

Guidelines for Pastor's Retirement

New Castle Presbytery



Pastor's Work:

- In consultation with COMC and Connectional Presbyter, discuss retirement process & identify retirement date
- Notify Session, staff, and congregation
- Review Presbytery's Policy on Departing Pastors
- Resolve matters of loans or any other financial arrangements (if applicable)
- Complete plans to vacate manse (if applicable)
- Identify responsibilities which will need to be picked-up by church members or staff: e.g., opening & closing buildings, contacts with vendors and outside organizations, etc.
- Keep up-to-date with Board of Pensions, Social Security, etc.
- Do exit interview (with COMC liaison) and sign presbytery's "Covenant of Closure"

Session's Work:

- Invite COMC liaison and/or Connectional Presbyter to meet with Session to discuss the process of transitions in leadership, options for interim time, and Presbytery's Policy on Departing Pastors
- Plan celebration of ministry for retiring pastor and spouse/family (as applicable) ... [REMEMBER: pastor is retiring from ministry, not just from one congregation, therefore including info on previous congregations or ministry settings where the pastor has served is appropriate]
- Plan for time immediately following retirement of pastor:
 - Arrange pulpit supply and worship leadership
 - Identify duties to be assumed by church leadership (e.g., teaching, pastoral care, business and administrative responsibilities)
 - Provide for pastoral care, particularly for emergencies and crises (e.g., arrange with area minister; use elders/deacons on call; Stephen Ministers, etc.)
- Set-up regular communication system to keep members apprised of next steps and Session activities (e.g., explaining the Presbyterian process for calling a new pastor)
- Call for a congregational meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationship with the retiring pastor
- Explain to congregation the "boundaries" on departing pastors (ref. Presbytery's Policy on Departing Pastors)
- Sign the Presbytery's "Covenant of Closure"
- Make changes to the Board of Pensions "Benefits Connect" website regarding retiring pastor
- Work with the presbytery's COMC Liaison to plan next steps in the transition

Presbytery's Work:

- Provide Moderator for the congregational meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationship
- Concur with congregation's action to dissolve the pastoral relationship (through action of COMC).
- Appoint Moderator of Session (begins service upon retirement of pastor)
- COMC Liaison will support the Session through the transition process
- Plan recognition of retirement at an upcoming presbytery meeting