Policies (Revised October 2009)

P-2.0100
SEXUAL CONTACT OR EXPLOITATION BY CLERGY (April 2002)

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains has established policies and procedures concerning sexual harassment and misconduct and to comply with the requirements of Chapter 148A of the Minnesota Statutes. This policy applies to all ministers who are seeking membership in the Presbytery or who have become members since August 1, 1986, or who have assumed new positions within the Presbytery since that date. A copy of these policies and procedures and Chapter 148A of the Minnesota Statutes is available upon request from the Presbytery office.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature if rejecting the conduct results in an adverse employment action, or submitting to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a condition of the target's employment, or the conduct unreasonably interferes with the target's work performance or creates an intimidating or hostile work environment.

Sexual Misconduct is a comprehensive term in the policy which includes but is not limited to child sexual abuse; sexual harassment; rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation; sexual malfeasance (sexual conduct within a ministerial, counselor with a client, lay employee with a church member, or presbytery staff person with a committee member who is a minister, elder or layperson); and sexual conduct (such as offensive, obscene or suggestive language or behavior; unacceptable visual conduct; unwelcome touching or fondling) that is injurious to the physical of emotional health of another.

Sexual harassment and misconduct should be reported to the minister and clerk of session at the church where it occurred. If the harassment or misconduct was perpetrated by a minister, report it to the Presbytery (either the Stated Clerk or presbytery executive) of which the minister is a member.

P-2.0200
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. Policy Statement

Scripture asserts that church professional leadership is a covenantal relationship which presumes the trustworthy exercise of power on behalf of those in our care. Ministry involves shared expectations that persons in position of religious leadership will use their skills and authority for the wholeness and well-being of others.

As God who called you is holy,
be holy yourselves in all your conduct.
. . . .
Tend the flock of God that is in your charge,
not under compulsion but willingly,
not for sordid gain but eagerly,
do not lord it over those in your charge
but be examples to the flock.
. . . .
Know that we who teach
shall be judged with greater strictness.

I Peter 1:15; 5:2; James 3:1 (NRSV)

It should be clear that in all interpersonal relationships the church professional is in a position of power based on trust. A betrayal of trust by the abuse of power is more than a personal tragedy for the alleged victim(s). It is also a personal tragedy for the offender. The church professional's position as a representative of God's love and care provides opportunity for misuse of this power while relating to the alleged victim(s). The betrayal is, then, an abuse of both persons' spiritual well-being as well as their sexual self.

The church professional's role provides the opportunity for a high level of trust and intimacy. Church professionals are responsible for their professional behavior and the emotional, spiritual, and physical protection of persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of authority. Breach of this protective relationship is improper and unethical. The mutual consent necessary for an appropriate sexual relationship is not possible in a context in which power is inherently unequal.

The high level of intimacy present in the relationship between church professionals and those whom they are serving provides the potential for sexual misconduct. Therefore, the purpose of the policy on sexual misconduct is to offer guidance in behavior that is appropriate, and to suggest procedures for accountability when allegations of misconduct are made as well as to assure appropriate care for all involved. This policy is not to police church professionals. A principle criterion for our work has been: Will the policy serve the church by guiding and enabling us to act for justice, healing, and restoration?

II. Purpose and Scope

1. Purpose

It is the purpose of this policy:

A. to define sexual misconduct in the Presbytery of Northern Plains;

B. to provide standards for behavior applicable to all members of the Presbytery of Northern Plains: its ministers, commissioned lay pastors, committee members, candidates, inquirers, volunteers, employees, or any other person carrying out the programs of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains;

C. to provide for measures to prevent the occurrence of sexual misconduct;

D. to provide the basis for policies to be adopted by church Sessions dealing with church members and non-ordained employees;

E. to have a system which provides for an expeditious, professional, confidential, and caring response in sexual misconduct situations;

F. to serve as a companion to the Book of Order but not to supercede any of its provisions.

2. Scope

The persons governed by this policy are all members of the Presbytery of Northern Plains: its ministers, commissioned lay pastors, committee members, candidates, inquirers, volunteers, employees, or any other person carrying out the programs of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

A. Particular Churches: This policy does not purport to regulate sexual conduct within the particular churches of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains. It is recommended that Sessions adopt policies similar to this one.

B. Child Protection: Because of the unique issues involved in monitoring youth and child activities, this policy is not intended to serve as a full child protection policy.

3. Other Policies and Procedures

This policy is to be interpreted and applied consistently with any and all other applicable policies of the Presbytery of Northern Plains, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and federal, state, and local law.

III. Definitions

1. Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct is a comprehensive term used in this policy to include, but not limited to:

A. **Child sexual abuse** includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child under the age of 18 and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person or any risque jokes, innuendo, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome casual touch, unwelcome and inappropriate hugs and kisses, and sexually suggestive pictures between an adult and a child, as deemed inappropriate by any reasonable adult. The behavior may, or may not, involve touching. (See sexual exploitation). Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether consented to by the child or not.

B. **Inappropriate Use of the Internet** to communicate with another to commit sexually abusive activity, including but not limited to sexual activities defined in this policy.

C. **Physical sexual contact** as defined respectively by North Dakota, Minnesota and Montana state law within a ministerial, professional, or employment relationship, or a relationship between church officers or volunteers and persons for whom they are responsible.

D. **Rape or sexual contact** by force, threat, intimidation or coercion.

E. **Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

(1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution.

(2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions influencing such individual, or,

(3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Lack of intent to harass is not a defense.

F. **Sexual Malfeasance** is sexual conduct within a ministerial relationship (e.g., clergy with anyone in or out of the church), counselor with a client, lay employee with a church member, presbytery staff person with a committee member who is a minister, elder, or layperson. Sexual conduct (such as offensive, obscene or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual conduct, unwelcome touching or fondling) that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another may include unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition is not meant to cover relationships between spouses, nor is it meant to restrict church professionals from having mutual, social, intimate, or marital relationships.

G. **Single Party Conduct** is that where no partner is involved, such as the use of computers, reproduction machinery or other office equipment belonging to a governing body. When discovered it could fall under this policy.

2. Presumed Consent

Presumed consent is the assertion that a particular act was between consenting adults. It may apply to relationships where there is no disparity of power, such as spouses or single adults functioning as peers or colleagues. Within this policy presumed consent does not apply between ministers and parishioners, supervisors and supervised, or with anyone involved with performance review, compensation, promotion or continued employment, even though the parties claim that a consensual agreement exists. The inherent imbalance of power between the minister and the lay person undermines the validity of such consent. If a minister and lay person wish to pursue a consensual romantic relationship, one or the other must change churches so that the professional relationship is no longer in place.

3. Presbytery Entities Involved in the Sexual Misconduct Cases

A. **Committee on Ministry** continues in it constitutional role as resource to ministers and congregations, particularly where pastoral vacancies occur. When appropriate, the Committee on Ministry is to facilitate the employment of interim leadership competent to manage any conflict associated with the sexual misconduct case. The Committee facilitates the relations between congregations, ministers, and the Presbytery, and resolves difficulties on behalf of the Presbytery when possible and expedient.

B. The **Executive Presbyter** maintains his or her role as resource to the Committee on Ministry. Under most circumstances the Executive Presbyter is the point of entry when an allegation of misconduct is made, and is to ensure that the proper steps are taken to bring the process to issue.

C. The **Pastoral Response Team** is a group of clergy and laity, from which panels of at least 3 persons shall be assigned to work with the person making the complaint, the accused and the affected governing body (in a congregation the Session) to make a preliminary intervention with affected parties. It has no judicial function, nor should it attempt to assume one. It shall assign an advocate to each of the parties. This team shall be responsible for the training of ministers and lay persons in the Presbytery in matters related to sexual misconduct, and shall take steps towards its prevention. Attendance at training sessions will be tracked and reported by the team.

D. The **Permanent Judicial Commission** is the continuing body elected by the Presbytery to conduct trials when an investigating committee files charges. The commission's structure and duties are described in D-5.000.

E. The **Special Investigating Committee** is a group appointed by the Presbytery Moderator in accordance with B-3.0100, whenever a written statement of offense is received by the Stated Clerk (D-10.0103). The Special Investigating Committee is charged, under the Rules of Discipline, with conducting a full investigation of an allegation of sexual misconduct, determining whether or not charges are to be filed, and prosecuting the case if there is one.

F. The **Stated Clerk** receives the initial complaint and notifies the Presbytery commissioners that a complaint has been received. The Clerk consults with the Executive Presbyter and the Committee on Ministry on whether the complaint warrants an administrative leave. (See Section G.3., below). The Clerk refers recommendations from the Special Investigating Committee to the Permanent Judicial Commission.

4. Others with Involvement and Needs

A. **Victims and Families**. The Presbytery, Session, and other entities will seek to ensure treatment and care of the alleged victims of sexual misconduct and their families. It has sometimes been the case that the victim or family is so angry and alienated from the Church that offers of help have been perceived as insincere attempts at a cover-up. If the victim or family at first refuses, the Church should continue to offer help. Above all, the Church should not act in a self-protective manner by ignoring the victims and their families.

Although the extent of the damage to the victims of sexual misconduct will vary from person to person, being influenced by such factors as the degree or severity of abuse, the age and emotional condition of the victim, personality, dynamics of the situation, and the importance of the religious faith, the Presbytery, Session, other entities, and response committee are to assume in all cases that the victim has been wounded by the experience.

B. **Congregations or Employing Entity.** The Presbytery, Session, entity, and response committee should be aware of the problems a congregation or entity may experience resulting from allegations of sexual misconduct, by a minster, employee, or volunteer. The allegations may polarize the congregation or organization, damage morale, and create serious internal problems. Efforts should be taken to recognize and identify the problems and heal the damage done to the congregation or organization.

C. **The Accused.** The Presbytery shall offer treatment and care for the accused and his/her family as well as alleged victims and families. If the accused is a minister, it is the responsibility of the Committee on Ministry (G-11.0501). It is important that representatives of the governing body or other entities do not make a presumption of guilt or over-react to reports of misconduct.

When a person is acquitted it is important for the governing body or entity to see that the acquittal is publicized as widely as possible, within their power to do it, when requested to do so by the accused; and deliberate efforts must be made to repair the damage done to the reputation, work, family and feelings of the acquitted.

D. **The Non-Victim Accuser**. In many cases, the non-victim accuser is the parent, guardian, or other advocate for a child who has been the victim of the sexual misconduct. Because of the child's minority status, an adult is requested to file the action on behalf of the child.

In cases where the victim is an adult, the non-victim accuser shall observe the following guidelines:

(1) For his or her own protection, the non-victim accuser should have something in writing from

the victim detailing the nature of the misconduct.

(2) The non-victim accuser should be certain that the victim is willing to come forward to testify if an action is filed.

(3) Some objective evidence should be available to substantiate the charges of sexual misconduct (e.g., medical test results, motel receipts, proof of repeated telephone calls, etc.). Otherwise, the victim and/or the non-victim accuser could be subject to a suit for filing a false charge that may damage a person's reputation and diminish his/her ability to obtain future employment. For this reason, it is not wise for staff of any governing body or entity to be the accuser unless that person is also the victim.

5. Additional Definitions

A. **Accused:** Person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made.

B. **Accuser**: The person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser and/or victim may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend or colleague of the victim may be the accuser whose information initiates an inquiry.

C. **Employee:** A comprehensive term covering individuals hired or called to work for governing bodies and entities of the Church for salary or wages.

D. **Mandated Reporter:** Described by state law as persons who are required to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, that come to their attention. Within the Presbytery, all persons covered by this policy have a duty to report suspected child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or Presbytery representative. State laws vary in defining "all persons having knowledge". Some states identify mandated reporters by specifying very limited lists of professions whose members are required to report.

E. **Persons Covered:** Includes presbytery members, officers, ministers, and nonmembers who are employees or volunteers under the supervision of the Presbytery, including those who are accused of sexual misconduct under circumstances in which (a) access to the accuser and/or victim is related to some form of service to or appointment by the Presbytery, or (b) sexual misconduct in a non-church related situation raises questions of character and effectiveness for the Church. (For example, this policy covers a non-member adult who sexually abuses a non-member teenager while 'helping out' on a presbytery-sponsored camping trip.)

F. **Sexual Exploitation:** Most often occurs in situations where one person abuses the power he/she has over another person, thereby violating the boundaries and trust implicit in the relationship. Sexual abuse can occur between equals.

G. **Volunteer:** Persons who provide services for the Presbytery, Session, and entities of the Church but do not receive any benefits or remuneration. Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other organizations. For the purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

IV. Preventive Actions

1. **Implementation**.

The Presbytery urges all sessions and related entities to establish policies, procedures, and practices related to sexual misconduct. The Presbytery will take appropriate steps to inform ministers, church members, employees, and volunteers of the standards of conduct and the procedures for effective response when receiving a report of sexual misconduct. The Presbytery will cooperate with secular authorities in the investigation and prosecution of violations of law.

In part, the strictures and procedures for responding to allegations of sexual misconduct are mandated by the *Book of Order*, such as the roles of the Committee on Ministry and the Investigating Committee. (See G-11.0502 and D-10.0200.) When child sexual abuse or other misconduct that violates criminal laws is alleged, the secular authorities will presumably take control of the investigation and disposition of charges against the accused. The Presbytery, however will make its own inquiry and enforce disciplinary procedures.

Response to complaints of sexual misconduct in the course of employment will be governed by the Presbytery's or Session's personnel policy. The same allegations may also result in charges filed against a church member or minister under the Rules of Discipline, and may lead to temporary or permanent removal from membership or office.

Implementation of this policy will require Presbytery to adopt educational programs that will aid in the prevention of sexual misconduct, and to provide training in pastoral and disciplinary procedures.

2. **Employment Practices**

A. **Pastors, Associate Pastors, Commissioned Lay Pastors and those in Temporary Pastoral Relationships**

Prior to the approval of pastoral, associate pastoral, commissioned lay pastor or temporary pastoral relationships, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains shall make written inquiries of the person's employers for the previous five years regarding any occurrence of illegal sexual contact as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 148A (See Appendix A.) . *This inquiry shall proceed in the following manner:*

(1) All candidates for such positions will be required to authorize release of information concerning occurrences of sexual contact and shall provide names and addresses of all employers for the previous five years. Failure to do so shall be understood as terminating the call or employment process.

(2) The Executive Presbyter shall send a letter of inquiry to all such employers along with a written response form. Inquiries shall ordinarily be sent to clerks of session of congregations or chief executive officers of other places of employment.

(3) The Executive Presbyter shall report the results of this inquiry to the Committee on Ministry.

a) If no illegal sexual contact is reported, it shall be noted in the minutes of the Committee on Ministry and the Committee shall proceed to process the call or appointment if the way is otherwise clear.

b) If illegal sexual contact is reported, the Committee on Ministry shall not proceed to process the call or appointment until further investigation demonstrates to the Committee's satisfaction that there are adequate safeguards to prevent a reoccurrence of such activity.

(4) Copies of all authorizations for release of information, inquiries, and responses shall be confidentially maintained by the Presbytery for at least five years.

B. Other Members of Presbytery

(1) The Presbytery of the Northern Plains shall not grant membership status to any person seeking to enter the Presbytery to assume responsibilities in a non-parish setting until it has conducted such an inquiry using the same procedure as above.

(2) Persons granted membership in the Presbytery without employment shall not seek employment as a "psychotherapist" as defined in Statute 148A until the Presbytery has conducted the required inquiry using the above procedure.

C. Candidates and Inquirers

The provisions stated above shall also apply to all Inquirers and Candidates who have been enrolled by Presbytery.

D. Responsibilities of Congregations

Congregations are reminded that they are potentially liable in the event that persons in its employ engage in certain forms of sexual contact with persons with whom they have been, or are, in a counseling relationship. The Presbytery will insure necessary inquiry for pastoral positions, but congregations who employ marriage and family therapists, mental health service providers, or other counselors are instructed to develop a policy whereby they will make inquiry of past employers of prospective employees, as required by M.S.A. Chapter 148A.

V. Procedures and Implementation

1. Response Procedures

A. Initial Report Procedures

Allegations of sexual misconduct are made in variety of ways. It is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand how allegations of incidents are to be processed.

An accuser may report alleged sexual misconduct to any of the following:

(1) the pastor of the accuser’s church or the accused’s church;
(2) a member of the Committee on Ministry;
(3) the Executive Presbyter;
(4) the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery

The first person to learn of alleged sexual misconduct must take the allegations seriously and confidentially. This person shall complete the Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct (Exhibit A.) The report shall be delivered to and called to the attention of the Stated Clerk of the

Presbytery.

B. **Pastoral Response Team Definition**

See Section III.3.C., above.

C. **Presbytery Judicial Response**

Immediately upon receipt of the Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct, the Clerk shall inform the Executive Presbyter and COM Chair, and an Investigating Committee (I.C.) shall be appointed as set forth in the Presbytery Bylaws (B-3.0100).

The I.C. must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations, having received orientation by the Stated Clerk, as delay may cause further harm to all parties involved. The I.C. will conduct a thorough investigation as called for in D-10.0200.

Administrative Leave for the accused shall be evaluated, and recommended when appropriate by the I.C. to the Stated Clerk, Executive Presbyter and Chair of COM, who together shall determine and take appropriate action. If administrative leave is deemed appropriate, the COM shall immediately begin work with the session and congregation. If the allegation involves alleged sexual abuse toward any person under the age of eighteen, or who it is alleged lacked the mental capacity to consent, the Stated Clerk shall immediately communicate such allegation to the permanent judicial commission (PJC). The PJC shall make the determination regarding administrative leave in accordance with D-10.0106.

2. The Role of the Pastoral Response Team

A. When the Pastoral Response Team is first notified of an accusation, it shall coordinate pastoral care as needed for the accuser/victim(s), the accused, their families, the congregation, and all other involved parties. The Pastoral Response Team's responsibilities are to:

(1) notify the affected parties of the Pastoral Response Team's role;
(2) confirm that civil authorities have been notified, when appropriate;
(3) access the needs of the affected parties, congregations, entities, agencies and governing bodies, including the need for advocates and/or an attorney or counsel.

(a) The Accuser/Victim(s): At least two persons from the Pastoral Response Team will meet with the accuser/victim(s) and their family to listen to their concerns and ascertain their needs. The Pastoral Response Team members' role is to help clarify options for the accuser/victim(s) so they may decide for themselves what they will choose to do, as well as make available to the accuser/victim a list of counseling resources.
(b) The Accused: The Pastoral Response Team, through its moderator, shall consult with the Executive Presbyter and his or her designee, to determine what support and resources should be offered to the accused. The Executive Presbyter or his or her designee will offer to arrange for at least two persons from the Pastoral Response Team to provide support, as well as make available to the accused a list of counseling resources, if requested.
(c) The Congregation: When a congregation is involved, the Pastoral Response Team, in consultation with the Committee on Ministry and the Executive Presbyter or his/or her designee, shall determine if it would be helpful to offer the congregation support

and services. When appropriate, members of the Pastoral Response Team may be called upon to meet with the Session to advise the congregation on the kind of support and resources that are available and to help the Session plan a response to the situation.

(d) Resources: The Pastoral Response Team will identify the resources available for professional counseling. If the victim and /or the accused do not have insurance and are unable to assume the costs of counseling, the Presbytery shall accept responsibility for payment of counseling fees, for a reasonable time, up to a maximum of one year.

B. At no time will there be only one person in possession of knowledge of any matters pertaining to a case. At least two members of the Pastoral Response Team will be present when meeting with the accuser, victim, accused, or witnesses. Such consultations shall always include at least one person who is of the same gender as the person being interviewed.

C. Members of the Pastoral Response Team will make reasonable efforts to guard the privacy of persons involved. Material information will be made available only to authorized persons on a need-to-know basis.

D. Should the accuser choose to file a complaint as defined in this policy, the Pastoral Response Team ceases to function in the case, other than to listen and counsel on the initiative of the parties involved.

E. Should the accuser refuse to file a complaint, the Pastoral Response Team is to continue in a supportive role with the various parties through their advocates.

3. The Role of the Special Investigating Committee

A. The Special Investigating Committee is charged, under the Rules of Discipline, with conducting an inquiry to determine whether charges should be filed (D-10.0201).

B. The Special Investigating Committee is appointed by the Moderator of Presbytery, in consultation with the Stated Clerk and the Executive Presbyter, for that particular case.

C. The Special Investigating Committee will provide the accused with a copy of the statement of the alleged offense (D-10.0202a).

D. The Special Investigating Committee will determine whether sufficient grounds exist to bring the complaint to trial. If the committee determines that grounds exist, and they can reasonably be proved (D-10.0202g), the investigating committee will prosecute the case before the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission.

E. After the investigation is complete, the Special Investigating Committee, if appropriate, will initiate alternative forms of dispute resolution (D-10.0202h), or proceed to filing of charges (D-10.0302) and the prosecution of the case (D-10.0402).

4. Appeal Process

If the defense in a case alleges that grounds exist for an appeal (D-13.0106), the appeal shall be made to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Synod. During the appeal process, any level of censure invoked by the Presbytery shall remain in force.

