

-----Presbyterian Church be dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (USA)?” Ample time shall be provided for both speakers wanting dismissal and those wanting to stay with the PCUSA.

After discussion and prayer, a secret written ballot shall be taken on this question, the only choices being “Request dismissal” or “Do NOT request dismissal.”

If the vote is three-quarters (75%) of those active members present and voting vote to request dismissal, the request shall go to presbytery. If the vote fails, the commission will report this to the presbytery and offer suggestions on healing within the congregation.

If any member, present and voting, contests the regularity of the second meeting, he/she shall send the details of the allegation to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery, who shall convene the Permanent Judicial Commission to render a decision.

d. If the vote is to dismiss the commission shall immediately contact the Board of Trustees and offer its recommendation concerning THE CHURCH AND ITS PROPERTY, (G-8.000)

A full written report shall be submitted to the Coordinating Cabinet Moderator, Moderator of Presbytery, Stated Clerk of Presbytery and the Executive Presbyter within a week of the deciding vote.

#### CORINTHIANS 12: 12-13

CHRIST IS LIKE A SINGLE BODY, WHICH HAS MANY PARTS; IT IS STILL ONE BODY, EVEN THROUGH IT IS MADE UP OF DIFFERENT PARTS. IN THE SAME WAY ALL OF US, WHETHER JEWS OR GENTILES WHETHER SLAVES OR FREE, HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED INTO THE ONE BODY BY THE SAME SPIRIT, AND WE HAVE ALL BEEN GIVEN THE ONE SPIRIT TO DRINK

*Amended by substitution 11/27/07.*

#### **P-9 CRITERIA FOR VALIDATED MINISTRY WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY OF DETROIT**

Presbytery membership classifications include the following for ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are Continuing Members of Presbytery. (G-11.0406)

- A. **Active:** (G-11.0406a) Active members have been admitted to the Presbytery in accordance with G-11.0401 and engaged in a validated ministry that complies with criteria in G-11.0403 without exception,
- in service in a Presbyterian congregation
  - in other service of this church and honorably retired.

This status shall be reviewed every three years. An active member in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church whose ministry is validated shall have this status reviewed and renewed annually.

- B. **Members-at-Large:** (G-11.0406b; 0413) Members-at-large who have been previously admitted to the presbytery but without intentional abandonment of ministry are no longer engaged in an occupation that complies with all criteria in G-11.0403. This status shall be reviewed annually.

- C. **Inactive:** (G11.0406c; 11.0413) Inactive members are previously active members of

presbytery, voluntarily engaged in an occupation that does not comply with all the criteria in G-11.0403. This status shall be reviewed annually.

This position deals with the status of active membership of those who are engaged in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church. Such ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church must be validated by the presbytery.

In order for a ministry to be validated it must comply with all the criteria in G-11.0403 which are as follows:

- a. "The ministry on continuing members shall be in demonstrable conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order of this church." (G-11.0403a)

Comment:

A statement of Mission is essential in order for presbytery to determine if a particular ministry is in "conformity with the mission of God's people." Such a statement should specify what the presbytery sees as its mission within its geographic bounds and should clarify the types of ministries needed in order to accomplish this mission. This statement should be as comprehensive as possible; it should be flexible and dynamic, periodically assessed and modified as new concerns emerge or new human resources become available.

A particular work should not be ruled invalid simply because it is not funded by the presbytery nor does all involvement in validated mission projects mean that the person serving there will automatically be validated.

- b. "The ministry shall be one that serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others." (G-11.0403b)

Comment:

The primary thrust of the work being validated is toward serving people and enabling them to serve other peoples. Its primary thrust is not toward things, nor toward profit-making activities.

This does not mean that a person in a profit-making business cannot perform ministry, nor that a minister cannot be employed in a profit-making enterprise. The primary functions of one's work should relate to the service of people rather than the production of goods or of profits. The special gifts and training of the minister of Word and Sacrament that provide a theological perspective on the life of people must be used in a validated ministry.

- c. "The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. This will normally require the Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent and the completion of the requirements for ordination set forth in G-14.0202" (G-11.0403c)

Comment:

"Theologically informed fidelity to God's Word" will be evident in the ministry if it requires the ability to apply theological competence to such skills as communication, interpretation, or the care and nurture of a person's wholeness and growth. Key questions may be: Does the ministry relate God's Word to life experience, to faith and service? Does

the ministry gather persons for worship, support and study? If a proposed calling does not provide opportunity to articulate the Christian faith, questions should be raised as to whether it can be a validated ministry.

d. “The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery and to other organizations, agencies and institutions.” (G-11.0403d)

Comment:

Accountability implies that a member of presbytery is answerable to the presbytery for agreed-upon end results or activities in addition to the “character and conduct” of one’s ministry. It must be clear from the outset what is expected in the ministry. Accountability involves intentionality. It includes a performance review by the employer and provides support from presbytery, which enables the person to carry out the ministry with maximum effectiveness.

A person who is employed by a body other than the presbytery or a congregation will be accountable to an employer in ways which may not necessarily relate to the mission intention of that person or of the presbytery. Presbytery should ask that person to describe the specific ways in which his or her work contributes to the mission of presbytery. Both presbytery and the person need to evaluate the ministry on a regular basis.

It may be helpful for presbytery to assign this accountability and support relationship not only to COM but to another committee whose responsibilities related in some closer way to the work of the minister concerned. Presbytery could assign a colleague group or another minister to meet with these persons at least once a year to discuss their ministry.

It is inadequate for a presbytery to exercise its accountability relationship solely by collecting and reviewing annual report forms. At the very least, accountability to the presbytery should involve a face-to-face review of the ministry every three years.

The same criteria used for full-time ministers should be used in determining the validity of part-time ministers. Presbytery may validate ministries for which there is no compensation. While neither the amount of time spent in the particular ministry nor the amount of compensation should be prime considerations in applying the criteria for validation, a lack of compensation and large time demands can be a means of misusing people and abusing the system of validation.

e. “The ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation.” (G-11.0403e)

Comment:

Minimum standards for involvement in presbytery and congregations include the following:

- persons with validated ministries shall attend at least one presbytery meeting per year
- persons with validated ministries shall be encouraged to participate in the committee life of presbytery
- persons with validated ministries shall be available to moderate

- sessions and preach in congregations
- persons with validated ministries shall regularly participate in worship in a congregation.

If one or more of the criteria (a-e) cannot be met, the continuing member should ask to be designated either a member-at-large or an inactive member of presbytery. If presbytery is unwilling to grant this then the continuing member should seek release from the exercise of ordained office (G-11.0414) until he or she receives a call to ministry that fulfills all five criteria.

Ordinarily, the presbytery needs to be a formal party to any call involving a minister of Word and Sacrament. While this is obvious for those engaged in ministries within a congregation, in ministries beyond the jurisdiction of the church, such calling process is less evident.

Normally, the agency or employer will participate as a third party to the call. If the employer does not wish to be involved in the call or if the minister does not wish to approach the employer about this matter, a call can still be validated if the function to be performed meets the criteria in G-11.0403.

The comments are adapted from the 1994 GA handbook for Committee on Ministries. The Book of Order is the primary resource for the above position paper on Validated ministries that are beyond the jurisdiction of this church.

*Approved by Presbytery October 24, 1995*

## **P-10 STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

### **LIFE TOGETHER IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH: STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR ORDAINED OFFICERS IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

As an ordained officer in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made at my ordination, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
2. Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
3. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
4. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
5. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
6. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitative behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness, responsive to God's reconciling will.