



Validated Ministries Handbook

Presbytery of Western North Carolina

March 2012

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INTRODUCTION

Every active minister member of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina must be engaged in a validated ministry. Validated ministries include 1) those with Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations, 2) other service of the PC(USA), 3) service beyond the jurisdiction of the PC(USA), and 4) honorable retirement (G-2.0503).

The work of the Validated Ministries Task Force is to consider and make recommendations to the Committee on Ministry to validate or not validate ministries that provide service beyond the jurisdiction of the PC(USA) (see item 3 above). Presbyteries are required to establish written criteria for validating these ministries. This handbook provides an explanation of this process and a description of the criteria adopted by the Presbytery for those seeking this type of validation. Also included are the initial application for the minister and for the agency/organization, as well as the annual review forms for both the minister and agency/organization.

All completed applications and additional information should be sent to:

The Presbytery of Western North Carolina
Validated Ministries Task Force
114 Silver Creek Road
Morganton, NC 28655

2011-2013 BOOK OF ORDER REFERENCES TO VALIDATED MINISTRY

G-2.0501 Teaching Elders Defined

Teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament) shall in all things be committed to teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). They may serve in a variety of ministries, as authorized by the presbytery. When they serve as preachers and teachers of the Word, they shall preach and teach the faith of the church, so that the people are shaped by the pattern of the gospel and strengthened for witness and service. When they serve at font and table, they shall interpret the mysteries of grace and lift the people's vision toward the hope of God's new creation. When they serve as pastors, they shall support the people in the disciplines of the faith amid the struggles of daily life. When they serve as presbyters, they shall participate in the responsibilities of governance, seeking always to discern the mind of Christ and to build up Christ's body through devotion, debate, and decision.

G-3.0306 Membership of Presbytery

Each presbytery determines the teaching elders who are its members and validates the ministries in which they are to be engaged. It shall be guided in this determination by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds (G-2.0503a).

The presbytery shall examine each teaching elder 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.

The presbytery may designate teaching elders to work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacraments at times and places authorized by the presbytery.

Every teaching elder shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides.

G-2.0502 Presbytery and the Teaching Elder

As the Lord has set aside through calling certain members to be teaching elders, so the church confirms that call through the action of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine whether a particular work may be helpful to the church in mission and is a call to validated ministry requiring ordination as a teaching elder. In the performance of that ministry, the teaching elder shall be accountable to the presbytery. Teaching elders have membership in the presbytery by action of the presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery.

G-2.0503 Categories of Membership

A teaching elder is a member of a presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry validated by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or honorably retired.

a. Engaged in a Validated Ministry

A validated ministry shall:

- (1) demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, *The Book of Confessions*, and the *Book of Order* of this church;
- (2) serve and aid others, and enable the ministry of others;
- (3) give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;
- (4) be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served; and
- (5) include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship, and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church in correspondence with the PC(USA) (G-5.0201).

When teaching elders are called to validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church, they shall give evidence of a quality of life that helps to share the ministry of the good news. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships and shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the boards and agencies of those councils.

The presbytery shall review annually the work of all teaching elders engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation.

THE MISSION OF OUR PRESBYTERY

Strengthen congregations to be faithful and vital witnesses to Jesus Christ

Make Disciples

- Promote spiritual formation in Bible, theology and service for all ages
- Enhance the churches' worship of God
- Encourage those called to ministry

Equip Congregations for Ministry

- Foster spiritual and numerical growth
- Guide the calling of faithful and effective Pastors
- Support churches in transition or crisis

Together we build
relationships and
partnerships

Strengthen People in Ministry

- Support church leaders, elders and church professionals
- Develop effective communication
- Provide meaningful officer training

Witness to God's Love

- Promote Biblical understanding of mission
- Engage in the mission of God everywhere
- Support our Missionaries and partnerships
- Proclaim the Gospel of God's love

PROCESS FOR VALIDATION FOR MINISTERS IN SERVICE BEYOND THE JURISDICTION OF THE PC(USA)

A six-member task force, appointed by the Committee on Ministry, will review all applications for new validated ministry positions and annually review all previously validated ministry positions. The Validated Ministry Task Force (VMTF) will consist of six members, two currently on the Committee on Ministry, two in a non-congregational validated ministry, and two serving congregations.

Several times a year, the VMTF will review written requests for validation or renewal of validation. Though each teaching elder must have his or her ministry validated annually, the VMTF will, in addition, meet annually with 1/3 of the ministers in approved validated ministry positions, each such minister meeting with the VMTF at least once every three years. If possible, the VMTF should meet with each applicant at the time of his/her initial request for validation.

If, during a review, the VMTF sees satisfactory evidence that the criteria for validated ministry are being met, the VMTF shall recommend to COM that the ministry be validated, or that its validation be renewed.

If, during a review, the VMTF sees a concern, then the VMTF shall invite either the minister, a member of the employing agency, or both, to respond in person or in writing.

If the VMTF decides not to recommend validation of the ministry, the VMTF shall inform the minister, the employing agency, and the COM of this recommendation with a concise, written statement of its concerns and reasons.

Regardless of the recommendation of the VMTF, the COM may, or may not, recommend to the Presbytery that the ministry be validated, or that its validation be renewed.

If the COM decides not to recommend validation (or re-validation) of the ministry, the COM shall invite the minister and a representative of the employing agency to meet with the COM to discuss this matter.

Following this discussion, the COM shall recommend to the Presbytery either that the ministry be validated (or re-validated) or not.

If the COM decides not to recommend validation (or re-validation), it shall provide the applicant with a clear, concise but comprehensive statement of its concerns and reasons, along with any supporting argument or evidence.