5. Unsupported Allegations

If the accused is acquitted of charges or if the investigating committee determines that the allegations are unsupported by evidence, the Executive Presbyter and his or her designee will consult with the accused to decide how best to repair any damage that may have been done to the reputation of the accused. If an allegation is found to have been submitted maliciously or without grounds, the accuser may be named and disciplinary action may be initiated. The Special Investigating Committee and the Pastoral Response Team should encourage the accused to file a 'request for vindication' under D-9.0000.

6. Additional Responsibilities of the Presbytery

A. Copies of this policy shall be provided to all ministers, ministerial candidates and inquirers, Certified and Commissioned Lay Pastors, and moderators of any of the Presbytery's entities and who shall be required to sign an acknowledgment of receipt. Such a signature constitutes an agreement by the signatory to abide by the policy and be governed by its terms.

B. The document shall be available on request to all church members and to the public.

C. All ministers, ministerial candidates and inquirers, Certified and Commissioned Lay Pastors, and moderators of any of the Presbytery's entities, and all employees of the Presbytery shall be required to attend a workshop offered by the Presbytery on the issues of sexual misconduct. All new clergy are required to attend a workshop no later than one year after employment. Persons who have taken training offered by other entities, such as another presbytery or synod, seminary or other institution, may submit proof of that training to satisfy this requirement. Youth overnight advisors/volunteers must receive training prior to spending the night with minors at Presbytery sponsored functions. The Pastoral Response Team or its designee will train all youth advisors/volunteers regarding this policy prior to overnight youth events.

D. Liability and insurance. The Presbytery shall periodically obtain from its insurance agents, confirmation that the liability insurance policy covers sexual misconduct liability for its programs and activities, if such coverage is available.

E. A Session or the Presbytery is constitutionally prohibited from granting a certificate of transfer to a member while an inquiry or charges are pending. The reasons for not granting a transfer may be communicated by the Clerk of Session or the Stated Clerk to the appropriate persons. Should a minister renounce jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) under G-6.0501, the Stated Clerk shall report to the governing body both the renunciation status of the matter at that time, including the name of the accused, the date and act of renunciation during an investigation or trial, and the charges filed, if any. Those actions shall end the Presbytery's disciplinary process. In the case of a renunciation, the Committee on Ministry shall make all reasonable efforts to provide pastoral care and justice to the accuser/victim and the congregation.

F. At the conclusion of a case, the records and files of all allegations and their disposition shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk as the designated custodian of all files concerning the case. No committee or its members shall keep copies of a file.

APPENDIX A
MINNESOTA STATUTES CHAPTER 148A

CHAPTER 148A ACTION FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION; PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

148A.01 DEFINITIONS

Subdivision 1. General The definitions in this section apply to sections 148A.01 to 148A.04, 148.05, and 148A.06

Subd. 2. **Emotionally dependent.** "Emotionally dependent" means that the nature of the patient's or former patient's emotional condition and the nature of the treatment provided by the psychotherapist are such that the psychotherapist knows or has reason to believe that the patient or former patient is unable to withhold consent to sexual contact by the psychotherapist.

Subd. 3. **Former patient.** "Former patient" means a person who was given psychotherapy within two years prior to sexual contact with the psychotherapist.

Subd. 4. **Patient.** "Patient" means a person who seeks or obtains psychotherapy.

Subd. 5. **Psychotherapist.** "Psychotherapist" means a physician, psychologist, nurse, chemical dependency counselor, social worker, member of the clergy, marriage and family therapist, mental health service provider, licensed professional counselor, or other person, whether or not licensed by the state, who performs or purports to perform psychotherapy.

Subd. 6. **Psychotherapy.** "Psychotherapy" means the professional treatment, assessment, or counseling of a mental or emotional illness, symptom, or condition.

Subd. 7. **Sexual contact.** "Sexual contact" means any of the following, whether or not occurring with the consent of a patient or former patient:

1. sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anal intercourse or any intrusion, however slight, into the genital or anal openings of the patient's or former patient's body by any part of the psychotherapist's body or by any object used by the psychotherapist for this purpose, or any intrusion, however slight, into the genital or anal openings of the psychotherapist's body by any part of the patient's or former patient's body or by any object used by the patient or former patient for this purpose, if agreed to by the psychotherapist;

2. kissing of, or the intentional touching by the psychotherapist of the patient's or former patient's genital

area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast or of the clothing covering any of these body parts;

3. kissing of, or the intentional touching by the patient or former patient of the psychotherapist's genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast or of the clothing covering any of these body parts if the psychotherapist agrees to the kissing or intentional touching.

"Sexual contact" includes requests by the psychotherapist for conduct described in clauses 1 to 3.

"Sexual contact" does not include conduct described in clause 1 or 2 that is a part of standard medical treatment of a patient.

Subd. 8. **Therapeutic deception.** "Therapeutic deception" means a representation by a psychotherapist that sexual contact with the psychotherapist is consistent with or part of the patient's or former patient's treatment.

148A.02 CAUSE OF ACTION FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.
A cause of action against a psychotherapist for sexual exploitation exists for a patient or former patient for injury caused by sexual contact with the psychotherapist, if the sexual contact occurred:

1. during the period the patient was receiving psychotherapy from the psychotherapist; or

2. after the period the patient received psychotherapy from the psychotherapist if (a) the former patient was emotionally dependent on the psychotherapist; or (b) the sexual contact occurred by means of therapeutic deception.

The patient or former patient may recover damages from a psychotherapist who is found liable for sexual exploitation. It is not a defense to the action that sexual contact with a patient occurred outside a therapy or treatment session or that it occurred off the premises regularly used by the psychotherapist for therapy or treatment sessions.

148A.03 LIABILITY OF EMPLOYER.
a. An employer of a psychotherapist may be liable under section 148A.02 if:

1. the employer fails or refuses to take reasonable action when the employer knows or has reason to know that the psychotherapist engaged in sexual contact with the plaintiff or any other patient or former patient of the psychotherapist; or

2. the employer fails or refuses to make inquiries of an employer or former employer, whose name and address have been disclosed to the employer and who employed the psychotherapist as a psychotherapist within the last five years, concerning the occurrence of sexual contacts by the psychotherapist with patients or former patients of the psychotherapist.

b. An employer or former employer of a psychotherapist may be liable under section 148A.02 if the employer or former employer:

1. knows of the occurrence of sexual contact by the psychotherapist with patients or former patients of the psychotherapist;

2. receives a specific written request by another employer or prospective employer of the psychotherapist, engaged in the business of psychotherapy, concerning the existence or nature of the sexual contact; and

3. fails or refuses to disclose the occurrence of the sexual contacts.

c. An employer or former employer may be liable under section 148A.02 only to the extent that the failure or refusal to take any action required by paragraph (a) or (b) was a proximate and actual cause of any damages sustained.

d. No cause of action arises, nor may a licensing board in this state take disciplinary action, against a psychotherapist's employer or former employer who in good faith complies with this section

APPENDIX B

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

For suspected child abuse occurring with the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, contact the local child protective services in your respective state. A website giving contact information for each state is: http://frcmo.org/reporting-child-abuse.htm.

APPENDIX C

ACCUSATION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Date of Report: ____________________ Date Received by Stated Clerk: ________________

1. ACCUSER INFORMATION (please print)

Name: ____

Address: ____

City: _____________________________________ State: ________ Zip: ___________________

Phone: ______ / ______ - _________

Church Membership: ____

Ordination: Elder _______ Deacon _______ Minister _______ CLP ________ Other ________

Currently serving: Yes: _______ No: _______

2. ALLEGED VICTIM INFORMATION (if different from accuser) (please print)

Name: ____

Address: ____

City: _____________________________________ State: ________ Zip: ___________________

Phone: ______ / ______ - _________

Church Membership: ____

Ordination: Elder _______ Deacon _______ Minister _______ CLP ________ Other ________

Currently serving: Yes: _______ No: _______

3. ACCUSED INFORMATION

Name: ____

Address: ____

City: _____________________________________ State: ________ Zip: ___________________

Phone: ______ / ______ - _________

Church Membership: ____

Position: Elder _______ Deacon _______ Minister _______ CLP ________ Other ________

Presbytery Staff:______ Presbytery Volunteer ______

4. ALLEGATION

Being as specific as possible, please list incident(s) of sexual misconduct, including date(s), time(s), and location(s). If more space is needed, please staple additional comments to this form.

5. POSSIBLE WITNESSES

Please list the name, address, and phone number of persons who may have information related to or pertinent to this accusation.

6. OTHER INFORMATION

Please identify any additional information that may be helpful to the investigation.

APPENDIX D

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I have received the Presbytery of Northern Plains Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures and acknowledge its contents.

Name: ____

Date: ____

Position(s): ____

____

I agree to abide by the standards of the Presbytery of Northern Plains Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures as long as I remain a minister, ministerial candidate or inquirer, certified or commissioned lay pastor, employee, volunteer, or work in a position carrying out programs of the Presbytery of Northern Plains.

P-3.0500
PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES STATEMENT (Jan 1980)

I. STYLE OF THE PRESBYTERY PERSONNEL SYSTEM

The basic style of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains personnel system is based on a commitment to use the full human resources available. It reflects a management style that is supportive, seeking to secure and maintain the cooperation of all staff who perform certain Presbytery functions. It is a style of shared rights, responsibilities, and accountability.

A. EMPLOYER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

a. to establish basic work goals consonant with the purpose of the Presbytery;
b. to establish an overall structure designed to best accomplish the basic goals as best it can;
c. to establish and administer a personnel system which can meet the personnel needs of the structure;
d. to establish position descriptions and qualifications for particular functions and determine who is qualified and/or qualifiable to perform such functions;
e. to establish and administer processes for compensation, career development, benefits, working conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, and other phases of employment;
f. to expect employees to be productive in their assigned functions;
g. to exercise suitable discipline.

RESPONSIBILITIES

a. to be faithful to the purpose of the organization;
b. to provide opportunity for employee participation in the development and administration of the personnel system allowing adequate time during the regular working hours for such participation;
c. to assure that policies and administration of the personnel system are consonant with the rights of the employees and are supportive of their career objectives;
d. to provide Equal Opportunity and fair employment practices for all employees in all aspects of every phase of the personnel system and to implement an Affirmative Action Program;
e. to provide adequate and equitable compensation to employees;
f. to assist the employees in meeting their career goals and objective;
g. to conduct for all employees regular performance reviews and evaluations which relate their work objectives to goals of the Presbytery and which give them an opportunity to participate in evaluating their own performance in relation to these objectives;
h. to provide benefits and working conditions for the general welfare and well being of all employees in an equitable manner;
i. to establish and maintain open communication with employees on matters concerning their welfare and the Presbytery's interests so that the formulation of personnel policies, procedures and practices is a responsibility in which all levels of management and employee representatives may cooperate;
j. to establish and administer a process which provides for the hearing and resolution of complaints and grievances.

B. EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

a. to receive adequate information from which to develop an understanding of one's role and function in the total structure of the Presbytery;
b. to receive regular information on the quality of one's performance;
c. to have as much control as possible over one's own career development;
d. to be kept informed of proposed changes in personnel policies and procedures in order to provide input into the process;
e. to participate in establishing personnel policies;
f. to participate in the administration of personnel policies; where appropriate, to insure objectivity and fairness (e.g. grievance procedures, job classifications, performance review and evaluation);
g. to have working conditions that promote the general welfare and encourage productivity;
h. to receive adequate compensation and other benefits under a fair and open process.

RESPONSIBILITIES

a. to give one's best possible performance in one's assigned functions;
b. to provide requested representation to, and to participate fully in, any committee or group on which employees are given representation;
c. to see that employee opinion is sought and presented to any appropriate forum dealing with the personnel system;

d. to give adequate time and thought to the input which is provided to such forums;
e. to understand their roles and functions in the context of the goals of the Presbytery;
f. to honor their commitment to goals and objectives agreed upon by their participation in the personnel system.

II. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESBYTERY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

To administer an Affirmative Action plan for Equal Employment Opportunity.

B. COMPENSATION

To administer a process of compensation wherein the individual employee's compensation is determined on the basis of a system of job evaluation and classification, uniform and equitable salary scales, and increments determined in light of an annual performance review.

C. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

To administer a process wherein authorized expenses incurred by employees in the performance of their work assignments are reimbursed in an adequate and uniform manner utilizing a voucher system.

D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

To administer a process of career development which affords employees the opportunity for acquiring new skills/knowledge, and/or refining of old skills/knowledge, consonant with the need of the Presbytery.

E. BENEFITS
To provide benefits to satisfy the needs of employees for medical services and insurance, pension coverage, regular vacation, and regular and special leaves, as long as the needs are consonant with the goals and financial capacity of the Presbytery.

F. WORKING CONDITIONS
To establish and administer a process wherein the employees is assured of equitable working hours, necessary equipment to perform tasks, and pleasant working conditions, as long as such are compatible with the goals and financial capacity of the Presbytery.

G. GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS
To administer a process that will ensure all employees a fair and equitable opportunity, including the right to choose an advocate, for the hearing and resolution of misunderstandings and grievances that may arise in the administration of the total personnel system.

H. PERSONNEL MANUAL
Employees shall be given a Presbytery Manual of Operations which shall contain staff rationale, position descriptions, names of persons on the personnel committee, personnel policies, and any other documents pertinent to employment.

III. PERSONNEL POLICIES

A. BASIC POLICIES

1. DETERMINATION OF PERSONNEL GUIDELINES AND POLICY

Personnel policies are determined by the Presbytery Council upon recommendation by the Presbytery

Personnel Committee after they have been reviewed by the Council on Administrative Services.

2. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Presbytery is committed to fair employment practices and Equal Employment Opportunity for all employees in accordance with the Presbytery AAEEO policy, the Form of Government, policies of the General Assembly, and in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of1964 and 1968, the Equal Employment Act of1972, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, together with any state laws that may apply to the Presbytery as an employer.

B. EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES, TERMINOLOGY, AND PROCEDURES

1. EMPLOYER

The legal corporate employer of all Presbytery staff is the Presbytery of the Northern Plains of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a legal corporation of the State of North Dakota. The Presbytery staff shall include all employees of the Presbytery.

2. EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT CATEGORIES

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act there are exempt and non-exempt positions:

Non-exempt: Persons employed in non-exempt positions shall be paid overtime wages for hours worked in excess of 40 hours a week. Overtime pay is at the rate of one-and-a-half times the regular hourly rate. Compensatory time lieu of overtime pay, with the current pay period.

Exempt: Persons employed in exempt positions are not paid overtime wages for hours worked in excess of 40 hours a week. They are expected to manage their schedules so that they can have a minimum of one day off each week.

3. **ORDAINED CLERGY**
In accordance with Federal and State statutes and Church Policy, all ordained clergy are considered self-employed persons (exempt) engaged in the exercise of their ministry, and are not subject to withholding for certain taxes, nor are they covered under Unemployment Insurance. They are, however, included in all other policies which apply to "employees".

4. **ELECTED STAFF**
All exempt staff shall be elected to office in accordance with the provisions of the Form of Government (G-9.0007).

5. **EMPLOYMENT OF NON-EXEMPT STAFF**
Non-exempt staff are employed by the Executive Presbyter upon authorization by the Presbytery Personnel Committee.

C. TENURE

1. **FOR ELECTED STAFF**
Election is for an indefinite period. It is understood that in addition to the annual performance review and evaluation, all elected staff shall be subject to a comprehensive review and evaluation at least every five years.

2. **FOR NON-EXEMPT STAFF**
Non-exempt staff shall serve for an indefinite period, and shall receive an annual performance review and evaluation.

D. POSITIONS WITH THE PRESBYTERY

1. **POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**
A position description, subject to periodic review, shall be required for each exempt position. The position description will be in accordance with guidelines established by the Council on Administrative Services. Position descriptions will be provided for non-exempt positions.

2. **VALIDATION OF POSITION**
All new and vacant exempt positions shall be validated by the Presbytery Council.

3. **EVALUATION OF POSITIONS (FACTORING)**
All exempt positions shall be evaluated and factored by the Presbytery Personnel Committee, using those resources available from the Synod and General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

   Non-exempt positions will be evaluated and factored by the Presbytery Personnel Committee.

4. **MODIFICATION OF WORK WITHIN A POSITION DESCRIPTION**
In order to enable employees to make use of their skills and to increase their potential abilities, position descriptions or titles may be modified by mutual agreement between the

Presbytery and the employee.

E. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

1. FOR ELECTED STAFF

Exempt staff shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of the Form of Government (G-9.0700), and the Affirmative Action program of the Presbytery.

2. FOR ALL OTHER STAFF

The Executive Presbyter will actively seek to fill positions in keeping with the Affirmative Action Program of the Presbytery.

F. PROBATIONARY EMPLOYMENT

The first three months of employment of non-exempt personnel is a probationary or trial period giving the employee and his/her supervisor an opportunity to evaluate interest and qualifications for the position under actual working conditions. Prior to permanent employment a performance appraisal is prepared and discussed with the employee by his/her supervisor. When all requirements for regular employment are completed satisfactorily, regular employment shall begin with the next pay period.

G. TERMS OF CONTRACT AND APPOINTMENT

All exempt staff shall be provided with a written "call." In compliance with the Forms of Government (G-11.0410), the call of a minister shall be submitted to the minister's Presbytery for approval.

All non-exempt staff shall be provided with a letter containing title of position, date of employment, salary and benefits, a copy of which is to be signed by the employee and returned to the Executive Presbyter.

H. SALARY ADMINISTRATION

1. SALARY POLICIES

Salaries for exempt positions will be determined on the basis of a uniform points-factoring position evaluation and classification system. Non-exempt positions will be determined on the basis of a classification system that is consistent with systems used in areas where the person is employed.

The Presbytery is committed to salary administration principles which will provide fair pay for the work performed; incentive for personal achievement and growth; equity of payment for positions of relative responsibilities; flexibility to meet the many changes in organization, functions, positions, and personnel over a period of time. Exempt salary levels will be consistent with salaries paid by not-for-profit organizations in areas where they are employed.

An incumbent in any position included in the plan will receive a salary that falls within the indicated salary range for the classification which his/her position is assigned. Initial placement within a salary range should reflect a judgement of the qualifications and experience of the appointee relative to the position requirements. An employee will normally start at a salary no higher than the mid-point of the range for the position which he/she is employed.

2. ADJUSTMENT OF SALARY SCALES

Salary scales for non-exempt staff will be reviewed at least once a year. The Commerce and Industry Index of the city in which the employee works will be the basis for determining salary scales for non-exempt salary grades and the seventy-fifth percentile as the top of the range.

Salary scales for exempt staff are reviewed annually, based upon information on cost of living changes, salary information on pastors in the Presbytery from the Board of Pensions, Compensation Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), salaries in other presbyteries and not-for-profit organizations in cities where the employee works, and in other nearby metropolitan areas.

3. SALARY REVIEW AND INCREMENTS

Salary adjustments are normally given to all employees at the same time.

An increase may be given when an individual has improved his/her performance or has consistently maintained a satisfactory level of performance.

Long service alone is not considered a valid reason for an increase. If performance is normally good, an employee can reach the midpoint of his/her salary range. Higher levels of salary ranges are reserved for those whose performance is outstanding over a period of many years.

In accordance with the Form of Government (G-11.04lO), changes in terms of call for an ordained staff member must be approved by Presbytery before implementation.

4. AVAILABILITY OF SALARY INFORMATION

Information concerning the position evaluation and salary scale for each position will be confidential information of the Presbytery Personnel Committee and/or Presbytery Council. Employees are entitled to information on the salary range within which their positions fall. Exempt salaries are published annually in the statistics of General Assembly and the Presbytery.

5. MANSE ALLOWANCE

The Internal Revenue Code provides that a minister can exclude from gross income for income tax purposes any rental allowance paid as part of his/her compensation to the extent that he/she used it for renting or providing a home.

In order to satisfy the requirement of the Internal Revenue Service relative to the Housing or Manse Allowance for ordained ministers, it is understood that of the total amount of compensation paid to an ordained minister, a percentage of the salary is designated as a manse or housing allowance. This designation must be done prior to the calendar year in which the salary/housing allowance is to be paid.

If the amount which is designated for manse allowance is not fully used, it is the recipient's responsibility to report the balance to the Internal Revenue Service as taxable income.

6. HONORARIA

All honoraria received having to do directly with the work and program of the Presbytery, should be turned into the Presbytery.

Honoraria received for services not related to the position description may be retained by the Presbytery person in consultation with the Executive Presbyter.

7. SERVICES TO AN EMPLOYER OTHER THAN PRESBYTERY

Exempt staff who seek employment outside of regular position responsibilities are expected to consult with the Executive Presbyter.

I. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

1. PRESBYTERY'S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM

All employees will be given an annual opportunity to review and determine their short and long term career goals and objectives as a part of the Presbytery's Affirmative Action program. Such an opportunity will include at least the following:

a. A sharing of the employee's total career goals and objectives, and his/her career goals and objectives as an employee of the Presbytery.
b. A sharing of the Presbytery's goals and objectives within the context of the total mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.
c. A review and analysis of the employee's skills and knowledge in light of his/her current work assignment, and the Presbytery and the employee's goals and objectives.
d. An analysis of the employee's potential career opportunities within the structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbytery.
e. The development of possible career ladders for the employee.
f. An agreement by the employee and the Presbytery concerning short and long term goals and objectives.
g. A development of a projected program to help the employee develop new skills and knowledge, or refine old skills and knowledge, which would be helpful in achieving the agreed upon objectives.

2. ANNUAL STUDY LEAVE FOR EXEMPT STAFF

Up to two weeks annual study leave with pay and assistance in expenses may be granted within the following guidelines:

a. Study leave is not additional vacation but may be taken in conjunction with vacation.
b. Study leave is not automatic, but is directly related to career goals and objectives as well as the development of skills that are useful to the Presbytery. Therefore, it is granted only when clearly identified targets have been agreed upon for the particular study leave requested.
c. Satisfactory provision must be made to cover the employee's work.
d. Study leave, if granted, must be used within the period designated.
e. A report on the specific accomplishments of the study leave will be required.

3. EXTENDED STUDY LEAVE FOR EXEMPT STAFF

In order to enable employees with specific needs or opportunities to give extended study to subject areas which will contribute to the work of the Presbytery as well as their own technical or professional development, an extended study leave, with pay, may be granted by the Presbytery Council within the following criteria guidelines:

a. The employee must have completed two years continuous service with the Presbytery.
b. At least five years have elapsed from the time of any previous extended study leave, and at least one year from any previous two weeks study leave.
c. A detailed written plan of study, with clearly identified goals and with end-products clearly set forth, must be approved by the Executive Presbyter and the Personnel Committee of the Presbytery Council long enough in advance to be covered by the Presbytery's budget and staffing plans.

d. The maximum length of extended study leave will be four (4) months. This may be taken in conjunction with earned vacation with a particular year, but may not be combined with a two-weeks study leave.
e. The ongoing work of the particular position and the total Presbytery function will be primary factors in considering and granting of study leave.

4. STUDY LEAVE FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES
Under special circumstances, when it can be demonstrated to be for the Presbytery as well as for the employee, the Executive Presbyter may approve study leave for non-exempt staff in line with provisions for exempt staff.

J. ANNUAL/COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

1. EXEMPT STAFF
Review and evaluation of exempt staff shall take place in accordance with guidelines established by the Presbytery.

2. NON-EXEMPT STAFF
An annual performance review and evaluation will be conducted for non-exempt staff in accordance with provisions established by the Presbytery.

K. TERMINATION POLICIES FOR EXEMPT STAFF

1. PRINCIPLES

a. All conditions for separation shall be compatible with the provisions of the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
b. All matters regarding staff separation shall be reported in writing to the Council Committee on Personnel and to the Chairperson of the Presbytery Council. The reason(s) for staff leaving shall be stated in detail.
c. The separation process shall be considered incomplete until the appropriate council, or committee, of the hiring body acts upon it.
d. Immediate discharge for cause shall be made on the basis of substantial evidence. However, the discharge process should not be completed without providing the staff person with the opportunity to be heard by the body that will make the final decision regarding his/her discharge.
e. The record of events, facts, and discussions regarding the proposed discharge of a judicatory staff person shall be treated with strict confidentiality.
f. Provision should be made by the judicatories for staff to appeal separation decisions to the next higher judicatory. The steps of the appeal process shall be consonant with the appeal process outlined in the Rules of Discipline (D-13.0000).
g. Separation shall be operative in judicatories without discrimination based on race, color, sex national origin, age, and ordination status.

2. REASONS FOR SEPARATIONS

a. Resignation: Resignation may take place after one month's written notice to the Executive Presbyter with copies to the Personnel Committee and the Chairperson of Presbytery Council. When the Executive Presbyter resigns, the written notice shall be sent to the Personnel Committee with copies to the Chairperson of Presbytery Council and the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Staff will be paid the cash equivalent of the unused earned vacation at the official date of separation. No severance allowance will be provided. Staff members are urged not to consider resignation with a period of less than one year's employment. Resignations should not take place in less than one month's period. Staff who resign should make arrangement to leave the job from which they have resigned within three months unless special arrangements have been made with the Executive Presbyter and the Personnel Committee.

b. *Reduction of Force:* Separation because of the discontinuation of a project or retrenchment in budget, or for other circumstances arising out of no fault of the employee, is at the discretion of the judicatory. Written notice of such separation will come from the Council of the judicatory after consultation with the Personnel Committee. At least six months notice or pay in lieu of notice will be given to staff. Should reemployment take place before expiration of the notice period, salary payment will continue only to the actual date when reemployment is achieved. When notice is given, severance allowance will be given in relation to the length of continued service with the judicatory as follows:

Years of Service	Weeks of Severance Allowance
Less than 1	2
l but less than 4	4
4 but less than 5	6
5 and over	8*

*Plus a week's salary for each year over five years, to a maximum of twelve weeks.

c. *Suspension:* Suspension occurs following consultation with the person involved by his/her immediate supervisor. In the case of the Presbytery Staff, concurrence for suspension is required by the following persons: the Executive Presbyter, Chairperson of the Presbytery Personnel Committee, and the Chairperson of the Presbytery Council.

Following the suspension process, the next step is investigation of the facts that led to the suspension. The investigation should be under the aegis of Presbytery Council. The Council shall notify the suspended person of the right to appear before the Council, or representatives thereof, with our without advocate, in order to provide the Council with facts and to defend his/her position.

The third step is the decision by the Presbytery Council regarding extending the suspension, reinstating the suspended person, or separation for cause.

d. *Separation for Cause:* Separation for cause shall include but not be limited to: unsatisfactory; performance; insubordination; neglect in the case and use of Presbytery property and funds; unexcused absences and/or repeated tardiness; moral turpitude; violation of Presbytery Policy regarding Personnel Responsibilities.

Persons may be terminated for unsatisfactory performance when the following steps have been followed:

1) The person informed by the Personnel Committee that he/she is not performing in a satisfactory manner. Ways should be worked out to indicate how the person might proceed in order to improve performance. There should be a letter to the person, carbon copies to the Executive Presbyter and Presbytery Council indicating what was communicated to the person at the time when the Personnel Committee met with the person.
2) Three months after review there should be a progress interview. At that point, if the person is still not performing in a satisfactory manner, there should be agreement as to what the person must do in order to improve performance. There should be a

letter to the person after the progress interview indicating what was agreed upon, with carbon copies to the Executive Presbyter and Presbytery Council.

3) A staff person may be discharged for continued unsatisfactory performance three months after the progress interview during which his/her lack of acceptable performance was discussed. The Personnel Committee should meet with the person. A recommendation for separation should be made in accordance with the Bylaws (8-5.0403) for exempt staff.

L. TERMINATION POLICIES FOR NON-EXEMPT STAFF

The above termination policies for exempt staff in Section K will apply to non-exempt staff, except:

a. The Presbytery Council is not involved;
b. Action is taken by the Executive Presbyter or appropriate supervisor;
c. In separation for cause, notices must be given or pay in lieu of at least two (2) weeks.

M. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

For the purpose of this policy, a complaint or grievance is an alleged violation of an approved personnel policy or practice, or of an applicable State or Federal Law not adequately dealt with in these policies or practices. In order to deal promptly and fairly with all complaints or grievances, the following steps are to be taken.

1. PRELIMINARY COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Prior to filing a written grievance, several preliminary steps are to be taken:

a. The complaining party must first discuss his/her problem with his/her immediate supervisor;
b. If not satisfied with the supervisor's action, the complaining party is to approach the Executive Presbyter or Presbytery's Personnel Committee who will seek to resolve the issue in consultation with all parties involved.

2. FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If informal efforts to resolve a grievance have failed, a formal grievance may be filed by submitting a written statement to the Chairperson of the Presbytery Personnel Committee, with a copy to the Executive Presbyter and the person's supervisor. Formal grievances must be filed within forty-five (45) days of the alleged grievance.

a. The chairperson of the Presbytery Personnel Committee shall call a meeting of the Presbytery Personnel Committee which shall review the grievance with all parties concerned. It shall make a determination of the grievance.
b. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Presbytery Personnel Committee, the person may file an appeal within fifteen (15) days to Presbytery

   Council. The Council, in consultation with all parties concerned, shall make the final determination. It shall supply all parties concerned with its decision in writing.

3. RIGHT OF ADVOCACY

It is understood that the complaining party may arrange to have an advocate with him/her at all steps in the formal process.

4. WRITTEN RECORDS

A written record of all decisions arrived at in all meetings shall be kept.
Letters of decision from the Presbytery Personnel Committee of Presbytery Council shall contain provision for the complaining party to indicate his/her acceptance.

N. RETIREMENT

Retirement age for regular full-time employees is 70, to take effect by the end of the month in which that age is attained. At the discretion of the Executive Presbyter, retirement may be deferred to the end of the calendar year with concurrence by the Presbytery Personnel Committee and Presbytery Council. When Presbytery Council desires to continue the regular full-time employment of an individual beyond the year in which the 65th birthday occurs, Presbytery Council may grant permission for such continued employment on a year to year basis with the concurrence of the Council on Administrative Service.

0. DISABILITY

Disability is considered to be temporary separation due to physical or mental inability to function on the job. The decision to grant leave shall be made by the Personnel Committee in consultation with the Executive Presbyter. It shall be based upon the recommendation of a physician, or physicians, and subject to approval of Presbytery Council. Disability allowance shall be up to six (6) months. During the first three (3) months from the time of the affirmative decision the staff person will receive full salary. During the next three (3) months the person will receive one-half of the regular salary.

P. DEATH IN SERVICE

When the death of a member of the Presbytery Staff occurs, the spouse, or dependents, shall receive a separation allowance. The amount shall be the equivalent of the salary of the deceased for thirty days from time of death.

Q. BENEFITS

1. SOCIAL SECURITY

All personnel are covered by the Federal Old Age and Survivors Benefits Act (Social Security). The employee's share of the tax is withheld from the wages of non-ordained staff. Ordained staff are considered self-employed and taxes are not withheld, nor paid for them.

2. PENSION

All full-time employees who have completed a probationary period are enrolled in the Presbyterian Pension Plan for which dues are paid by the Presbytery. Non-ordained employees, not previously enrolled in a Pension Plan, are enrolled in a group plan provided by the Board of Pensions.

3. HEALTH INSURANCE

Major medical coverage is provided by the Presbyterian Pension Plan.

4. VACATION

A vacation with pay is provided for all permanent employees for rest, refreshment, and relaxation. Vacations are not cumulative, must be used within the calendar year, except, when special provisions has been made by the Presbytery Personnel Committee.

Full-time exempt employees are entitled to one full month (22 working days) vacation per year.

Full-time non-exempt employees are entitled to annual paid vacation computed on July 1 of each year, according to the following:

Years of Employment	Vacation Days
1-4 years	10 working days
5-9 years	15 working days
10 + years	22 working days
25 + years	27 working days

Vacation entitlement during the first year of employment will be pro-rated according to length of service as of July 1.

5. HOLIDAYS

There shall be nine (9) paid holidays per year: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and two other days to be designated by the Executive Presbyter at the beginning of each year.

6. SICK LEAVE

Permanent employees are entitled to up to 10 working days of sick leave of each calendar year, cumulative up to 90 days. Sick leave entitlement during the first year of employment will be pro-rated according to length of employment. At the time of termination of employment (either voluntary or involuntary) an employee shall have no claim for pay in lieu of sick leave.

7. WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

All employees in all locations are covered by the Worker's Compensation Law of the appropriate state.

8. ON-THE-JOB TRAVEL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All employees on Presbytery business are covered with travel accident insurance at General Assembly expense in an amount equal to three times their annual salary subject to a minimum principal sum benefit of $40,000 and a maximum principal sum benefit of $100,000.

9. OFF-THE-JOB DISABILITY BENEFITS INSURANCE

All employees are covered by a plan which is in conformity with the state off-the-job disability benefits program which provides temporary cash benefits to replace in part, wages lost due to loss of time because of injuries or illness that do not arise out of or in the course of employment. This becomes effective after using all accumulated sick leave.

Disability insurance benefits for permanent, total, and temporary disability are provided by the Presbyterian Pension Plan.

10. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

All non-ordained employees are covered by the state unemployment insurance, in accordance with the laws of the state in which they are employed.

11. LEAVES OF ABSENCE, WITH PAY

Leaves of absence, with pay, are provided under the following circumstances with approval by the Executive Presbyter:

-- For a regular training period of U. S. Armed Forces (up to two weeks leave);
-- For marriage of an employee who has been with the Presbytery for one year or longer (up to three days);
-- For personal or family emergencies or for other personal business which cannot be cared for outside of working hours (up to three days annually).

-- In addition to other benefits, a elected and non-exempt staff are entitled to parental leave in the period immediately preceding and/or following the arrival (birth, adoption, or guardianship) of a child/children as follows:
  a) The elected or non-exempt staff should normally apply for the leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child/children, specifying the amount of time desired.
  b) Up to six weeks of parental leave will be at full salary. Additional compensated leave may be negotiated. An additional two weeks is recommended for a woman who has delivered by Caesarean section.
     The leave may include a period in advance of the expected arrival of the child/children as recommended by the physician. Return to part-time employment with part-time compensation may be considered.
  c) The leave should normally be unbroken except for any period of absence for medical reasons.
  d) Those who take parental leave shall retain their full employment and all other rights pertaining to their employment.

12. LEAVES OF ABSENCE, WITHOUT PAY

Leaves of absence without pay may be provided under the following condition with the approval of the Executive Presbyter in consultation with the Presbytery Personnel Committee:

-- For military service of an employee who has been with the Presbytery for three months.

-- For other special reasons leave may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Presbyter in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

-- Upon return every effort will be made by the Presbytery to place the employee in a position with like seniority and status if it is not possible to hold the identical position open.

13. MOVING EXPENSES

Whenever an employee, whether by new employment or by transfer, is required to move his/her place of residence in order to carry out the duties of his/her position, the Presbytery will pay for the cost of packing & crating & moving, temporary storage, and insuring the employee's household goods, and personal effects not in excess of 12,000 pounds.
Transportation expenses for the employee and family will be paid to the new location by air (coach fare), rail, or automobile, or some reasonable combination thereof. In the event that travel is by automobile, reimbursement shall be made at the rate currently being paid by the Presbytery for work related travel, and shall cover one automobile with mileage computed by the most direct route.

House hunting expenses will be paid to the transfer site for the employee and spouse for one round-trip covering a period not to exceed three (3) days, in addition to travel lodging, and meals. In unusual circumstances, additional time may be made available upon authorization by the Executive Presbyter. Assistance will be provided by the Presbytery in house hunting.

Until the employee is established in his/her new residence, actual and reasonable living expenses of the employee at the new location will be paid, but not to exceed in the aggregate a sum equal to two-thirds of one month's salary.

14. LOSS INCURRED IN SELLING A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE OR TERMINATING A LEASE

Losses incurred in selling a principal residence or in terminating a lease whose term is in excess of ninety (90) days, will be paid to employees who are transferred, but not to new employees, as follows:

a. If a residence, the residence to be sold shall be first appraised by two responsible appraisers, one selected and paid for by the employee and one selected and paid for by the employer. If there is less than a 10% variance between the two, the two appraisers shall select a third appraiser, paid for by the Presbytery, and the average of the three shall be the appraised value. If the residence, when sold does not sell for a sum equal to, or greater than, the appraised value as so determined after first deducting from the sale price the reasonable cost of the sale, including all appraisal fees, broker's commission, title evidence, reasonable attorney fees, and prepayment penalties on existing mortgages, the difference shall be paid to the employee within thirty (30) days after evidence satisfactory to the Presbytery is presented in support of such transaction; or

b. If a lease, the actual cost of terminating a lease by the prepayment of a lump sum, or the monthly cost thereof.

15. SECOND MORTGAGE LOANS

Employees, either new or transferred, may be given assistance in the purchase of a home through the loan of the Presbytery of a second mortgage in accordance with the guidelines established by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies for exempt employees.

16. PERSONAL LOANS

Personal loans for other than second mortgages or costs incurred because of transfer to a new location in the Presbytery are not available to new employees.

R. PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Part-time employees are those who are employed to work less than forty (40) hours per week. If they are not temporary, and are employed at least twenty (20) hours a week, they are eligible for the following:

1. Holiday pay, if the holiday falls on one of the regularly scheduled working days for the part-time employee;
2. Jury duty pay;
3. Merit increases in salary;
4. Regular pay up to forty (40) hours, time-and-a-half pay over forty (40) hours in any work week; **5.** Vacation, sick pay, and parental leave in proportion to hours worked each week;
6. Worker's compensation;
7. Off-the-job disability benefits;
8. Social Security participation;
9. Severance allowance in proportion to hours worked each week.

The rules of the Presbyterian Pension Plan do not permit participation of part-time employees.

If a part-time employee is later placed on full-time basis, pro-rated service credit will be given from the first day of his/her part-time employment for sick leave and vacation benefits.

S. BENEFITS FOR TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

Those employed for a short period, usually less than three months, are not paid for holidays, sick leave, or other leaves, and do not earn vacation leave during their temporary employment. They are not eligible for the Pension Plan. If they work more than forty (40) hours in one work week, they will be paid time-and-a-half for above forty (40) hours. If a temporary employee joins the regular staff, his/her temporary employment is not considered in computing vacation and other benefits.

P-4.0101a
REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES (October 2009)

Expenses for the following items shall be reimbursed at a rate to be recommended by the Presbytery Council and approved by the Presbytery at its Fall Meeting:

a. All expenses including both mileage and housing and meal expenses for ruling elder officers of Presbytery and members of the Presbytery Council who are not also commissioners from their churches.

b. Per Diem Guidelines:
   1) A daily meal allowance of $35 divided approximately by $10 each for breakfast and lunch and $15 for dinner.
   2) Hotel rooms for 2 persons under $100.
   3) When overnight meetings require hotel accommodations adults are asked to share a room with two beds with one person of the same gender, if possible. Those preferring not to share a room will be asked to pay ½ the room cost (or the difference between the cost of a shared room and a single room).

b. Presbytery does not pay mileage for persons attending presbytery meetings, either regular or special.

Encourage churches to include in their budgets provisions for covering all non-reimbursed expenses for their commissioners and others who are needed at the meetings.

P-4.0101b
MODEL FOR PRESBYTERY MEETING AGENDA (April 1990)

FIRST DAY

Preliminary	11:00 a.m.	Registration
	12:00 noon	Lunch
	1:00 p.m.	Call to Order and Opening Worship (including Communion)
	2:00	Roll Call, etc.
	2:15	Approval of Agenda
Report (1)	2:20 p.m.	Moderator (January only)
Officers and Staff	2:20	Stated Clerk
	2:30	Treasurer
	2:45	Executive Staff
Reports (2)	3:00 p.m.	Presbytery Council
Presbytery Agencies		
	3:30	Break
	4:00	Committee on Representation
	4:15	Committee on Ministry
	5:00	Introduction of New Business (for action before end of this meeting)
	5:15	Recess
	5:30	Dinner
Program	7:00 p.m.	Program Feature
	8:30	Recess

SECOND DAY

	8:30 a.m.	Worship
	9:00	Reports from Presbytery Standing Committees
	10:15	Break
	10:45	Reports from Other Presbytery Agencies
	12:00 noon	Lunch
Special Orders,	1:00 p.m.	Business as necessary
Unfinished Business,	3:00	Break
New Business	3:30	Business as necessary
Closing	4:30	Installation of officers (January only)
	4:40	Completion of Roll
	4:50	Committee on Resolutions
	5:00	Adjournment and Closing Prayer

A communion service shall be held at each stated meeting.

Following the reports of the Committee on Representation and the Committee on Ministry, which take priority, reports of other Presbytery Standing Committees (shown in the model at 9:00 a.m. on the second day) will normally be scheduled on a rotating basis.

The Presbytery's Bylaws (8-5.0405) provide that the agenda for meetings of the Presbytery be prepared by the Presbytery Council, with the assistance of the Stated Clerk. This model provides for the use of the time allowed for two-day meetings (noon of day 1 through day 2 afternoon), and sets an order of business as recommended by Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised), Section 40.

The actual agenda for each meeting is drawn up according to the demands of its particular business. Most meetings will be shorter than this. But such things as starting time, meals, and break times, and times for specific reports given on the previous page should be respected, as experience has shown them to be best.

P-4.0101c
CONSENT CALENDAR (October 1992)

A consent calendar may be used to dispose of routine business at stated meetings of the Presbytery.

Such matters will be proposed to Presbytery at the time the agenda is considered for adoption (on the first day of its meeting). Once the list has been completed, and at any time prior to the deadline for introduction of new business,

any item on the consent calendar may be withdrawn (without debate or vote) upon the request of any member, and items withdrawn from the consent calendar will be dealt with at their regularly scheduled time.

Items remaining on the consent calendar will be adopted by Presbytery in an omnibus motion prior to the consideration of reports from standing committees.

