authorized to undertake a particular Specialized Ministry may not take up a different Specialized Ministry without the Presbytery's approval given through the COMC.

If a Minister of Word and Sacrament engaged in a validated Specialized Ministry leaves that work, she/he is will automatically be designated as an at-large member of the Presbytery pending further changes. This is an action taken by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery and does not require any action by the COMC.

E.3001—Points of Information Regarding Specialized Ministries

Specialized Ministers are not required to be enrolled in the pension plan of the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA). A Specialized Minister who wishes to be so enrolled must be employed at least 20 hours per week and have the Presbytery's approval of the ministry. This information must be conveyed to the Board of Pensions in writing so that coverage can be obtained.

A Specialized Minister's compensation is not subject to approval by the COMC unless the minister is a staff member of a presbytery, a synod, or the General Assembly. Otherwise, a Specialized Minister not so engaged will be considered to be in a validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church (G.2.0503(a)).

Either the Specialized Minister or her/his employer may submit to the COMC a request for a portion of compensation as a housing allowance so that this portion may be considered for exclusion from income taxes.

E.4001—Criteria for Determining a Particular Specialized Ministry to be a Validated Ministry Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Church” (G-2.0503(a))

In order for a Specialized Ministry to meet the criteria for validation, it must meet one or more of the following requirements:

- Involve a mission project or other form of ministry
- Involve a chaplaincy
- Involve pastoral care in some form
- Involve pastoral counseling
- Involve pastoral education
- Involve health care (service(s))
- Involve a ministry related to a theological seminary acceptable to the Presbytery
- Be related to a domestic church-related organization other than the PC(USA)
- Be related to an international church-related organization

Additional criteria that may be considered for validation are:

- The ministry serves or aids others, enables the ministry of others, or otherwise relates to the service of people rather than the production of goods or products.
- The ministry is carried out with accountability for its characteristics, conduct and performance to a management committee, a board of directors, or other body or individual responsible for the overall results of the total program involved. The ministry that makes active and effective use of the Biblical and theological training required for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PC(USA).
- The ministry is of a nature and character such that it can be expected to meet the requirements of the Presbytery in terms of agreed-upon results or activities. To this end, a review of every Specialized Ministry will be conducted by the COMC on a yearly basis, and a face-to-face review with the COMC will be scheduled every three years.
- The ministry is one that will allow the Specialized Minister to participate actively in the life of a member congregation of the Presbytery or of a congregation in a denomination with which the PC(USA) is in correspondence.

- The ministry is one that will allow the Specialized Minister to participate in the life of the Presbytery.

E.4002—Committee on Ministers and Congregations Procedure for Validating Ministries Beyond the Jurisdiction of the Presbytery

- 1) Each year, in March, the COMC (via the Stated Clerk) will send a letter/form, together with a copy of the above criteria, to each Minister of Word and Sacrament member currently in a validated Specialized Ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the Presbytery. Each such member will be asked in what ways she/he continues to be in compliance with the policies of the Presbytery and whether or not she/he desires to continue in a position of “Validated Specialized Ministry beyond the Jurisdiction of New Castle Presbytery.” The written response will be due by April 30.
- 2) If a written response is received by the April 30 due date, a subcommittee of the COMC will review it and recommend to the full COMC by not later than the following September 30 whether or not to continue in active validated status the Specialized Minister working beyond the Presbytery’s jurisdiction. Every third year, the process will also include a face-to-face interview by a COMC subcommittee for each such Specialized Minister. The COMC will report to the Presbytery as appropriate on these matters.
- 3) If a written response is not received from a Specialized Minister by the April 30 due date, the COMC will notify the minister in writing of its intention to place her/him on the Presbytery’s roll of inactive Ministers of Word and Sacrament effective with the first stated Presbytery meeting of the following calendar year.

E. 4003—Criteria Not Met

If one or more of the above criteria cannot be met, a Specialized Minister working beyond the Presbytery’s jurisdiction should ask to be designated either as a member-at-large or as an inactive member of the Presbytery.

E.4004—Possible Removal from Office for Non-Compliance

The Book of Order, (G-2.0508), describes the consequences of failure by a Minister of Word and Sacrament to engage in validated ministry. It is further noted here that of Minister of Word and Sacrament members from ordered ministry is possible when such members working outside the jurisdiction of the Presbytery persist in non-compliance with its policies. Restoration to this ministry without a requirement for re-ordination may be possible in some circumstances. It is the intent of the COMC and the Presbytery not to be judgmental in any such cases, but rather to facilitate steps toward restoration