P-4.0101d

CERTIFIED/COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor Program is to provide pastoral services in particular settings where the services of a Minister of Word and Sacrament is not available. To accomplish this the Presbytery:

1. selects, trains, educates, prepares and equips elders of the Presbyterian Church(U.S.A.) to lead worship, preach the Gospel, watch over the people, provide for their nurture and service, and perform duties assigned to them in conjunction with designated local commissions.
2. establishes and maintains requirements for certification and commissioning.
3. provides certification and commissioning.

II. ADMINISTRATION OF THE CERTIFIED/COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR PROGRAM

1. The Constitutional authority for the program is found in the Form of Government, Section G-14.0801.
2. In the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, the administration of the program is under the oversight of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall report to the Presbytery.
3. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall carry out the following functions:
   A. Review applications and meet with those seeking to enroll in the program as learners.
   B. Establish a training program for all learners and Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastors.
   C. Appoint mentors for all learners and CLP's.
   D. Examine learners who complete the initial training, and following approval of placement by the Committee on Ministry, recommend those whose examinations are sustained, to the Presbytery for commissioning.
   E. Conduct the annual review of those commissioned and submit the results to the Committee on Ministry for its review.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. A CERTIFIED LAY PASTOR is an elder of the Presbyterian Church(U.S.A.) who has received the endorsement of the session of the church where he/she is a member, has successfully completed the training program provided by the Presbytery of Northern Plains, has been examined by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and received endorsement to appear before the Presbytery of Northern Plains, and has received an affirmative vote by the Presbytery with regard to the person's readiness to serve as a Certified Lay Pastor within the Presbytery.
2. A COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR is a Certified Lay Pastor who is granted a local commission by the Presbytery of Northern Plains to lead worship and preach the Gospel, watch over the people and provide for their nurture and service in a particular setting.
3. A LOCAL COMMISSION is an agreement between a particular church/es and/or other institution approved by Committee on Ministry, a Certified Lay Pastor, and the Presbytery of Northern Plains. It may be renewed at expiration or terminated at anytime at the discretion of the Presbytery.

4. COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR LEARNER is a person who has been accepted into the Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor Training Program.
5. THE PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS are

determined for each assignment by the Presbytery, Committee on Ministry and the local commission, and may be performed only within the bounds of a particular commission(G14.0801a). When the Presbytery determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the Presbytery, upon receiving recommendation from Committee on Ministry and from the session of a local church or the governing body of the calling institution, may authorize a Commissioned Lay Pastor who has received the instruction and training necessary to perform any or all of the following functions.

A. administer the Lord's Supper
B. administer the Sacrament of Baptism
C. moderate the session of the congregation/s she/he is serving, under the supervision of, and when invited by the Moderator of the session appointed by the Presbytery.
D. perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee and when allowed by the state in which the Commissioned Lay Pastor is serving.

6. SUPERVISION FOR CERTIFIED AND COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS is provided by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
   A. Commissioned Lay Pastors - Committee on Preparation for Ministry is responsible for assigning a Minister of Word and Sacrament to supervise each Commissioned Lay Pastor during his/her service. Supervision for Commissioned Lay Pastors without a particular commission is also provided by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
   B. Certified Lay Pastor - Committee on Preparation for Ministry is responsible for supervision of Certified Lay Pastors and will assign a Minister of Word and Sacrament to supervise each Certified Lay Pastor.
   Supervision for both Commissioned and Certified Lay Pastors will include responsibilities for ongoing training and evaluation.
   C. Commissioned Lay Pastor Learner - Committee on Preparation for Ministry provides supervision of Commissioned Lay Pastor Learners.
7. THE CERTIFIED/COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR TRAINING PROGRAM is the training program administered by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and is designed to offer the required training for all Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor's that they may become knowledgeable in the areas of Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. (G14.0801a)

IV. APPLICATION - REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

1. The gospel of Jesus Christ is best served when the church's leaders are well trained for their particular service. To this end, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains endeavors to provide the best training that our circumstances allow for those called to particular forms of service. Most of the persons seeking to serve as a Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor enter the program already busy with other paid employment. Therefore, provision must be made for a program of their training that both accommodates the time they can realistically give to study and preparation and will serve the goal of making them knowledgeable in the areas of Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching.
2. To accomplish this, a person seeking to become a Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor will study and prepare under the guidance of a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is designated by the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to be the person's principal mentor. Training should be undertaken through Dubuque Seminary on-line courses [see attached], the Institute for the Development of Lay Ministry (IDLM) [see attached] or a college, a seminary or a curriculum submitted and approved by Committee on Preparation for Ministry . Ordinarily, the expense for all courses taken will be shared between, the learner, the sponsoring church, and the Presbytery.

A. Enrolling
   (1) A person seeking to enroll in the CLP Training Program should review the CLP Training Packet. If one is not available at the seeker’s church, it should be requested from the Presbytery office.
   (2) If the decision of the seeker is to continue, the seeker should complete the application and follow the process specified.
   (3) When the Presbytery Office receives copies of the completed application, it shall make copies and distribute them to the members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
   (4) The seeker shall be invited to meet with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, at which time the application will be reviewed and the seeker shall be afforded the opportunity to expand on his/her reasons for becoming a Commissioned Lay Pastor.
   (5) Within six months of enrolling in the CLP program a learner will schedule a time to participate in a series of psychological and professional interest instruments to help the learner better identify his/her gifts and suitability to be engaged in ministry. These instruments will be administered through the North Central Ministry Development Center. Ordinarily, the expense for this exercise will be share be between, the learner, the sponsoring church, and the Presbytery.

B. Selecting a Mentor
   (1) If the decision of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is to advance the seeker to learner status, then, with the learner, the committee shall select a minister of the Word and Sacrament to serve as a mentor.
   (2) A member of the committee shall contact the potential mentor. If the potential mentor does not have a CLP Training Packet available, the committee member shall arrange to have a packet mailed from the Presbytery Office and establish a time when the information in the packet can be reviewed with the potential mentor, paying particular attention to~~,~~ “Guideline for Mentors”.
   (3) If, after completing the review, the potential mentor agrees, that person will then be designated as the mentor for the learner.

C. Monitoring Progress
   (1) The learner shall then begin study of the material in the forthcoming semester under consideration. See “Method of Training”
   (2) Following the Mentor’s role as an evaluator described in “Guidelines for Mentors,” the mentor shall notify the Committee on Preparation for Ministry when each area of study is completed and this shall be noted on the CLP Record Form.

D. Examining the Learner
   When the mentor is satisfied that the learner has completed the “Method of Training” and is ready to be examined, he/she shall notify the chair of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and a time shall be set for the examination to take place.

E. Commissioning
   (1) The Committee on Ministry shall be notified when a learner has successfully passed the examination. Before commissioning can take place, that committee will need to approve a job description and placement in the Presbytery.
   (2) Once this approval is granted, the learner shall then be presented to the Presbytery for commissioning. While the responsibility for the examination rests with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the members of Presbytery can use the opportunity to get to better know the learner. The commissioning can take place at the meeting of Presbytery, or if it is advantageous to do so, by an administrative commission appointed by the Presbytery in the learner’s home church, or the church in which he/she will be serving.

F. Annual Reviewing
   An annual review of the work of the Commissioned Lay Pastor shall be conducted by the

Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the results of that review shall be shared with the Committee on Ministry.

The term of the course of study will normally take up to two years. During that time, the person will have study in the areas of:

- The Bible
- Reformed Theology and the Sacraments
- Presbyterian Polity
- Leading Worship and Preaching
- Pastoral Care

V. GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

1. Introduction

The relationship between mentor and Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLP) and/or Learners is essential to the effective development of CLPs. Mentors serve as advisors, teachers, and evaluators both in the Learner stage of CLP preparation and after a CLP has been commissioned. The Mentor is the primary contact to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry regarding a Learner's preparation for ministry and a CLP's practice of ministry.

The Mentor shall be accessible for meetings and phone conversations with the CLP/Learner and be willing to make time available for consultation. The Mentor will be approachable and non-judgmental. The Mentor shall counsel the CLP Learner on all aspects of ministry and intentionally strive to be a true friend in Christ.

The Mentor shall be a positive role model for the CLP/Learner. The way the Mentor relates to the CLP/Learner should demonstrate the kind of openness and caring the CLP/Learner should develop as a CLP. The Mentor will share information on the ministry to enrich the CLP/Learner's efforts at developing ministerial skills.

Mentors of Learners shall assist the Committee on Preparation for Ministry in assessing the mental and emotional status and the maturity of the individual and where the Learner is in his/her faith journey. If, at any point in the process, the Mentor feels that the Learner should not continue in the CLP program, such concern will be communicated in writing to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry which will make a determination about the Learner's status.

The relationship between a Mentor and a Learner, or a Mentor and a CLP may be terminated by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, or at the request of either party, without prejudice. Following termination of a mentoring relationship, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall appoint a new mentor to the Learner or CLP as soon as possible.

Expenses incurred by Mentors shall be reimbursed through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry following Presbytery reimbursement procedures.

2. Specific Responsibilities of Mentors of CLP Learners

Most of the time, CLP Learners will be engaged in either "independent study," or "directed study." Consequently, the degree of "hands on" mentoring the Mentor has with the Learners will vary from Learner to Learner. The following responsibilities thus constitute the minimum engagement between the Mentor and the Learner during the Learning stage of the CLP program. It should be noted that the goal of the CLP program is not to produce seminary students or PhD candidates; the goal is to produce Commissioned Lay Pastors who have demonstrated competencies in the required areas of study.

3. The Mentor as Advisor

As an Advisor the Mentor will be drawing upon his/her own experience in ministry, both in terms of seminary education and practice of ministry. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommends that Learners, to as great a degree as in feasible, take courses in the required areas for commissioning "online" through Dubuque University Theological Seminary or IDLM.

However, as timing of courses, and the individual Learner's time allowance and needs don't always coincide with the offering of these opportunities, the Mentor as Advisor will work with the Learner, following the training method for the CLP program, in determining how the Learner can best meet the requirements for commissioning.

Mentors should serve as a resource to the Learner, providing direction in establishing criteria for the Learner's individual study program, but also suggesting means of applying what is learned in ministry settings. The Mentor can suggest reading materials to the Learners, apart from the bibliography recommended in the CLP Learner guidelines. The Mentor can pass on to the Learner opportunities for continuing education in the form of seminars and other programs which come to his/her attention. The Mentor can suggest to the Learner specific opportunities for engaging in ministry with the church which augment what the learner is studying.

The Mentor should be an ongoing "sounding board" for the Learner, providing a sympathetic ear, encouragement, and advice when needed apart from regular consultations about the Learner's development.

4. The Mentor as Teacher

Again, depending on whether the Learner is taking courses in a specific area of study online through Dubuque Seminary or through IDLM, the Mentor's role as teacher will vary. If the Learner is taking courses online, the Mentor may find his/her teaching role as that of answering questions the Learner as about some aspect of the course, discussing theoretical situations raise by the course of study, and helping the Learner identify areas of ministry and/or service to the church which complement the course of study. The Mentor should make it a point to review and offer critique of any written materials the Learner has prepared for the Seminary or through IDLM, prior to those materials being submitted for evaluation.

Should the Learner not be taking a course in a specific area of study, the Mentor will then help the Learner define learning objectives. On-going instruction may take the form of meetings with the Learner to discuss particular topics, the Mentor providing supplemental materials for the Learner to read, and/or the Mentor giving the Learner specific assignments.

5. The Mentor as Evaluator

The Mentor should work with the Learner to determine what will be evaluated to ascertain the Learner's competency in the given area of study. Things to be evaluated may take the form of written materials such as essays, Christian Education curricula, reports on books read, long-range plans for specific ministry areas, etc. It may be that the material to be evaluated consists of the Learner's own evaluation of some aspect of ministry. Particular Learners and Mentors may decide to engage in an oral examination regarding what the Learner has been studying. This evaluation should occur periodically during a given period of study.

When the Mentor is satisfied that the Learner has completed the work required for a particular area of study, the Mentor will notify the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and proceed to the next areas of study with Learner. After the Learner has completed the required areas of study, the Mentor shall review with the Learner all material studies to determine if the Learner is ready to be examined for commissioning by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. If the Mentor determines that the Learner is ready, the Mentor shall notify the Committee on Preparation for Ministry who shall schedule the examination. If the Mentor believes the Learner is unprepared for the examination, the Mentor and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will together ascertain what specific areas of study need further work in order for the Learner to complete the learning requirements.

Mentors for both Learners and CLPs shall make an annual report to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry regarding the Learner/CLP's preparation and/or work. The Mentor shall rate the Learner/CLP's performance and share with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry areas in which the Learner/CLP might benefit from additional training. This information will be used to develop future colloquiums for Learner and CLPs.

6. Brief papers written by the applicant will be required in each of the topics mentioned above. The mentor may suggest what these papers should cover or may ask the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry for suggestions as to which each paper should cover. In the case of preaching, the applicant must either:
   A. Submit to the mentor a written manuscript of a sermon he/she has preached to a congregation, along with a separate paper giving a brief statement about the meaning of the Bible passage that was being preached - what it said to the preacher, and how that message developed into the sermon.
   B. Preach a sermon to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the time of examination for approval, and be prepared to talk about its Biblical basis.

1. During the time of preparation, the applicant shall meet with his/her mentor regularly (at least monthly is recommended) for discussion of reading, evaluation of assignments fulfillment, planning, and support.

VI. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

1. This policy applies to all elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament ("ordained officers") of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.
2. The Presbytery of the Northern Plains will not tolerate sexual misconduct by its ordained officers. Ordained officers are servants of God and as such are responsible to God, to the people entrusted to their care, and to the church for their behavior. They are therefore expected to refrain from sexual misconduct.
3. Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual immorality.
4. Written and signed accusations of sexual misconduct shall be dealt with according to the process provided in the Rules of Discipline. In addition, such conduct may be subject to civil and/or criminal prosecution according to the laws of the State. The Presbytery will automatically notify the appropriate criminal or civil agency in the event of any alleged or suspected sexual abuse involving children. Presbytery will impose appropriate discipline when sexual misconduct has been proven.
5. When a written and signed accusation of sexual misconduct has been filed with the Stated Clerk and an investigating committee has been designated by the Presbytery, the investigating committee shall instruct both the accused and the accuser that it will not tolerate any attempt to tamper with the process or its outcomes. Intimidation, manipulation, or any other kind of interference is unacceptable, and may result in further judicial action.
6. Presbytery may set aside an amount of money to be distributed at the sole discretion of the Stated Clerk, to be used as partial payment for psychological and spiritual counseling for those affected by the process.

VII. EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

1. When the Learner and the Mentoring Pastor determines that the Learner is ready for examination in the area of academic competency, the Mentor shall report this to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will then schedule an examination on the area of competency.

2. Expectations of Lay Pastors to be Sustained by Examination
   A. Bible
      a. Have a basic understanding of the historical evolvement of the Bible.
      b. Be able to name the various types of literature found in our Scriptures and give examples of each.
      c. Know the historical acts of God, the remembering of which provide the central message of

the Old Testament. Also, of the New Testament.
   d. Be able to illustrate the difference between the Gospels.
   e. Be able to relate the current scientific views of creation and evolution to the Biblical account.
   f. Have a way to approach a biblical text to faithfully determine its meaning.

B. Reformed Theology
   a. Know the essential tenets of the Reformed faith.
   b. Be able to describe the original purpose of each of the confessions in the *Book of Confessions* and its relevance and authority for today.
   c. Be able to highlight major events in the development of the Presbyterian Church starting with the reformation.
   b. Be familiar with the lives of leaders of the Reformation and their major contributions.
   c. Relate how the study of the Reformed faith enhanced their personal faith.

C. Worship and Sacraments
   a. Be able to describe the essential elements of Christian worship and organize them in a worship service.
   b. Know the primary meaning of baptism and the essential elements in the sacrament and why are they there.
   c. Know who may be baptized and when.
   d. Know the primary meaning of Holy Communion and the essential elements necessary in the service.
   e. Give their understanding of the presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper.

D. Polity
   a. Know the "Great Ends of the Church" as found in the *Book of Order*.
   b. Be able to name the divisions of the *Book of Order* and define their purpose.
   c. Be able to show how the four governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church relate to each other.
   d. Be able to describe the major functions of the Elders, Session, Deacons, Minister of Word and Sacrament.
   e. Be able to tell how one becomes a member of the Presbyterian Church.

3. Procedures for examination

A. The Learner can choose to be examined either orally or by submitting responses to questions in writing.

B. The examining team shall consist of at least three members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

C. Each member of the examining team shall rate the Learner's response to each question using the following scale:

a.	An excellent response	(5)
b.	A good response	(4)
c.	An adequate response	(3)
b.	Showing some understanding, but less than adequate	(2)
e.	Indicating little or no understanding	(1)

D. The responses to each question in the area of the examination will be averaged by each team member, and that average will be averaged with the assessment of other team members for the particular area. An average of 3.0 shall be considered as passing. The Learner must achieve a passing grade for each area of examination before academic competency for commissioning can be considered sustained.

E. If the Learner should fail to pass an area of the examination, the Committee on Preparation for

Ministry shall recommend to the Learner and the Mentoring Pastor directions for further study in that area.

VIII. CERTIFICATION

1. After a period of study, training and practical experience, under the guidance of an approved mentor, the learner and the mentor shall stipulate to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry that the learner is ready for examination for certification. The learner will be required to submit a written statement of faith, and demonstrate written proficiency and knowledge in the areas of Bible, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and polity. (G14.0801a) Care should be taken, however, to remember that the learner is not a seminary graduate and that their areas of expertise and proficiency are more circumscribed.

2. When the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is satisfied that the applicant is ready, it shall recommend to the Presbytery that the applicant be examined. The applicant may also be questioned on the floor of Presbytery as to his/her journey of faith, the essential tenets of the Reformed faith, Presbyterian polity, and reasons for seeking certification.

3. Following the successful examination of the learner, Committee on Preparation for Ministry will recommend to the Presbytery that the Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor trainee be approved as a Certified Lay Pastor.

4. If no commission is available, the Certified/Commissioned Lay Pastor trainee shall be designated as a Certified Lay Pastor. This does not extend the rights and responsibilities and privileges of a Commissioned Lay Pastor, but indicates that the person is ready for commissioning.

IX. COMMISSIONING

1. When a church or other approved institution, in consultation with and approved by Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry, extends an invitation to serve a local commission to a Certified Lay Pastor , Committee on Preparation for Ministry will recommend to the Presbytery to commission the Certified Lay Pastor.

2. The Moderator of Presbytery will ask the Certified Lay Pastor the constitutional questions.(G14.0801e) If answered in the affirmative, a brief charge shall be given by a member of Presbytery, followed by a prayer offered by the Moderator.

X. COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS

1. Committee on Ministry shall determine whether or not a Certified Lay Pastor is suitable for a local commission. Prior to any commissioning, Committee on Preparation for Ministry must examine the Lay Pastor and report its findings to the Presbytery.

2. The report of Committee on Ministry approval of a commission to the Presbytery shall include:
   A. the terms of the contract, which shall be negotiated by Committee on Ministry, the individual, and representative/s of the local commission. The terms shall include the name of the local commission church/es or institution, the ministry to be provided (including whether the individual is permitted to perform duties listed under “Rights and Responsibilities”), the initiating date of service, the length of service, and compensation for said service.
   B. the Presbytery of Northern Plains has established minimum salary requirements for full time Commissioned Lay Pastors. (P-6.0101b) This figure is reviewed annually by Committee on Ministry.

3. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to oversee the work of any Commissioned Lay Pastor and to provide proper support during the tenure of service in a local commission. Commissioned Lay Pastors shall work under the supervision of the Presbytery through the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and the Minister of Word and Sacrament assigned to the person for supervision.

4. The names of Commissioned Lay Pastors actively serving in the Presbytery of Northern Plains shall be reported by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to the Presbytery annually.

5. A review of the work of all Commissioned Lay Pastors shall be conducted annually by Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

XI. CERTIFIED LAY PASTORS

1. Persons who have received certification by the Presbytery but who are not working under a local commission will be considered Certified Lay Pastors as well as those who have been commissioned but are not presently working under a local commission. Their gifts and abilities should be continually fostered by providing opportunities to preach in churches as needed for pulpit supply.

2. Certified Lay Pastors shall meet annually with their assigned supervisors to review work and continued study and a report by both shall be presented to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

XII. COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR TRAINEE

Under the direction of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Commissioned Lay Pastor learners shall be allowed to preach in local congregations when invited by the sessions as pulpit supply.

XIII. EVALUATION OF CERTIFIED/COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS

1. Commissioned Lay Pastors
   A. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall conduct an annual evaluation of all Commissioned Lay Pastors. The evaluation will include a report of service and work, continuing education, future plans, goals, and a report from the supervisor as well. The Moderator of the Session of the local commission, the supervising pastor, the Commissioned Lay Pastor and a representative of the Session shall ordinarily participate in the annual evaluation.
   B. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry Mentor for the Commissioned Lay Pastor and Commissioned Lay Pastor shall discuss the ministry of the local commission prior to the annual evaluation.
   C. As part of the annual evaluation of each Commissioned Lay Pastor, the Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall vote to continue or discontinue the service to the local commission. This vote shall be reported the Presbytery at its next meeting.
2. Certified Lay Pastors
   Committee on Preparation for Ministry will conduct an annual evaluation of all Certified Lay Pastors which will include a report of service and work, continuing education, future plans, goals and a report from the supervisor.
3. Annual CLP performance review Letter
   To: CLP Name and Mentor Name
   From: Committee on Preparation for Ministry Chair Name, moderator, Committee on Preparation for Ministry
   Subject: Annual CLP performance review

   For the CLP:

   If at all possible, we would like to meet with you at (place and time).

Please have ready the following:

a. A summary of your activities as a CLP this past year.
b. A copy of your job description and any anticipated changes for the coming year.
c. Plans you have for continuing education.
d. Specific areas in which you would find further training to be helpful.
e. A copy or outline of one of your recent sermons.

If you find that it will be impossible for you to be there at the time scheduled, please let me know at once so that we can adjust the time schedule for others. We will then reschedule a time to meet.

For the Mentor:

How would you rate the person's overall performance as a CLP?
(circle one which applies)
Excellent Very Good Good Fair Needs Improvement

What were areas of greatest strength?

In what areas do you feel that this CLP would benefit from more training?

Do you recommend commissioning be continued for another year? YES/NO

Date: ________________ Signature__________________________________

XIV. RENEWAL AND TERMINATION OF THE LOCAL COMMISSION

1. The local commission is granted for a period of up to three years, the length of which must be specified as a part of the local commissioning agreement by the Presbytery at the time of commissioning. A commission may be renewed upon expiration and at the end of three years, at the discretion of the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and the session of the local church or the employing institution. A commission may not be renewed for more than a three year period of time.
1. Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the Presbytery may revoke the local commission of any Commissioned Lay Pastor who does not abide by the provisions specified in G-14.0800 of the *Book of Order* and the provisions contained in this policy.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the Presbytery may revoke the status of any Certified Lay Pastor who does not abide by the provisions specified in G-14.0800 of the *Book of Order* and the provisions contained in this policy.

Approved January 29, 2005

P4.0102
POLICY ON PRESBYTERY MEETING LOCATION (April 1990)

GEOGRAPHY - This Presbytery covers the entire state of North Dakota, plus a narrow slice of northwestern Minnesota, and one community in Montana. The majority of Presbyterians, however, is found in the area of the Red River Valley and the adjacent part of North Dakota extending northwestward. This vast expanse of land lays heavy demands upon those who must travel to attend these meetings, and the possibility of severe weather for nearly half the year complicates things further.

LOCATION AND FREQUENCY - The Presbytery wishes to hold its meetings as close as possible to its members' homes, and to hold them as few times as possible to eliminate as much travel as possible. Accordingly, there are three stated meetings each year: The annual meeting in January, a spring meeting in April, and an autumn meeting in October. The January meeting runs the greatest risk of being hobbled by bad weather, so it is scheduled for a location near the Presbyterian population center. The western part of the Presbytery, where people are fewest and distances between them greatest, is the location for the two-day autumn meeting, when weather is usually favorable for travel. Options are now available to hold presbytery meetings using video conferencing.

ACCESSIBILITY TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - Presbytery meetings shall be held in locations accessible to persons with disabilities. Meetings of Council, committees, and other presbytery agencies shall be held at such locations whenever membership of these groups includes persons with disabilities.

LIMITATIONS OF SIZE - When this Presbytery gathers, its numbers of people (100-150) are too great for most of our church buildings to handle (and for many of our communities to house). In practical terms, only a dozen or so of our church buildings and communities can accommodate the crowd.

ACCEPTABLE LOCATIONS - On the basis of the principles affirmed above, the acceptable locations are the following:

Western:	Bismarck First, Bottineau, Mandan, Minot
Central:	Jamestown College, Jamestown Church, Rugby
Eastern:	Crookston, East Grand Forks, Fargo, Grand Forks, Moorhead

ROTATION - Since 1981, a rotation involving these locations has guided the scheduling of our meetings. Subject to changing conditions, the following schedule incorporates this rotation, in the order already in use:

February 2010 Grand Forks	September 2010 Jamestown College

P4.0103
HELPFUL HINTS FOR HOSTING A PRESBYTERY MEETING (April 1990)

The following information is provided to assist the local church in its planning as it prepares to host a meeting of the Presbytery.

1. *Housing.* Provide the Presbytery Office with a listing of motels and room costs one month before the date of the meeting.

2. *Transportation.*
    a. Provide the Presbytery Office with a map (8-1/2 x 11) of the location of the meeting one month before the date of the meeting.
    b. Prepare for parking 60 cars near the meeting place.
    c. Have someone available to transport attenders to and from your airport.

3. *Hosting.* Attendance for the past three years has averaged as follows: January: 105.3 (51 - 140), April: 98 (89-114), October 108 (104 - 113)
   a. Provide an official host who will greet the people and help with minor emergencies.
   b. Provide one person (or more) who will sell meal tickets.
   c. Have available, if possible, an organist for worship services at the beginning and end of the meeting.
   d. Provide four folding tables (6 to 8 feet long) as follows:
      1) at front of room, for stated and permanent clerks.
      2) at entry, for registration and meal ticket sales.
      3) near entry, for distribution of printed materials.
   e. Provide a public address system capable of amplifying speeches from both podium and floor. If the church is already equipped, have someone on hand who knows how to operate it.
   f. Provide restroom facilities (either in the church or nearby) capable of serving the needs of this size crowd.
   g. Provide coffee and light snacks available as people begin to arrive (include cost of these in meal charges or take a collection at snack table, at your discretion).

4. *Meals.* Plan meals simply and serve near cost. If possible, post prices and menus at registration table, so that delegates can decide if your meals fit their dietary requirements. (If you are providing for diabetics, state that fact prominently on your poster.) Numbers are hard to predict, and at least 20-40 of the attenders will eat elsewhere, so do advance planning accordingly. Suggested price ranges:
   Type of Meal: Lunch $3.00-4.00; Supper $ 5.00-6.00
   Number of Meals (2-day meetings):
   Lunches: 1; Suppers: 1; Breaks: 3; Total Cost: $8.00-10.00
   (Please provide coffee also at registration time.)
   **Lunch the first meeting day is normally not provided. Some churches employ caterers for one or more meals. If your church wishes NOT to provide any meals, please notify the Presbytery Office at least one month before the meeting is scheduled, so that meeting notices can inform attendees. (Even in such a case, the church will be expected to provide coffee and snacks at break times, and at registration time.)
5. *Menu planning.* Please keep in mind that
   :a. Increasing numbers of people are on low-salt, low-cholesterol, or diabetic diets.
   b. Heavy meals are for physically active folks, Presbytery Meetings involve a lot of sitting.
   c. Coffee hours are one-half hour long, so plan several distribution points for faster service.
   d. Sweets are not for everyone, so plan some alternative snacks. In addition to coffee, provide hot water and decaffeinated coffee, tea, cocoa, or chilled fruit drink.

   Groups wishing to be served separately during Presbytery meals should schedule such service before the meeting begins through the Stated Clerk, who will negotiate arrangements with the person in charge of meal service.

6. *Registration.* Please provide one person (who may also be your meal ticket seller) to be on hand from one hour before the meeting begins until two hours after it begins to advise attendees about registration. A simple registration system is in use, requiring no work by the host church, but some attendees may need advice on filling out the forms provided.

P4.0104
CHILD CARE POLICY (January 1991)

Policies (Revised October 2009)

The church hosting Presbytery is responsible for providing on-site child care for Presbytery Meetings. This child care will be provided at no cost to the attenders or to Presbytery. Attenders who need child care will contact the hosting church one week prior to the meeting.

Child care will not be provided at meetings of committees of Presbytery or Presbytery Council. Nursing babies may be brought to these meetings, however their care will be the complete responsibility of the parent. Presbytery will fully reimburse the cost of necessary child care for these meetings.

P-5.0404
GUIDELINES FOR PROPERTY SALE, PURCHASE, OR MORTGAGE (Revised May 2000)

"A particular church shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any of its real property and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the Presbytery transmitted through the Session of the particular church." (G-8.050l)

"A particular church shall not lease its real property used for purposes of worship, or lease for more than five years any of its other real property, without the written permission of the Presbytery transmitted through the Session of the particular church." (G-8.0502)

1. **Building, Remodeling and Purchase**. Any congregation within the bounds of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains which is initiating plans to build onto or remodel their current structure or to purchase any building additions or other real property shall:

   A. Submit the proposal to the Corporate Affairs Committee of Presbytery Council through the Stated Clerk prior to securing preliminary drawings or engaging the services of an architect, or contractor except as provided in paragraph 1D below. The proposal shall include the legal description of the property.

   B. If the proposal is to involve a mortgage or encumbrance the total amount of the proposed mortgage must be included either in the original proposal or in a subsequent request for permission to mortgage the property. The actual amount of the mortgage may be less than the limit approved or may exceed the approved limit up to 10% if due to inflation or unavoidable delay. If the final amount of the mortgage is to exceed the approved limit by more than 10% a new request for a revised limit must be made to Presbytery through the Corporate Affairs Committee.

   C. The Corporate Affairs Committee will submit the proposal to Presbytery Council (see B-5.0500) or to Presbytery, at the committee's discretion.

   D. Remodeling plans may be handled by the local church without Presbytery action unless the cost of the remodeling exceeds 25% of the appraised value of the building or the cost involves a mortgage or other encumbrances.

2. **Sale of Property.** Request for permission to sell the Manse or other real property shall include the following information:

   A. The reason for selling the Manse or other real property and if the sale involves the Manse, what arrangement is to be made for the housing of the Pastor.

   B. The proposed minimum selling price or the words "at approximately the value set by a professional appraiser". The selling price may be as much over the minimum as it is possible to obtain and may be as much as 10% under the minimum if necessary to close the sale without additional approval of Presbytery. If the actual selling price must be more than 10% below the minimum a new approval must be obtained from Presbytery.

C. The proposed use to be made of the proceeds of the sale.
D. Whether or not there are any outstanding mortgages or encumbrances against the property and if so, the amount of the mortgage or encumbrance and the holder of such mortgage.

On all requests to Presbytery for permission to buy, sell, build, or mortgage or whatever, a statement of what local actions have been taken by Session, Trustees, congregation or other, or a copy of these actions shall be included and such statement shall show how any votes were taken and the result of such voting. The statement shall be up to date to the time the request is made.
The Corporate Affairs Committee and/or the Presbytery Council may request any other information it deems necessary for it to make an informed recommendation to the Presbytery.

After the sale of any real property, report to the Presbytery Stated Clerk the sale price, the reason for the sale, to whom it was sold and the proposed use of the proceeds. In case of a lease, the statement of the terms of the lease, the reason for leasing and the proposed use by the lessee should be reported to the Presbytery Stated Clerk.

P-5.0406a
BUDGET PREPARATION POLICY GUIDELINES (Revised October 1997)

1. The Budget and Finance Committee will be responsible for the following:
   a. Development of budget time-lines annually.
   b. Development of income projections.
   c. Receiving all budget requests, and requests for budget revisions.
   d. Preparation of budget revisions for the next fiscal year; and proposed budget for the following fiscal year including portions of Presbytery Council's budget.
   e. Fiscal Accountability Policy revisions as necessary.
2. The Presbytery Council will be responsible for the following:
   a. Annual review and adoption of goals and objectives.
   b. Consider/approve/modify/reject requests for non-budgetary expenditures.
   c. Approve all line items in excess of budgeted amounts.
3. The Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, Mission Units will be responsible for the following:
   a. Prepare all budget requests in the light of and related to Presbytery's goals and objectives.
   b. All budget requests must be detailed: i.e., estimated number of meetings, mileage, meals, accommodations, and program costs.
   c. Monitoring expenses to:
      1) Keep with budget.
      2) Make requests of Presbytery Council for expenses beyond the approved budget line item(s).
      3) Develop budget requests for Mission Projects for continuing projects.
   d. Develop proposals for new mission projects with goals, objectives, budget.
   e. Be responsible for meeting the time-line in the budget process.

P-5.0406b
FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY (April 1990)

I. INCOME - EXPENDITURES AND CONTROLS
   A. The Presbytery shall have a Unified Budget which shall be called THE PRESBYTERY BUDGET.
   B. The Presbytery Budget is funded from the following sources:
      1. A per capita apportionment established annually by the Presbytery upon recommendation from Presbytery Council to support the essential ecclesiastical function of the Presbytery.
      2. A grant from the Synod of Lakes and Prairies for staff salary support to be annually negotiated.
      3. Income from unrestricted invested funds.
      4. Service charges made to trust funds administered by the Presbytery for accounting and other services rendered.
      5. Honoraria received by Presbytery Staff persons when on Presbytery assignment.
      6. Miscellaneous receipts.
      7. Mission Pledges made by Sessions of local congregations.
      8. Income from designated gifts.
      9. Grants from General Assembly, Synod, and other sources.
      10. Income from invested reserve funds which are restricted as to investment and/or use.
   C. Balances available at the end of the year from the Presbytery Budget shall be carried forward in the General Fund balance, except where an agreement with Synod, General Assembly, or grant source requires the return of salvage funds from any grant at the end of the year, with the following exceptions:
      1. The Capital Improvement line item in the General Fund will be an accruing fund used for:

a. Replacement of existing or equivalent equipment.
b. Acquisition of essential new equipment.
c. Capital improvement and maintenance to the office building and property.
This fund may carry a capitalized value reflected in the current Audit Report as the Plant Fund.

2. Salary support, executive staff continuing education, and the special assistance fund will be accruing funds with the balances carried forward and available for use upon recommendation from the appropriate committee to Presbytery Council.

D. All restricted funds and trust funds received by the Presbytery shall be administered strictly in accordance with the stipulations of the restrictions and the provisions of the trusts. A reasonable service fee may be charged against such funds. This fee shall be set by the Presbytery Council upon recommendation from the BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

E. The Presbytery Budget shall be expended in accordance with the Budget adopted by the Presbytery. Presbytery Council shall have authority to adjust the Budget as necessary during the year in consultation with committees and/or persons involved in any of the proposed adjustments.

F. The Treasurer of the Presbytery shall have authority to establish control accounts for non-budgeted funds received, with expenditures to be according to written agreements up to the limit of the income received.

G. All funds for Presbytery Programs shall be received and expended by the Treasurer of the Presbytery. No committees or persons shall hold funds for Presbytery Programs or establish bank accounts for such funds without approval from the Treasurer with the following exception:

1. The Executive Presbyter shall each be given a travel advance and office petty cash fund of $400 to be held in checking accounts. This advance shall be considered payable to Presbytery upon resignation, retirement, or termination.

H. Where the Presbytery participates in the financial support of any agency, the agency shall provide the Presbytery with an audit report annually.

I. The Treasurer, or anyone authorized by Presbytery Council to handle Presbytery funds or other assets of the Presbytery, shall be bonded at the expense of Presbytery in amounts to be determined by the Presbytery Council upon recommendation from the BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

II. BUDGET MAKING

A. Each unit, committee, agency, or task force participating in the budget shall be responsible for submitting request to the Presbytery through the Budget and Finance Committee of the Presbytery Council.

B. The Budget and Finance Committee shall make budget recommendations to Presbytery Council with priority recommendations which have been made in the light of priorities recommended and approved by the Presbytery Council.

C. The responsibility for establishing criteria for setting priorities in the Mission Program of the Presbytery shall rest in Presbytery Council. Presbytery Council may delegate a committee the responsibility for bringing recommendations to the Council concerning criteria for establishing priorities in Mission Program in the light of those criteria.

D. Presbytery Council may designate a portion of the Presbytery Budget for contingency purposes.

E. Presbytery Council shall be responsible for making recommendations as to priorities in Mission Program of the Presbytery at the Spring Stated Meeting of the Presbytery.

III. BUDGET ADMINISTRATION

A. Check Writing

1. All Presbytery checks shall normally be written in the office of the Treasurer or the principal office of the Presbytery.
2. Presbytery Council shall determine who shall be authorized to sign checks.

B. Budget Changes and Adjustments
   1. No committee, agency, task force, or administrative unit, and no Presbytery controlled mission unit shall expend more money than is provided for it in the approved budget except by action of the Presbytery Council.
   2. Requests for expenditures beyond the budgeted amount must be accompanied by a statement of proposed funding for the additional expenditures.
   3. The Budget and Finance Committee shall receive all requests for budget adjustments and shall make recommendations for action to the Presbytery Council.
   4. The Presbytery Council shall have responsibility to hear and act on requests for budget increases or additional budget items through its Budget and Finance Committee.

IV. GENERAL BUSINESS PRACTICE

A. Purchases
   1. Expenditures in excess of $500 for office equipment must have prior approval of the Presbytery Council.
   2. Office equipment acquired after January 1, 1980 having a value of $500 or more, will be depreciated in accordance to its useful life.

B. Financial Statements
   1. The Treasurer shall prepare and submit to the Presbytery at each Stated Presbytery Meeting a full statement/report of expenses and income as compared to the budget for that period.
   2. Invoices and income received after the close of the fiscal year will be accrued (up to ten days) to more nearly report all expenses in the year in which the expense was incurred.
   3. A certified audit report will be submitted to Presbytery each year no later than the Spring Stated Meeting showing the operations for the prior year, and the status of all the accounts as of the end of the fiscal year. A copy of this audit will be forwarded to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies when it is received by the Treasurer. A representative from the Budget & Finance Committee shall be present at the annual audit review.

C. Presbytery Office
   1. The Presbytery will enter into an Agreement for Services with the Synod of Lakes and Prairies to handle the payroll, incurred by the Presbytery.
   2. The Personnel Committee of Presbytery will negotiate annually the changes in the terms of call of the Executive Presbyter and submit its recommendations to the Budget and Finance Committee to be forwarded to the Presbytery Council and Presbytery for approval.
   3. The Executive Presbyter shall have a travel advance and office petty cash fund of $400. Reimbursement for expenses paid out of the travel advance fund and the petty cash fund will be made monthly or as needed.
   4. The Presbytery shall reimburse monthly to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, funds to cover the Presbytery Payroll.

D. Accruing Funds. The following accruing fund accounts are part of the Presbytery's financial assets. Disbursal policies follow. Some accruing funds have a cap. Once a cap has been reached, the Presbytery may continue to place funds in the line item to be spent in the succeeding budget year, but the unspent monies will not be transferred into the accruing fund at the end of the year.
   1. Peacemaking
      The Peacemaking Offering is a General Assembly offering taken on World Communion Sunday. By General Assembly action, a portion of the offering is retained by the local congregation for peacemaking efforts, a portion is sent to Synod and General Assembly, and the Presbytery retains a portion. The Social Concerns Committee makes recommendations to Presbytery for the disbursal of Presbytery's portion for peacemaking efforts. Unused funds in the account are held over from year to year. There is no cap.

   2. Capital Equipment

Capital Equipment is a line item in the regular Presbytery budget, used to purchase, replace or improve office equipment. At the end of each fiscal year, unused funds are deposited in the restricted fund to be accrued until needed. CAP: $20,000.

3. Salary Support
   Salary Support is a regular line item in the Presbytery budget, disbursed by the Presbytery at the recommendation of the Committee on Ministry to assist churches whose salaries fall below the Presbytery minimum. At the end of each fiscal year, unused funds in the annual budget line are deposited in the restricted fund. CAP: $6500.
4. Special Assistance
   Special Assistance is a regular line item in the Presbytery budget, disbursed by the Committee on Ministry to address pastoral emergencies. At the end of each fiscal year, unused funds in the annual budget line are deposited in the restricted fund. CAP: $15,000.
5. Clergy Renewal Interest
   Interest from the Clergy Renewal Endowment Fund for retreats, sabbaticals and continuing education for pastors. The fund is held by the Presbyterian Foundation. Ninety percent (90%) of the interest is returned to the Presbytery annually for use by the Committee on Ministry for retreats, sabbaticals, and continuing education.

V. INVESTMENT POLICIES

A. The primary place of investment shall normally be the approved bank serving as the Presbytery's principal depository.

B. Available cash balances above current maximum or cash flow needs may be invested in National Banks, State Banks, Insured Savings and Loans, Government Treasury Notes or Government agencies to earn interest at the most advantageous rate. These cash balances may also be invested in the Presbyterian Church Foundation and Domestic Mutual funds with no more than 5% of the available funds in any one fund excluding the Foundation and with no more than 30% of the available funds invested in all selected mutual funds at any one time including the Foundation.

C. Special accounts may be maintained within the Presbytery.

D. Presbytery Council shall establish an Investment Committee, to be composed of the Chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee, the Treasurer, and the Executive Presbyter.

VI. FINANCIAL RESERVE POLICY. The Presbytery will strive to maintain minimum financial reserves (cash and investments) equal to:

1. The average of the last three years actual expenses. These actual expenses include all expenses on the Statement of Activities, but not expenses for the Dedicated Accounts. The years used for averaging will not include the current year, but the preceding three years; plus

B. The total of all permanently restricted funds.

VII. AMENDMENTS

A. Any amendments to this policy shall be made upon recommendations to the Presbytery through the Presbytery Council.

B. It shall be the responsibility of the Budget and Finance Committee to keep these policies current and recommend changes, as necessary, to Presbytery Council for final approval by the Presbytery.

C. Any changes recommended by the Presbytery shall be referred to the Presbytery Council for study, with Council reporting back to the Presbytery recommendations at the next Stated Meeting.

P-5.0406c
FUND ACCOUNTING SYSTEM (April 1986)

A Fund Accounting System shall be used to identify and manage the variety of monies which are received by the Presbytery.

The Fund Accounting System utilizes the following funds:

A. GENERAL FUND
   This fund is used to account for the following:
   1. Budget, income and expenses
   2. Mission Treasury Service
   3. Unrestricted miscellaneous income
   4. Non-budgeted income and expenses

B. GENERAL FUND INVESTMENT FUND
   This fund is a cash flow fund which manages cash flow dollars from the General Fund to earn the highest possible short-term interest for the Presbytery.

C. DESIGNATED RESERVE FUND
   This fund accounts for restricted funds received and disbursed by the Presbytery, and includes accrued funds from the Presbytery Budget as described in the Fiscal Accountability Policy. Income deposited to the fund is restricted to the purposes for which it has been designated.

D. JULIA UELAND MEMORIAL FUND
   This fund is held by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation. 85% of the net income is paid back to the Presbytery in quarterly payments. 15% is reinvested and becomes part of the principal amount. Additional money designated for Seminary Scholarships may be added to this fund.

E. FUNDED DEPRECIATION
   (See Fiscal Accountability Policy - P-5.0406b - I.C.l.)

An administrative service charge of 30% may be levied against the interest of all Funds: (70% of the interest will be credited to the Fund from which the interest is earned). The administrative service charge becomes part of the "salvage and interest" line item of income of the Presbytery Budget.

P-5.0407a
PROPER USE OF PER CAPITA AND GENERAL MISSION MONEY (April 1986)

The Book of Order is silent on the subject of per capita, with no reference given. We do find the following statement taken from the Presbyterian Constitution and Digest. page c38:

> "6a. Statement for guidance on use of per capita monies and General Mission Monies--The Executive Committee of the Consultative Conference has adopted the following statement for its own guidance in conducting consultations with judicatories:
>
> 'Per capita monies should be used for administration expenses of a judicatory as a judicatory, but nor for program purposes.
>
> 'General Mission monies, including field service or board monies or Synod and Presbytery budget-cause monies, should be used for program and its administration, and not for the expenses of a judicatory as a judicatory.

'It is understood that expenditures for the promotion of funds for the program needs of the judicatory are properly charged against such funds.' "

Presbyterian Law for Presbytery and Synod 1982-83, page 85, in a section titled "Funding Ecclesiastical Expense" is based upon the statement found in the Digest for an enlarged commentary on the subject. The significant statement in this section of PLPS reads: "Each judicatory will determine the particular items to be included in the budget to be apportioned." This gives the Presbytery wide latitude in defining the proper use of mission and per capita funds, it also places upon the Presbytery the necessity of making a commonly agreed definition.

There are two principles at work guiding the Presbytery in determining its definition for use of per capita and mission funds:

A. Ecclesiastical expenses can be raised by per capita but this doesn't mean that those expenses have to be totally borne by per capita. Presbytery may choose to support one-half of our ecclesiastical expenses by per capita and the other half through Mission Funds or any combination it chooses.

B. Per capita should be kept as low as possible.

P-5.0407b
FUND RAISING REQUESTS (April 1986)

All requests for permission to raise funds within the bounds of the Presbytery come to the Presbytery Council for its recommendations to the Presbytery. (See Bylaws 8-5.0407). Presbytery Council's recommendation for Presbytery action will be based upon the following criteria and the full rationale for the Council recommendation will accompany that recommendation:

A. Is the funding request consistent and in harmony with the Principles of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Statement of Purpose and the Goals and Objectives of the Presbytery?
B. Will the fund raising project strengthen, improve, and enhance that ministry of the agency?
C. If the funding project is for a new building, there must be submitted with it a description of the total financial impact upon the continuing ministry of the agency.
D. There must be a definition outlining the necessity of the project.
E. There must be a statement describing the consideration of other alternatives for the delivery of that ministry.
F. There shall be a statement of impact of such a fund drive upon the congregations and the Presbytery.
G. There shall be a statement of the membership, organization, governance, and accountability of that ministry.
H. There shall be a description of the target group to which that ministry is focused, a statement of the ways in which this project will increase its program, outreach, and ministry.
I. The details of the fund raising campaign shall be specified, and there shall be a statement of its timing in relation to the total life of the Presbytery.
J. There shall be a complete listing of other available funding sources.

Ministry Teams shall have permission to raise funds for their ministry within the churches of the presbytery and from individuals provided that sessions have given permission for fund-raising within their particular congregations.

P-6.0101a

POLICIES FOR AAEEO (April 1990)

FOR PRESBYTERY EMPLOYMENT

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains, in accord with the policy of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) set forth in the "Churchwide Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity", hereby affirms its policy to develop and establish the following Affirmative Action Equal Employment Opportunity program to insure non-discrimination in its own employment practices:

A. The Presbytery will recruit, hire, call, train and promote persons within all job classifications without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or religious affiliation except where, after careful study, religious affiliation is deemed a bona fide occupational qualification.
B. The Presbytery will insure that all other personnel policies and practices such as compensation, benefits, transfers, leaves of absence, lay-offs and lay-off returns, educational opportunities, tuition assistance, termination, and any others will be administered in accord with EEO principles.

FOR CLERGY PLACEMENT

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains in accord with the Form of Government (G-4.0403) establishes this policy to insure compliance with the Form of Government (G-9.0104).

The Committee on Ministry shall consult with the Session about the Pastor Nominating Committee's responsibility to be an Equal Employment Opportunity Committee or in case of assistant/associate pastor its intent to be an Equal Employment Opportunity Session in the process of Calling a Pastor (Form of Government G-14.0502).

The Committee on Ministry shall, through the Session, advise the congregation of the constitutional requirement that the Pastor Nominating Committee be an Equal Employment Opportunity Committee in considering candidates and in recommending a candidate to the congregation (Form of Government G-9.0104).

The Committee on Ministry shall fully discuss the meaning of being an Equal Employment Opportunity Committee with the Pastor Nominating Committee and see that a statement of such intent be given to the Session.

The Committee on Ministry shall require the Pastor Nominating Committee to submit a form indicating the number of dossiers received, number of minority dossiers received, number of women's dossiers received, and shall authorize the Pastor Nominating Committee to proceed with the final selection and the interview process when it is satisfied that the Committee has given serious consideration to all candidates, including a willingness to interview without prejudicial regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, or marital status. (Form of Government G-11.0502g).

The Committee on Ministry shall indicate to the Presbytery at the time the Call is approved whether or not the Pastor Nominating Committee has complied with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy together with a recommendation for positive or negative action (Form of Government G-9.0104).

P-6.0101b

POLICIES FOR COMPENSATION PACKAGES AND REIMBURSEMENT [October 2009]

Introduction

In October of 2006, the Presbytery of Northern Plains (PNP) passed a policy on recommended guidelines for compensation packages and reimbursement. It included a formula based on the denominational median for determining, annually, the minimum compensation to be paid to ministers of the word and sacrament and commissioned lay pastors (CLPs). Subsequently, in October of 2007 and 2008, the Committee on Ministry (COM) brought the specific figures, calculated from the formula and the new median salary for that year, to the PNP for approval. But each year, while approving the new figures, there has been confusion about the use of these guidelines, particularly with regards to whether they are mandatory or recommended. This new policy clarifies that issue while affirming the practice of offering specific guidelines each year based on the original formula. This document thus replaces all policies on compensation packages and reimbursement previously passed by the PNP.

Policy

The main components of the policy are as follows:

- That minimum compensation guidelines be calculated each year based on the formula described below.
- That these guidelines be considered mandatory for all new calls and commissions.
- That these guidelines be sent annually to all the churches with strong encouragement from the COM that they be considered minimum standards for compensation.
- That in the same mailing the COM will offer to counsel with sessions and/or ministers or CLPs who have concerns about compensation issues.
- That (as explained below) the SECA allowance be mandatory in new calls or commissions but, along with cost of living adjustments, be strongly encouraged in existing calls or contracts.

I. The minimum effective salary will be prorated upward based on the years of service a Minister of Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Lay Pastor has accrued in service to the denomination and not just a particular church. Effective salary is the combination of salary, housing, and utilities These amounts may be designated as the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Lay Pastor and Session choose. Using a formula of a percentage based on the denominational median as a guideline, this prorated minimum compensation scale for Ministers of Word and Sacrament is as follows:

Newly ordained *up* to two years of service 80 percent of median
Two *up* to four years service 85 percent of median

Four years *up* to six years service	**90 percent of median**
Six years *up* to eight years service	**95 percent of median**
Over eight years service	**100 percent of median**

The minimum compensation will be adjusted annually based on what the denominational median salary is for the current year. Information regarding the current denominational median salary will be sent to churches by COM by October in order to budget for the coming year.

For example, in 2009 the denominational median was $50,800; therefore, the prorated minimum compensation scale for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and for Commissioned Lay Pastors would be as follows for (for CLP description see II. below):

	Ministers of Word and Sacrament	**Commissioned Lay Pastors**
Newly ordained up to two years of service	**$ 40,640**	**$ 36,576**
Two up to four years of service	**43,180**	**38,862**
Fours years up to six years service	**45,720**	**41,148**
Six years up to eight years service	**48,260**	**43,434**
Over right years service	**50,800**	**45,720**

The Self-Employment Compensation Allowance (SECA) allows a church to reimburse a Minister of Word and Sacrament or CLP up to half of self-employment taxes which are 15.3%. Therefore SECA would equal 7.65% of effective salary (combined salary, housing and utilities). The Board of Pensions does not include SECA in determining Pension and Medical dues.

Salary	______________(a component of effective salary)
Housing	_____________ (a component of effective salary)
Utilities	_____________ (a component of effective salary)
SECA	___________________ (7.65% of effective salary)
Auto Allowance	reimbursable at IRS rate
Continuing Education	$500 and two weeks annually, cumulative 3 years
Pension and Medical	Full
Vacation	Four weeks

II. The minimum compensation for full time *Commissioned Lay Pastors* (CLPs) shall be 90 percent of that for Ministers of Word and Sacrament commensurate with years of service. For CLPs working less than full time the compensation will be prorated to an hourly figure derived from a base of a 40 hour work week

III. Presbytery strongly recommends that a cost of living increase be granted annually. The most common consumer price index (CPI) is issued by the U.S. Dept. of Labor (www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.toc.htm). The category recommended by the Synod of Lakes and Prairies is the expenditures for all items in Table 1: CPI For All Urban Consumers. It is most important that churches and governing bodies use a consistent index from year to year. For years in which the CPI is flat or actually decreases, COM recommends no change to effective salary.

IV. Recognizing that some churches would have difficulty reaching salary minimums using this formula, it is recommended that for every 10 percent in a given salary category below the recommended minimum compensation for that category that the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Lay Pastor be given an additional one week paid vacation or paid continuing education leave. This period of time (six workdays) could also, based on negotiation between the clergy/CLP and the Session of the church, be taken on holiday weekends during the year, in lieu of vacation/continuing education time.

V. Presbytery recommends that clergy and CLPs receive a minimum three-month paid sabbatical following five years of continual service. This sabbatical would include the amount of vacation and continuing education time allowed the clergy/CLP plus an additional six weeks of sabbatical time. Upon accepting a sabbatical, the clergy/CLP would promise to return to the church of service for at least one year following the sabbatical before accepting a call to another place of service.

VI. The Presbytery will maintain a reserve fund for salary support to help congregations pay for pulpit/temporary supply while the clergy/CLP is being paid for sabbatical leave.

VII. Part-time employees are those who are employed to work less than forty (40) hours per week. If they are not temporary, and are employed at least twenty (20) hours a week, they are eligible for the following:

1. Holiday pay, if the holiday falls on one of the regularly scheduled working days for the part-time employee;
2. Jury duty pay;
3. Merit increases in salary;
4. Vacation, sick pay, and parental leave in proportion to hours worked each week;
5. Worker's compensation;
6. Off-the-job disability benefits;
7. Social Security participation;
8. Severance allowance in proportion to hours worked each week.

P-6.0102a
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR CHURCH PROFESSIONALS (April 1990)

I. REQUIREMENTS

In light of the historical importance placed on formal education and training of the ministerial leadership in the Presbyterian tradition and the importance to have this training and education continuously updated, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains requires:

A. When a call is extended to a minister, and all others whose terms of employment are approved by Presbytery, it shall include as a term of the call, two weeks each year for continuing education. During this time the employed person is relieved of all duties but the time is not considered to be part of his/her vacation.

B. That all present employing agencies of the churches or of the Presbytery are encouraged to change the call to their present minister(s) or church professional(s) whose terms of employment are approved by Presbytery to include two weeks per year for continuing education.

C. That the church, parish, or employing agency budget a minimum of $500 each year to apply toward continuing education expenses of their minister(s) and church professional(s).
D. That the two weeks of annual study leave be cumulative for a maximum of six weeks.
E. That the annual study leave grant be cumulative to a maximum of the total amount of three years.
F. That all ministers and church professionals confer with their appropriate board before enrolling in a continuing education program or event.
G. That there shall be an annual accounting to the employing agency of the utilization of continuing education time and monies with reported balances of accrued time and monies each year. This data shall be included in the annual report on ministerial compensation and changes in terms of call.
H. That continuing education be a concern in the triennial visits with sessions and annual visits to parish and non-parish ministers of the Presbytery.
I. That a minister or other church professional whose terms of employment are approved by Presbytery forfeits his/her accumulation of time and allowance for continuing education if it has not been used prior to the dissolution of the ministerial relationship.
J. That employing agencies be encouraged to provide that unused continuing education monies at the end of the three year cumulative term and continuing education monies forfeited at the end of the dissolution of the employment relationship shall be placed in a Presbytery Fund which shall be designated for continuing education events and/or scholarship aid to those serving in Presbytery approved positions.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains recognizes that educational needs vary with individuals and that those needs correlate with both experience and the situations of employment. The Presbytery further recognizes that continuing education opportunities encompass a broad range of events and programs, some involving portions of a day and others requiring several years. The nature of the program and the duration obviously have direct bearing on associated costs. While considerable effort is made to provide close access of continuing education programs particular needs often require substantial travel costs. Special circumstances sometimes require inclusion of a spouse or members of a family. Careful consideration is encouraged of all persons utilizing continuing education time and monies and all employing agencies that provide the funds.

P-6.0102b
PASTORAL RESIGNATION AND DISSOLUTION (April 1990)

I. PASTOR CONTEMPLATES RESIGNATION OR RETIREMENT

A. Committee on Ministry (COM) Chairperson is to be informed, especially as the contemplated resignation becomes imminent. Chairperson may designate a COM member to be in communication with the pastor.
B. Pastor should notify the Executive Presbyter of the intended action and may also wish to consult with colleagues and trusted lay people.
C. Pastor and COM Chairperson (or representative) discuss:
    1. Reasons for this intended resignation
    2. Approximate resignation time frame
    3. Steps involved in resignation procedure
    4. Issues related to continuity of pastoral care for the congregation.

II. PASTOR MAKES DECISION TO RESIGN

A. Inform COM Chairperson and Executive Presbyter immediately; "EXIT CHECK SHEET" is mailed to the pastor, if not already done.
B. Determine if it will be possible to follow the preferable procedure to have a COM Representative present at the Session meeting when the pastor presents resignation request.
C. Discuss with COM person the proposed date for the congregational dissolution meeting.
D. Arrange with COM person a substitute moderator for the congregational meeting if it seems impractical to have the pastor moderate (See G-14.0603).

III. ROLES OF THE SESSION

A. Concur with the request of the pastor to set the date and the time for the congregational meeting and the effective date for the resignation.
B. Determine that all financial obligations to pastor will be fulfilled.
C. Be informed of Presbytery's supportive role which will be carried out through the Committee on Ministry:
   1. Another Pastor from the Presbytery may be present, if needed, to serve as moderator of the congregational meeting.
   2. Presbytery will take final action on pastor's request.
   3. Presbytery will provide a moderator for the Session. Presbytery is prohibited from appointing the associate pastor of the church as moderator.
   4. Presbytery will provide guidance in establishing a Pastor Nominating Committee and work with that Committee.
   5. Presbytery will recommend provision for pastoral leadership and care.
D. Only if Committee on Ministry gives permission - recommend to the special meeting of the Congregation a method for electing the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC):
   1. Determine how many persons shall constitute the PNC.
   2. Discuss concerns necessary in assuring a representative committee is elected.
   3. Decide how the PNC will be nominated.
   4. Make it known that the pastor shall in no way be involved in the influencing the nominating process for the PNC.
   5. Make it clear that the PNC can be elected only after an irrevocable resignation date has been set and approved by the Presbytery.

IV. EXIT CHECK SHEET FOR PASTORS

A. TWO DISSOLUTION VARIATIONS
   1. Retirement by Pastors
      a. Notify COM Chairperson and Executive Presbyter of retirement decision and effective date.
      b. Ask Session to call a congregational meeting to act on resignation request.
      c. Advise Session, only with COM approval, to recommend to congregation a procedure for nominating the PNC.
      d. Elect a PNC at the congregational meeting ONLY under two conditions: 1) Presbytery has set an irrevocable date when the Pulpit will be declared vacant; and 2) the proposed election is included in the Call.
   2. Resignation by Pastor to accept a Call, or for other reasons.
      a. Notify COM Chairperson and Executive Presbyter of intent to resign.
      b. Request Session to call a congregational meeting and recommend effective resignation date.
      c. Notify COM Chairperson and Executive Presbyter when definite resignation date has been set.
B. ADDITIONAL STEPS FOR ALL DISSOLUTION PROCEDURES

1. Request Session to call special meeting of congregation.
2. Inform Session of steps for terminating pastoral relationship that have been worked out with COM chairperson.
   a. Arrange for meeting of Session and COM Representative.
   b. Have Session arrange for nominations for PNC.
   c. Elect two elders to attest to action taken by the congregation. This will be done by attendance at a Presbytery Meeting or a letter to the COM Chairperson.
   d. Pastor should also be prepared to speak at a Presbytery Meeting or the COM regarding the dissolution.
   e. Immediately following congregational meeting pastor will send a completed copy of dissolution request to COM chairperson.
   f. Assemble statistics helpful to Pastoral Nominating Committee in completing the Church Information Form.
      1) Membership today and five years ago.
      2) Annual giving today and five years ago.
      3) Current debt of church and annual payments.
      4) Average attendance at worship services and church school.
      5) List of major organizations of the church.
      6) List of curriculum for Christian Education programs.
3. Request COM Chairperson to appoint a moderator for congregational meeting, if circumstances make it impractical for the pastor to moderate.
4. Attend congregational meeting and present formal resignation.
   g. Fulfill all your responsibilities promptly:
      1) Clear out all personal books and belongings from study.
      2) Clean Manse after movers have gone.
      3) Pay all bills.
      4) Arrange for transfer of any debts.
      5) Notify Board of Pensions.
      6) Have pulpit supply committee appointed by the Session.
   h. Make a clear and final break with the congregation so far as pastoral duties and services are concerned. You will have close friends you will keep in touch with, but refrain from any pastoral functions unless you are invited by the Session.

P-6.0102c
ORDINATION/INSTALLATION (April 1990)

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

The order of worship is to be planned by the person to be ordained or installed. It shall then be submitted in working form (not the printed bulletin) to the presiding officer of the commission for approval <u>no less than two weeks before</u> <u>the service is to be held</u>. The presiding officer will make any necessary additions or corrections before the bulletins are printed.

The order of worship shall be consistent with The Directory for Worship. The following elements **must** be included in the service:

Call to Worship; Opening Statement by the Presiding Officer; Scripture Reading; Sermon Appropriate to the Occasion; The Questions as given in G-14.0405 and14.0510 (2005 Edition); The Laying on of Hands with Prayer (ordination service); Prayer of Installation (installation service); Statement of Ordination or Installation by the Presiding Officer; A

Welcome by Members of Presbytery and others; A Benediction by the Person being Ordained and Installed

Other elements may be added to the service as appropriate such as hymns by the congregation by a choir, prayers, a charge to the minister and/or the congregation, and a brief statement by the person being ordained or installed before the benediction is given.

Taking an offering for the purpose of funding seminary scholarships is encouraged. Funds received would be maintained in an account under the control and disbursed at the discretion of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

A helpful order of worship, prayers and scripture readings suitable for ordination or installation may be found in The Worshipbook. "A Service of Ordination and Installation". Helpful prayers may be found in The Book of Common Worship. Questions from The Form of Government **must** be used.

Particular care must be taken to assure that language used throughout the service is inclusive.

The Commission

The Commission will consist of at least five members, one of whom shall be the Moderator of the Presbytery or his/her designee, who will act as the presiding officer. Presbytery will reimburse travel expenses for these five commissioners. Please try to select commissioners close to the worship site. The candidate or congregation may invite others to serve on the commission or to participate in the service. Their Expenses, however, will be the responsibility of the inviting party.

P6.0102d EXAMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP (April 1990)

Persons seeking continuing membership in the Presbytery shall be examined by

A. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry, if seeking ordination, or
B. The Committee on Ministry, if previously ordained to the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament (see G-11.0402).

[**P-6.0102e** was deleted October 1997 - see page VOL VIII-331]

P-6.0102f PROCESS FOR EXAMINATION OF MINISTERS SEEKING MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS (April 1984)

The Presbytery, through its appropriate committee, shall examine each minister or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this Church." (G-11.0402)

I. ACTIVE MINISTERS FROM OTHER PRESBYTERIES SEEKING MEMBERSHIP

A. Initial Interview
   1. Two members (ordinarily) of the Committee on Ministry, one of whom shall be the COM representative, will interview each minister at the earliest possible time

prior to that persons being invited to be a candidate for a ministerial position in this Presbytery.

2. The purpose of the interview is:
   a. To provide each candidate with information about this Presbytery,
   b. To inquire if the candidate has questions about the congregation or community that may be served,
   c. To inform the candidate that the Committee on Ministry is required to make a value

      judgment on the candidacy of every minister seeking membership in this Presbytery, and
   d. To alert the candidate to the required examination interview and explain the procedures.

B. Examination Interview
1. After a minister has been invited to become a candidate a minimum of two members of the COM, ordinarily an elder and a minister, will meet with that candidate:
   a. To review the written responses (see #2 below),
   b. To discuss any items of mutual concern, and
   c. To make a recommendation to the COM regarding this person's membership in this Presbytery.
2. Each candidate will submit a written response of no more than one page in length to each of the examination areas stated in the Form of Government (G-11.0402):
   a. "Christian Faith" Summarize your faith pilgrimage and identify. the "growing edge" of your faith at this time.
   b. "Views in Theology" State your understanding of the theological views set forth in the first three Constitutional Questions (a,b,c) addressed to elders, deacons, and ministers at the time of their ordination or installation (G-14.0207 and G-14.0405).
   c. "The Sacraments" How important are the Sacraments in the life of the Church, as you understand them, and why?
   d. "The Government of the Church" Read through the entire Book of Order and note a minimum of three items that you wish to discuss with the representatives from the COM. Identify these as items of your strong endorsement, concern, confusion, or reluctance compliance.

II. MEMBER-AT-LARGE MINISTERS FROM OTHER PRESBYTERIES

These ministers will be examined according to the procedure for active ministers as set forth under #I-B above.

Why do they seek membership in this Presbytery?

III. MINISTERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS WHO SEEK MEMBERSHIP

A. Examination of ministers from other denominations will follow the same procedure as examination of active members from other PRESBYTERIES.

B. In addition, the COM requests written responses to the following questions:
1. Why do you seek membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. Why are you leaving your present denomination?

C. These persons are to be informed that as part of their examination they must be prepared to answer questions posed by members of the Presbytery at the same time they are being presented for membership (G-11.0404). Such questions will normally be confined to the area of the minister's belief.

IV. POLICY ON INTEGRATION OF NON-PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS INTO OUR MEMBERSHIP (April 1996)

All non-Presbyterian ministers appointed to serve congregations of this Presbytery shall be required, prior to being admitted to membership to complete study of Presbyterian polity under the direction of the committee on Ministry and in accordance with a process to be developed by the Committee on Ministry and approved by Presbytery. Successful completion of the study shall be determined by the results of a review conducted under the supervision of the Committee on Ministry.

Following the successful completion of the review, such ministers may be admitted to temporary membership in Presbytery under the provisions of G-11.0404c, upon recommendation by the Committee on ministry.

Such ministers shall be offered the option of installation to permanent pastoral office (if appropriate) following admission to membership in Presbytery. If they choose to decline installation, Presbytery shall appoint them to temporary pastoral office.

Such ministers may be named as moderators of sessions only after successful completion of the review in polity and admission to Presbytery membership..

V. HONORABLY RETIRED AND INACTIVE MINISTERS FROM OTHER PRESBYTERIES

Examination of Honorably Retired ministers and inactive ministers who seek membership in this Presbytery will be considered by the COM on an individual basis at the time of application.

P-6.0102g
MINISTER MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL SECURITY (Oct 1988)

It is assumed that all minister members of the Presbytery will participate in Social Security. This policy relates to the policies and practices of the Board of Pensions whose benefits and extended coverage schedules are predicated on their participation in Social Security.

Furthermore, the Presbytery also recognizes that ministers, for reasons of conscience only, may waive their coverage under Social Security; but where that waiver is exercised the Presbytery, in relationship to the Board of Pensions, is released from any financial liabilities incurred by those who exercise their right of waiver.

When Social Security participation is waived by a minister of the Presbytery, a copy of the Waiver of Social Security, required by the Board of Pensions, becomes part of that minister's file.

P-6.0102h
PROHIBITED MODERATORIAL APPOINTMENT (October 1992)

When a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor, in a Presbyterian Church which has an Associate Pastor, the Associate Pastor shall not be appointed as moderator of that Church's session.

P-6.0102i
THE FORMATION OF LARGER PARISHES (October 1996)

A Presbyterian congregation may wish to join with other congregations to form a larger parish in order to carry out its mission more effectively, to provide more adequate pastoral support, to provide a lively ministry to its members, or for other reasons. Such a larger parish may consist of two or more congregations from either Presbyterian or other denominations with whom we are in correspondence. Each congregation maintains its own identity, organizational structure, and denominational relationship. In addition, each congregation agrees to cooperate with the other congregations as a member of the parish in certain aspects of ministry. The parish responsibilities may include, but need not be limited to, the support and oversight of a pastor.

When a session wants to consider becoming part of a larger parish, it will invite the Committee on Ministry **(COM)** of Presbytery to guide the process. A representative of COM will meet with the session to discuss the various aspects of a larger parish.

PURPOSE

In considering a purpose for a larger parish, a session is encouraged to engage in some Biblical and theological reflection about who God calls us to be and what God calls us to do. The following questions are helpful in applying this reflection to their own specific situations: What are our dreams for a larger parish if it could be formed? What are the significant trends in our community? How do those trends shape our mission? What are the significant trends in our congregation? How do those trends affect our ministry? What kinds of ministry could grow if we formed a larger parish?

These and similar questions lead to a brief, clear, specific statement of purpose for the larger parish. When this is accomplished, the session may wish to extend an invitation to other congregations to join in considering the value of forming a larger parish.

When the governing bodies of two or more congregations wish to pursue the formation of a larger parish, they should each appoint representatives to a planning group. With the guidance of the representative of the COM and representative(s) from the judicatories of other denominations involved, the planning group will consider and recommend to their respective governing bodies a proposed agreement for their approval. The parish agreement will finally need to be approved by the congregations and the judicatories of the denominations involved. (See Criteria for Parish Agreements".)

PASTOR (HOW A PASTOR IS CALLED/APPOINTED)
An all Presbyterian parish agreement may state how many persons shall be elected from each congregation to form the pastor nominating committee. An ecumenical parish may specify that pastors from participating denominations may be called or appointed, how the denomination of the pastor may vary with each new pastor, and how pastors may be asked to relate to the denomination not their own.

ADMINISTRATION (HOW THE PARISH IS ORGANIZED TO CONDUCT ITS BUSINESS)
Administration of the affairs of a larger parish shall be by a parish council composed of members of the governing bodies of the congregations in the parish. Members of the parish council shall be elected or appointed for specific terms of service. The planning group will want to consider how many shall come from each congregation and the length of term. Other questions to be considered include: how often meetings shall be held; what constitutes a quorum; how special meetings may be called; how the moderator, secretary, and treasurer will be elected; and whether there will be committees of the Parish Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL (HOW IT WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSE STATED ABOVE)

FINANCES
A parish council must have a budget to support the work for which it has been given responsibility. This will ordinarily be for support of the pastor, the parish office, and any parish programs. The budget is ordinarily recommended each year by the parish council to the governing bodies of the congregations in the parish. A stated formula for the support by each congregation will normally be a part of the Parish Agreement. The parish council will review annually the adequacy of the compensation for the pastor.

The parish council treasurer shall make a report to each meeting of the parish council, or more often if the council requests it.

It should be clearly stated how an annual independent review of the finances or audit will be conducted.

PASTORAL OVERSIGHT
The parish council, which includes representatives of all governing bodies of the participating congregations, will ordinarily provide for the annual performance review of the pastor. The pastor will ordinarily make regular reports to the parish council as well as to the governing bodies of each congregation as to the use of his or her time in each congregation. The division of the pastor's time among the congregations is a matter for the parish council.

OTHER EMPLOYEES

The parish council may employ a secretary or other employees as agreed to in the parish agreement. The parish budget shall include sufficient funds for salary and benefits including continuing professional development, Worker's Compensation, FICA, and any other required taxes.

PROGRAM

The parish council may have oversight of agreed upon parish program. This may include special worship services at various times of the Christian year, vacation church school, and any other programs the governing bodies of the congregations ask it to carry out.

PROPERTY

A parish will often use office equipment or other property belonging to one congregation. A record should be kept of whom property belongs to and what equipment is purchased by the parish.

AMENDMENTS

A parish agreement will need to be changed from time to time as circumstances and needs change. The agreement should specify how the agreement may be amended, including required approval by the congregations and the judicatories of the denominations involved in the parish.

DISSOLUTION

A parish agreement should include provisions for how it may be dissolved. This will normally require six-months notice to the other congregations and judicatories and require the approval by the judicatory having oversight of the congregation seeking to withdraw.

A good parish agreement will enable congregations to be mutually supportive of each others ministry and to handle differences when they arise in ways that are fair to all. Examples of effective parish agreements are available for planning groups as they develop their own agreement with their partners. Parish agreements usually run two to four pages in length.

CRITERIA FOR PARISH AGREEMENTS

A. NAME (What will the parish be called?)

B. MEMBERSHIP (What churches will be included in the parish arrangement?)

C. PURPOSE (What a parish agreement is desirable?)
for example: "The purpose of XYZ Parish is to further the mission of Jesus Christ by providing for a shared ministry and participating in common program."

D. ADMINISTRATION of the Parish (How the Parish will organize itself?)
   1. Provision for a "Parish Council" or "Board" to conduct Parish business
      Some considerations:
      - who will serve on the Council and terms of service
      - meetings: quorum, frequency of regular meetings, how special meetings may be called
      - how meetings will be conducted: officers (moderator, secretary), parliamentary authority
   2. Committees of the Council or Executive Board (if any).

E. RESPONSIBILITIES of the Parish Council (how the purpose will be accomplished?)
   1. Oversight of the pastor
      Some considerations:
      - calling a pastor

for example: formation of a PNC, or, if interdenominational, intention to rotate denominations of pastors

- developing terms of pastor's call:
  terms to be approved by congregations
- providing for annual review -- by Sessions or Parish Council?
- determining division of pastor's time in the parish
- if parish is interdenominational, expecting pastor to relate to all denominations involved

2. Finances
   Some considerations:
   - developing a budget (pastor's call, manse, parish office, etc.)
   - formula for churches' contribution to the budget
   - election of Parish treasurer
   - provision for regular reporting of finances
   - provision for audit
3. Planning Common Program

F. ADOPTION of and AMENDMENT to the Agreement
- approval by Parish Council, congregations, Presbytery/District/Conference, etc.

G. Provisions for DISSOLUTION of the Agreement
- approval by Parish Council, congregations, Presbytery/District/Conference, etc.
- normally include at least six months notice.

P-6.0102j
PARENTAL LEAVE

In addition to other benefits, a minister and staff are entitled to parental leave in the period immediately preceding and/or following the arrival (birth, adoption, or guardianship) of a child/children as follows:

A. The minister or staff should normally apply for the leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child/children, specifying the amount of time desired.

B. Up to six weeks of parental leave will be at full salary. Additional compensated leave may be negotiated. An additional two weeks is recommended for a woman who has delivered by Caesarean section.

The leave may include a period in advance of the expected arrival of the child/children as recommended by the physician. Return to part-time employment with part-time compensation may be considered.

C. The leave should normally be unbroken except for any period of absence for medical reasons.

D. Those who take parental leave shall retain their full employment and all other rights pertaining to their employment.

E. For part-time employees, their leave should be proportional to the hours worked each week.

P-6.0103a
REGULATIONS FOR LOAN-GRANT FUND FOR CANDIDATES (April 1990)

In addition to its duty to show a kindly and sympathetic interest in candidates for the Professional Ministry under its care, the Presbytery has established a LOAN-GRANT FUND for such candidates to aid them in meeting some of the expenses of their seminary education.

I. FUNDING

Funding will come from the General Fund of the Presbytery.

II. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to borrow from the fund, a person:

A. Must be an Inquirer or a Candidate for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament Under Care of Presbytery.
B. Must be enrolled as a student in a seminary approved by Presbytery.

III. AMOUNTS

A. The maximum annual loan-grant per candidate is $1,000.
B. The candidate is limited to three loan-grants (four if an internship year is used).

IV. APPLICATION

A. A person wishing to borrow from the Fund shall make application in writing on a form provided,

 to the Chairperson of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
B. The application must include a complete financial statement by the candidate, on a form provided.
C. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry has been given full jurisdiction in the administration of the Fund and the granting of the Loan-Grants, with annual accounting given to Presbytery Council.
D. The granting of Loan-Grants is subject to the availability of funds.

V. NATURE OF LOAN-GRANT, INTEREST, AND REPAYMENT

A. This is a LOAN.
B. This Loan(s) shall be interest-free until graduation or termination of studies leading to a degree for Professional Ministry.
C. An annual interest rate of 2% shall assume upon graduation from seminary, and payment of this interest shall be made annually upon the anniversary of graduation. Repayment of the Loan(s) may be made at any time, not to exceed seven (7) years after graduation from Seminary.
D. After five (5) years of full-time professional ministry in the Church, the recipient of the Loan(s) may apply to have the Loan(s) converted to a Grant(s), submitting with the application a record of service to the Church.
E. In the event of the termination of studies leading to a degree for Professional Ministry, or a change of occupation any time after graduation from seminary prior to the completion of five (5) years of full-time service to the Church, the Loan(s) shall become due and arrangements for its repayment shall be negotiated with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of Presbytery, or its successor, within ninety (90) days of such termination

or change of occupation.

VI. AGENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND REVIEW

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry is the agent of administration and all application, correspondence, negotiations and inquiries shall be directed to this Committee.

P-6.0103b
COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY PROCESS SUMMARY (April 1991)

The Preparation for Ministry Process involves two phases: Inquiry and Candidacy. these two phases are designed to explore the call, evaluate the gifts and support the preparation of men and women who feel themselves called to be ministers of the Word and Sacrament (G-14.030l) Committee on Preparation for Ministry works closely with those persons within its congregations who wish to prepare themselves for this ordained office. Since the model for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament is the ministry of Jesus Christ, it is the committee's particular responsibility to help these individuals grow toward maturity in Christ.

Both the inquiry Phase and the Candidacy Phase of the process nurture and test the individual's development in five key areas:

A. **Education for Ministry,** which includes evaluation of the individual's academic potential and progress and reflection on the purpose of educational experience and their relation to preparation for ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
B. **Spiritual Development,** which provides a framework in which individuals can reflect on their personal faith journeys.
C. **Interpersonal Relations,** which provide opportunities to reflect on how an individual relates to others and what this means in terms of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.
D. **Personal Growth,** through which persons reflect on who they are, what areas they need to develop, how to understand their call, and how to develop personal stewardship.
E. **Professional Development,** to help persons develop specific skills that will enhance their effectiveness as ministers of the Word and Sacrament and as presbyters.

During both the Inquiry Phase and the Candidacy Phase, the individual's progress is measured by specific **expected outcomes** formulated in light of these five growth areas. It is important that the expected outcomes be understood as essential goals rather than simply as minimum requirements to be met or papers to be written. These expected outcomes serve as the focus of ongoing consultations between the Inquirer (or Candidate) and the session and the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

The process of Inquiry and Candidacy is most effective when it reflects the biblical theme of the **covenant relationship**. That is, when it is both a response to God's faithfulness and an expression of the concern people have for one another. The process further affirms that all aspects of the church's life are based upon God's gracious promises and on the belief that God's self-giving love undergirds all that the church is and does. Throughout the entire process, all who are involved in the covenant relationship need to approach their tasks with seriousness and diligence, communicating openly and intentionally with each other.

PHASE I: INQUIRY

The purpose of Inquiry is to provide opportunities for the church and for those who believe they may be called to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore and test that call together. To make this exploration as effective as possible, a network of caring, supportive relationships is initiated - first, between the Inquirer and the church session, then with the Presbytery through its Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and with the seminary. In regular consultations with the committee the inquirer evaluates the personal implications and the suitability of a church occupation, is guided in prayerful examination of his or her motivation, personal faith and experience in the congregation, and makes a serious assessment of the gifts needed by ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This phase also provides the church with opportunities to respond directly to the inquirer's questions and concerns.

Admission to Inquiry

A member of a congregation is considered for enrollment as an inquirer when he or she approaches the session about the possibility of becoming a minister of the Word and Sacrament and formally agrees with the session and with the Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry to explore the implications of this quest. Enrollment is intended to be a thoughtful and deliberate step; people are encouraged to take this formal action soon after they have made their personal decision to explore this ministry so that the Presbytery's committee can provide them with support and counsel as early as possible.

During Inquiry

Before deciding whether to apply for candidacy, the inquirer consults at least once a year with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. During each consultation, the committee and the Inquirer assess her or his progress toward previously established goals in each of the five growth areas and together negotiate appropriate new goals.

When the Inquirer decides to apply to become a Candidate, it is the session which must determine whether or not to recommend her or him to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. (The application procedure is detailed in the Book of Order, G-14.0305.) This process of becoming a Candidate requires at least one meeting between the Inquirer and the session, in consultation with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, at least one meeting between the Inquirer and the committee, and approval of the Presbytery.

Completion of Inquiry

The Inquiry Phase concludes when the Committee on Preparation for Ministry knows the Inquirer well enough to determine whether or not to recommend that the Presbytery receive him or her as a Candidate.

Expected Outcomes (G-14.0303g(1)-(6))

Before being received as a Candidate, each Inquirer shall present:

"(1) A statement of her or his understanding of Christian vocation in the Reformed tradition and how it relates to her or his sense of call;

"(2) A statement of personal faith which demonstrates an understanding of the Reformed tradition;

"(3) An analysis of at least one concept from the personal faith statement regarding what it suggests about God, humanity, and their interrelationship;

"(4) A statement of what it means to be presbyterian, indicating how that awareness has grown out of participation in the life of a particular church;

"(5) A statement of self-understanding which reflects the inquirer's personal and cultural background and includes a plan for maintaining spiritual, physical and mental health;

"(6) A statement of her or his understanding of the tasks ministers of the Word and Sacrament perform, including an awareness of her or his specific gifts for ministry of the Word and Sacrament and of areas in which growth is needed."

PHASE 2: CANDIDACY

The purpose of this Phase is to provide opportunities for the church to support persons received as Candidates in their preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry to create an environment in which the uniqueness of each individual Candidate is taken seriously. As partners in a covenant relationship, both the Committee and the Candidate are encouraged to work together as they plan for and evaluate the Candidate's growth and development.

Admission to Candidacy

An Inquirer becomes a Candidate by action of Presbytery. At that time the Candidate formally agrees to accept the Presbytery's supervision in her or his preparation for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament (G-14.0305f(3)).

During Candidacy

The covenant relationship between the Candidate and the Presbytery is expressed through the negotiation and review of a series of learning contracts based on the expected outcomes for this phase. In consultations that occur at least once a year (G-14.0309), both the committee and the Candidate assess her or his progress toward completion of previously established goals and negotiate appropriate new goals. It is essential that during each consultation the decision be made as to whether Candidacy should be continued, especially if it becomes clear that adequate growth is not taking place.

Completion of Candidacy

Candidacy continues until the Presbytery acts in one of three ways to remove the Candidate's name from the Roll of Candidates:

A. Withdrawal by the Candidate
B. Removal by the Presbytery
C. Completion of the Preparation for Ministry process with a call to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. In this case, the following steps are involved:
    1. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry determines that the Candidate is ready to be examined for ordination;
    2. The Candidate receives a call; and
    3. The Candidate is examined and approved for ordination by the responsible Presbytery.

Expected Outcomes (G-14.0305j)

By the end of this phase each Candidate to be ordained shall demonstrate readiness to begin the ministry of the Word and Sacrament by:

"(1) Presenting evidence of competence in the fields of theology, Bible, polity, and worship and Sacraments, ordinarily attested by completion of the requirements of G-14.03lO; and evidence of ministerial skill attested in the supervised practice of ministry;

"(2) Presenting evidence of readiness to participate in a calling Presbytery's plan for transition and of plans for continuing study and growth;

"(3) Expressing theological views compatible with the confessional documents of the church;

"(4) Expressing understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination (G-14.0405) informed by knowledge of the church in diverse settings;

"(5) Revealing commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament within the discipline of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with personal maturity, spiritual depth, and a capacity to respond to the needs of others, including colleagues in ministry;

"(6) Presenting a written sermon, together with a description of the contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation of the biblical material out of which the sermon arose. This sermon shall be preached before the calling Presbytery or a committee thereof as a part of the appearance of the candidate as set forth in G-14.0402."

Requirements to be Certified Ready for a Call (G-14.0310)

To be certified by the Presbytery responsible for the Candidate's preparation, each Candidate is required to fulfill the following (G-14.0310):

"a. Demonstration of readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament as required in G-14.0305;

"b. Presentation of a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university; together with a diploma;

"c. Presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the Presbytery, the transcript showing satisfactory grades, and presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts;

"d. Presentation of satisfactory grades together with the examination papers in the five areas covered by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates."

It takes at least two years to proceed from admission to the Inquiry Phase to Ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament. During this time, the Inquirer (or Candidate) and members of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry strive to discover and be faithful to God's purpose. The committee's recommendations to begin and to continue the Candidacy Phase are based on prayerful reflection, on common negotiations with the Candidate, and on their mutual discernment that God has called that person and that he or she has adequately developed in response to that call.

A Manual for Preparation for Ministry has been developed by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). Detailed goals expectations, and means of assessment for inquirers and candidates are included in the manual. This manual can be obtained from the Presbytery Office or the current CPM chair. Seekers, inquirers, candidates, sessions, and pastors will find this manual helpful in dealing with the preparation for ministry process.

P-6.0103c
OFFERINGS AT SERVICES OF ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION (April 1990)

That, pertaining to services of ordination and installation of ministers in our Presbytery:

A. Those responsible for planning such services be encouraged to consider receiving an offering for the purpose of funding seminary scholarships.

B. Funds thus received be maintained in an account under the control of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

C. These funds be disbursed at the discretion of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

P-6.0104
COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS POLICY (January 2006)

Policies (Revised October 2009)

I. Introduction.

The Book of Order [G-9.080l] states: "The nominating Committee shall nominate persons to fill all vacancies on continuing committees (except the nominating committee), councils, boards, and other bodies that require election by the Presbytery or synod." To fulfill this task the following policies and procedures have been developed.

II. Requests for Nominees.

The Nominating Committee shall regularly bring before the Presbytery and its constituent congregations the ongoing need for qualified persons to serve the Church. Each year, prior to May1, the Nominating Committee shall notify each session, in writing, of its responsibility to submit names to the Nominating Committee for service on Presbytery committees, boards, councils, and affiliated corporations; for service on General Assembly or Synod Commissioners; for service as General Assembly and Synod Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs). This information will become part of the Presbytery's skills bank inventory. Each session shall determine its own methods of selecting nominees and shall submit such nominations to the Nominating Committee by September 1. All nominations shall be accompanied by relevant data indicating why the nominees should be considered for particular positions.

III. Nominating Criteria.

A. In nominating people as Presbytery officers, committee chairs or members, and for service with other governing bodies and affiliated corporations, the Committee will follow these criteria:

1. It shall seek the most qualified person available for the position. Primary consideration will be given to those seeking renomination.
2. It shall give consideration to the nomination of equal numbers of lay women, lay men, and ministers (i.e.,1/3 each).
3. It shall seek to make possible the implementation of the Church's commitment to inclusiveness and participation by working to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, or marital status.
4. It will attempt to give each committee a geographical distribution of membership, keeping in mind the cost of travel and potential for car pooling.
5. It shall contact committee chairs regarding re-election of those eligible for a second term.
6. Council and committee chairs shall be nominated from the existing membership thereof, wherever possible.
7. Nominees for Vice-Moderator and Moderator shall be persons actively involved in and familiar with the mission and ministry of this Presbytery.
8. Each nominee will be provided with an appropriate job description and will also be informed of the time and travel requirements of the position.

B. In nominating people for Synod Council, Synod Committees, and other Synod responsibilities, or General Assembly positions, it will inform the nominees of the job descriptions and time commitments for these positions and the relationship and communication channels to the Presbytery.

C. In nominating ministers and elders as commissioners and alternates for Synod and General Assembly, the following criteria will be followed:

1. Functionally, these shall be 3 year nominations for Synod commissioners and 4 year nominations for General Assembly commissioners. Synod commissioners shall be eligible for a second term and first alternates to General Assembly will be the commissioners to the next meeting, unless extenuating circumstances prevent such service.

2. Consideration will be given to (i) the qualifications which will make the nominee an effective representative, (ii) a written statement, describing their desire, qualifications, and sense of being called to serve the Presbytery as a commissioner, (iii) service in Presbytery and other governing bodies, and (iv) the nominee's availability to report to Presbytery.
3. The Committee shall seek to implement the Church's commitment to inclusiveness and participation by working to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, marital status, membership in large or small congregations, geographical location, and representation at previous meetings of Synod or General Assembly.
4. Nominees shall be informed of the obligation to participate in an orientation program and to report to Presbytery at the first stated meeting following their service as a commissioner. They shall also be informed of their obligation to visit churches upon invitation to bring directly to the local congregations reports of the Synod and General Assembly meetings.

D. Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs) to Synod and General Assembly. In nominating YADs we will consider:

1. Service in the church, in the Youth Connection Council, involvement in Presbytery youth activities, ability to report to Presbytery, and desire to be a YAD.
2. First consideration shall be given to the previous year's alternates.
3. Care shall be taken to select youth who will be effective (i.e., conscientious, informed) representatives to General Assembly or Synod.

IV. Elections.

Elections to fill vacancies on Presbytery Committees shall be held at the October Stated Meeting. Elections to all other vacant offices will normally be held at the annual (January) meeting.

V. Vacancies.

A. The Committee will work with the Moderator and Council to fill vacancies needing immediate attention.

B. Vacancies not needing immediate attention will be dealt with at the annual meeting of the Nominating Committee.

P-6.0106b
WILLS EMPHASIS DEFERRED GIFTS STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (April 1986)

Policies (Revised October 2009)

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains recognizes the many benefits to individuals and families which are derived from responsible estate planning. The Presbytery also knows the unlimited potential of financial support for the mission causes of the Church available through the conscientious charitable estate planning of Presbyterians. Therefore, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, through its Support Committee, adopts the following:

I.

A. Each congregation is encouraged to implement a Wills Emphasis and Deferred Gifts Program and to adopt a plan for receiving, managing& and disbursing such gifts as are received for the benefit of congregational, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly mission.

B. All donors and Sessions are encouraged to name the Presbytery of the Northern Plains as a secondary remainderman in their agreements, plans, or other instruments in the eventuality that the congregation (as the first beneficiary) ceases to exist or to be related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

C. Congregations are encouraged to use the services and program materials of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation (Indiana) or its successor for assistance in the implementation of a Wills Emphasis and Deferred Gifts Program.

D. Donors are encouraged to consult with a representative of the Foundation for assistance in the consideration of making a bequest or a deferred gift.

II. THE PRESBYTERY OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS ENCOURAGES INDIVIDUALS TO SUPPORT THE PRESBYTERY'S MISSION THROUGH A BEQUEST, A DEFERRED GIFT: OR OTHER DEVICE IN THE FOLLOWING:

A. An <u>endowment gift</u> in which the corpus is held in perpetuity and the income only is Expended.

B. An <u>unrestricted gift</u> which will be disbursed by the presbytery where the need is greatest.

C. A <u>restricted gift</u> which will be used for designated work within the Presbytery. (CAUTION: Restricted gifts should be made carefully and, where possible, in consultation with the Presbytery, with the understanding that needs may change. It is often best when planning to make a restricted gift to use a phrase such as "preference is to be given to [state purpose] but the assets may be used for other similar purposes if the specified restricted purpose is no longer needed in that amount".)

III. THE PRESBYTERY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

A. Endowment Fund monies may be invested with the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation (Indiana) or with another fiduciary approved by the Presbytery, with the intent of insuring the future buying power of the fund. All income from investment will be administered by the Presbytery Council.

B. Unrestricted gifts will be administered by the Presbytery Council.

C. Restricted gifts will be administered by the Presbytery Council.

D. The Committee on Support will assist congregations in developing their Wills Emphasis and Deferred Gifts programs by:

1. Providing assistance to and training for officers and Wills Emphasis and Deferred Gifts Committee members.
2. Supplying names of resource people who can assist congregational Wills Emphasis and Deferred Gifts programs.
3. Providing models of congregational plans for receiving, administering and disbursing bequests, deferred gifts, or other devices.
4. Providing current materials and other relevant information for the support of congregational programs in consultation with representatives of the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation.
5. Providing programs and program options which will encourage and support

Christian Estate Planning.

P-6.0108
SESSION RECORDS COMMITTEE PROCEDURES
(Revised October 1997)

I. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Discontinue the present practice of reading records and rolls at meetings of presbytery especially in recognition that we are considering new ways to "do" presbytery meetings. This will allow members of the committee, who are also commissioners and voters to fully participate in the deliberations of the meeting.

B. Designated reading activities be designated at sites in each of the quadrants of the presbytery in each calendar year. This reading activity will be overseen by members of the committee.

C. Either the clerk of session or moderators of session are expected to present their record books annually. The moderators and clerk are urged to attend and fully participate in the procedures which will both train and explain the necessity for the various methods used in compiling information. The reading sessions will also be a forum for the exchange of ideas which can be helpful at the time and also be of value to Council and Presbytery. This is a "bottom up" activity for information.

D. Reports will be make to presbytery as they occur and as a formal annual report naming complying and non-complying congregations.

E. Report the progress of records review, and status of compliance with the Constitution, to the Presbytery.

F. Arrange to have the reviewed books dated and signed by the Moderator.

G. Report the comments from the review of each church's records to the respective clerk of session.

H. Keep records of the review process and alert those sessions whose books are due for review to respond by:

1. Bringing the records into the next committee review (at Presbytery meeting) or
2. Reviewing the records in their cluster and bringing the books to Presbytery for the Moderator's signature.

II. SESSION RECORDS CHECK-LIST

Page 1 of Check List

TO THE CLERK OF SESSION:

The Session Records Committee hopes that you will find this check-list helpful in maintaining constitutionally required records. Leave this form with your records when they are brought to Presbytery to be reviewed. Comments will be noted and this form will be returned to you along with a new form for the following year.

G-10.030l

Each Session shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings which shall be submitted at least once a year to the Presbytery for its general review and control. (See also D3.0300)

A. THE MINUTES OF SESSION SHALL INCLUDE: praying

I. For <u>every meeting of the Session</u>, record:

1. The date, time and place of meeting
2. The type of meeting (regular, adjourned, or special)
3. The prayer, opening and closing the meeting, and the name of the one
4. The full names of the moderator, members present, and members absent
5. The reading and approval of the minutes of the last meeting.
   a. A separate paragraph to record each matter considered
   b. Record of the business transacted
6. The minutes of every meeting should be signed by the moderator or clerk.

II. Miscellaneous

7. Record only what is vital to discussion. Don't record (unless specifically ordered by the Session):
   a. Details of discussion
   b. Plans not adopted, suggestions not followed, or motions which were withdrawn
8. Avoid erasures, writing between lines, footnotes, or insertions. Nothing is to be taped or stapled into the record book.
9. Refer to previous actions of session (when mentioned) by page number.
   a. All pages are to be numbered.
   b. Empty pages and spaces are to be X'd out.

III. Every year, record:

10. The fact that the minister's salary has been reviewed by the Session with him/her. (G-14.0506).
11. All proceedings of the church as reviewed by the Session, including:
    a. The full record of congregational meetings, including attestation by the Moderator and Clerk. (G-7.0307)
    b. The establishment, and names of members of the congregational Nominating Committee. (G-14.0201b)
    c. Minutes shall include total receipts and expenditures; the male/female ratio to reflect the constituency of the congregation; age (under 25, over 65, other) racial and ethnic composition of the congregation. (G-14.0201d, G-4.0403)
    d. Election of clerk, and the term determined by Session (G-9.0203).
    e. Election of treasurer annually by Session. (G-10.0401)
12. Names and dates of ordination and installation of Elders and Deacons previously elected with record of training. (G-14.0205)

IV. As the occasion warrants, record:

13. Elders elected as commissioners to Presbytery, period of service, and (after service) report attendance. (G-10.0102o)
14. The administration of the Lord's Supper, at the next regular meeting of Session. When it is administered outside of a worship service record also the name(s) of the member(s) assisting. (W-2.4010)
15. Record the authorization of baptism for adults or infants. (W-2.3011)
16. The following about applicants for membership: (G-10.0102a))
    a. Everyone: full name, and whether baptized or not
    b. Married women: maiden name, and wife or widow of ___________
    c. Minors: son or daughter of _________________
    d. Transfers: name of church dismissed from _________________________
17. The name and church dismissed to of members transferring to another church. [G-10.0302b(1)]
18. The program of Christian Education; including staff approved by session, curriculum, and

all other pertinent matters. (G-10.0102e)

19. In the matter of discipline, who was disciplined, why and how. (D-5.0100b)

B. THE CONSTITUTIONAL ROLLS AND REGISTERS SHALL INCLUDE:
(submitted for review only when required by Presbytery)

1. Baptized Members (G-10.0302a[1])
2. Active Members (G-10.0302a[2])
3. Inactive Members (G-10.0302a[3])
4. Affiliate Members (G-10.0302a[4])
5. Register of marriages, with dates, witnesses, names, officiates, etc. (G-10.0302c[1])
6. Register of baptisms (G-10.0302c[2])
7. Register of Elders (G-10.0302c[3])
8. Register of Deacons (G-10.0302c[4])
9. Register of Pastors, co-pastors, associate pastors, assistant pastors, interim pastors, stated supplies, and parish associates serving the church. [G-10.0302c(5)]

SESSION RECORDS CHECK-LIST

Page 2 of Check List

**** Church Name and City**

A. Minutes

Date

Page

I. 1. Date, time, place
2. Type of meeting
3. Prayer - start & end
4. Names recorded
5. Minutes/Paragraphs/Business
6. Minutes signed

II. 7. Record business
8. Avoid erasures, etc.
9. Previous actions

III. 10. Annual review of the pastor's salary
11. Session's annual review of all church records & activities
12. Ordination/Installation/Training of Elders

IV. 13. Elder Commissioner/Term of Office
14. Record observance of Lord's Supper
15. Record baptisms
16. Membership applicants
17. Membership transferred
18. Christian Education
19. Matters of discipline

B. Constitutional Rolls and Registers

Date

Page

1. Baptized member
2. Active members
3. Inactive members
4. Affiliate members
5. Marriages - name & dates

6. Baptisms
7. Elders
8. Deacons
9. Pastors, co-pastors, etc.

** Note: The items above are numbered to correspond to those detailed on reverse side. Please fill in (a) date of meeting and (b) pages of Session Record where these minutes/names can be found, and (c) check appropriate items.

D-3.0300 -- In reviewing the proceedings...(Presbytery) shall determine...

a. whether the proceedings have been correctly recorded;
b. whether they have been regular, and in accordance with The Constitution;
c. whether they have been prudent and equitable;
d. whether they have been faithful to the mission of the whole church;
e. whether the lawful injunctions of a higher governing body have been obeyed.

P-6.0112
PRESBYTERY ENDOWMENT FUND (Revised October 1997)

WHEREAS, Christians are called to be faithful stewards of all of the gifts of God; and

WHEREAS, the Church is called to be Christ's body therefore extending the Good News to all it touches; and

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of the Northern Plains is an agent of the mission the Church is called to do; and

WHEREAS, there are women and men of faith who have been richly blessed and look for opportunities to witness to their faith through financial gifts which will bless others; and

WHEREAS, gifts held as endowment generate income which make mission possible for generations to come:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Presbytery of the Northern Plains, as of October 6, 1992 approve and establish a fund to be known as the PRESBYTERY OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS ENDOWMENT FUND.

Article I: Names and Definitions

A. The name of this Endowment Fund is the Presbytery of the Northern Plains Endowment Fund.

Article II: Governance

A. This Endowment Fund is administered under the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order and the operating policies and procedures of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.
B. It is understood that gifts given with restriction will be honored once they have been received by the Presbytery.

Article III. Purpose

A. The Endowment Fund is created exclusively for the purposes of accumulating gifts, designated and undesignated. Unless otherwise restricted the principal of all gifts will be held as permanently invested funds.
B. Income will be disbursed to support the mission of the Presbytery, and for its

congregations where gifts are designated for a particular congregation.

C. No funds shall be disbursed from this Endowment except for the Purposes described herein and reasonable administrative expenses associated herewith.

Article IV: Administration

A. The Presbytery of the Northern Plains is the final authority.
B. The Endowment Fund shall be administered by Presbytery Council.
C. Council's responsibilities shall be those described in B-5.0414.
D. The Fund will normally be invested in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation with the Presbytery as owner of the Fund.
E. Segregated funds may be held under this plan which have been restricted by donor or by the Presbytery.

Article V: Audit

A. No less than annually, the Endowment Fund will be audited according to the policies and procedures of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains.

Article VI: Income

A. Uses of Income
    1. Supplementing Presbytery annual programming
    2. Investors designations
    3. Special congregational projects
B. Other possibilities
    1. Special Projects
    2. Broaden mission opportunities for congregations (i.e., day care)
    3. Missionary/Fraternal Worker itineration
    4. Campus Ministry
    5. Programs for elderly
    6. Capital loan fund for congregations
    7. Presbytery mission support
    8. Office equipment

P-6.020la
FORMATION OF TASK FORCES (October 1997)

All requests for establishment of Presbytery task forces shall be considered by Presbytery Council.

P-6.0500
POLICY ON CLOSING A CHURCH (October 1996)

The primary task and responsibility of the Presbytery is to encourage the growth, nurture and vitality of its congregations. The energies and resources of the Presbytery are directed to this end.

The Presbytery is also charged with the responsibility of protecting the assets of the churches within its bounds for the extension and outreach of the mission of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, when a congregation determines that it can no longer continue its ministry and mission it is the responsibility of the Presbytery to assist the congregation to move to its closing.

Presbytery has the responsibility for the following:

Policies (Revised October 2009)

A. Membership (G10.0302b2)
To provide for letters of transfer of the members to the Christian communities of their choice; or to continue, for a period of two years, their membership on the at-large roll of the Presbytery.

B. Records (G9.0406)
To see that all the records of the church are transferred to the Presbytery where they will be maintained in the Presbytery archives.

C. Property and Continuing Financial Responsibilities
The property of the Congregation is held by the congregation for use of the Congregation; but it is also held in trust for the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (G8.0200 & G8.0400) At the time discussions begin about closure the Presbytery is immediately involved to insure a faithful and adequate disposition of all its property. In particular:
   1. The assets of a congregation can continue to assist in the mission and outreach of the whole church.
   2. To provide for the sale of the building, other assets and all real property.
   3. To insure that the building is used appropriately so that the original intention of the building is not desecrated or becomes an eyesore or other liability and hazard to the community.
   4. Where possible, to return the property to the tax rolls.
   5. Provide for the final year payment of the per capita apportionment.

D. Procedures
   1. Normally, request to close the church will come from the congregation itself. This request should be the outcome of a vote, taken by ballot, at a special meeting called by the session for this purpose. The report of this action shall be transmitted by the clerk of the session to the Stated Clerk.
   2. Upon receipt of this information, the Stated Clerk shall consult with the Executive Presbyter, the chairperson of the Committee on Ministry, and the moderator of the session, concerning the appropriateness of the request. If the request is found to be in order, this group shall propose a list of nominees to the Presbytery for election to an administrative commission named for the purpose of responding to the request. Ordinarily, at least one member of the commission will be an elder from the congregation making the request.
   3. The administrative commission will be charged with the responsibilities described in Sections A, B, and C above. The administrative commission will also arrange a final worship service to be held by the Presbytery to complete the life of the congregation, and to provide for its members to rededicate their lives to continuing service to Jesus Christ.

P-6.0700
REPORTING CHANNELS (October 1990)

Synod Commissioners should report to Presbytery.
P-11.0001

P-6.0800

SEEKING TO BE FAITHFUL TOGETHER: GUIDELINES DURING TIMES OF DISAGREEMENT. (October 1995)

Policies (Revised October 2009)

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will...

Give them a hearing...listen before we answer. John 7:51 and Proverbs 18:13

1. Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ;
   a) we will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange.
   b) we will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.
2. Learn about various positions on the topic of disagreement.
3. State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.

Speak the truth in love. Ephesians 4:15

4. Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in a spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus's teaching.
5. Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity;
   a) we will not engage in name-calling or labeling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.
6. Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concern.

Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3

7. Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree.
8. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension;
   a) we will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.
9. Follow these additional Guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:
   a) urge persons of various points of view to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;
   b) seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
   c) be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;
   d) abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these Guidelines.
10. Include our disagreements in our prayers, not praying for triumph of our viewpoint, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all