In all cases, the Presbytery shall vote whether or not to validate (or re-validate) the ministry, limiting its consideration to matters presented by the COM in its written statement.

The criteria to be used by the VMTF to review written requests shall be the pertinent references in the *Book of Order (G-2.0503.a)* and the most recent criteria approved by the Presbytery.

CRITERIA FOR VALIDATING MINISTRIES

In determining which teaching elders shall be its continuing members, the Presbytery of Western North Carolina shall be guided by these criteria: [All references are to the *Book of Order*, part II of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)]

A. The ministry of continuing members shall be in demonstrable conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, the *Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA). [G-2.0503.a (1).]

1. In particular, this ministry shall help the Presbytery foster vital and faithful congregations to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ.[Presbytery Mission]
2. This ministry shall assist others to see changes in their lives, share what they have seen, and be signs of the grace of the Triune God at work in the world.[Presbytery Vision]
3. This ministry shall equip and enable the people of God for their tasks within the Church and their mission in the world.[G-2.0504]
4. This ministry shall strengthen the Church and equip it for concern and service to the life of the human community.

B. The ministry shall be one that serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others. [G-2.0503.a (2)]

1. In particular, this ministry shall show the pattern of one who came not to be served, but to serve.[Matthew 20:28]
2. This ministry shall demonstrate a quality of life and relationships that commend the Gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice.[G-2.0504]
3. This ministry shall reach out in concern and service to the life of the human community as a whole.
4. This ministry shall show evidence of a quality of life which helps to share the ministry of the Good News.

C. The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. [G-2.0503.a (3)]

1. In particular, this ministry shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in the church's constitution.[G-2.0105]
2. This ministry shall be entrusted to persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.[G-2.0104]

D. The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the Presbytery, and to organizations, agencies and institutions. [G-2.0503.a (4)]

1. In particular, this ministry shall be conducted with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.[Ephesians 4:2]
2. This ministry shall be carried out by speaking the truth in love, and building up the Body of Christ.[Ephesians 4:14-15]
3. This ministry shall be sensitive to the judgments and needs of others.[G-2.0103]
4. This ministry shall demonstrate the Christian Gospel in the Church and in the world. [G-2.0104]

E. The ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the Presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation. [G-2.0503.a (5)]

1. In particular, this ministry must have the approval of God's people and the concurring judgment of a governing body. [G-2.0104]
2. This ministry shall also participate in ecumenical relationships.[G-2.0504]

***APPLICATION FOR VALIDATED MINISTRY
PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA***

Date of completed application_____

Name_____

Email:

Address_____

City_____

State/ZIP_____

Phone numbers: Home _____ Work_____Other _____

Agency/Organization _____

Job Title_____

Contact Person _____

Questions for minister to complete. Please answer on separate sheets of paper.

1.) Describe how this ministry conforms to the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in Scripture, the Book of Confessions and the Book of Order of the PC(USA). Please refer to section A of the criteria and give examples of how this ministry conforms in particular to items 1-4.

2.) Describe how this ministry serves and aids others, and enables the ministries of others. Please refer to section B of the criteria and give specific examples of how this ministry conforms to items 1-4.

3.) Give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. Please refer in your answer to numbers 1 and 2 of section C in the criteria.

4.) Describe how this ministry is consonant with the mission and vision of the PWNC.

5.) How shall this ministry be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the PWNC, and to organizations, agencies and institutions? Please refer to section D of the criteria and address numbers 1-4.

6.) Indicate the ways you responsibly participate in the deliberations and work of the PWNC.

7.) Indicate the ways you responsibly participate in the worship and service of a PC (USA) congregation.

8.) If applicable, give your work history outside the church: (Indicate starting/ending dates, employer, city, state, title or type of work beginning with most recent)

9.) Give your service to the PC(USA): (Indicate starting/ending dates, governing body, agency, etc. and type of service beginning with the most recent.)

10.) List your formal education: (Indicate starting/ending dates, institution, city state and degree beginning with the most recent.)

Date of interview_____

Date ministry validated by Presbytery_____

APPLICATION FORM FOR AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

Date of application _____

Name of Organization _____

Name and title of person completing this form

Address _____ City _____ State/ZIP _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Attach additional pages as necessary.

1.) Describe the goals of this agency/organization.

2.) Describe the goals of this particular position.

3.) Provide a brief job description of the minister you will employ.

4.) How will the work of the minister you are employing promote and support the mission of Presbytery?

5.) Presbyterian ministers are required to be active in local congregations and in the life of Presbytery. Do you foresee any impediment in this position that would limit or curtail such involvement?

Ministers in the Presbyterian Church are required to be accountable to the Presbytery and to the organization or agency which employs the minister. This accountability of ministers to your organization and to the Presbytery is for both work and personal conduct and character.

6.) What formal supervisory structures does your organization use to encourage and monitor the professional development and oversight of this ministry?

7.) What tools or methods will be used to conduct work and character evaluations in your organization?

8.) After receiving written authorization from the minister, will you share performance reviews, disciplinary actions and formal complaints with the Presbytery? How will you do this?

9.) Please provide the name, address and phone number of the person in your organization who can answer correspondence about the salary, compensation and other information about this minister.

Validated Ministry Annual Report

Date submitted _____

Name _____ Email: _____

Address _____ City _____

State/ZIP _____

Phone numbers: Home _____ Work _____ Other _____

Agency/Organization _____

Job Title _____

Contact Person _____

Identify two persons who can best describe the ministry in which you are engaged.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

1.) Describe any changes which have taken place in your ministry since your application or your last report. Point out specific ways in which changes have taken place; note additions or deletions in goals, organizations, etc.

(If no changes, skip to question 3)

2.) In light of changes discussed above, describe how your ministry still:

- A) is in demonstrable conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set for in Holy Scripture, the *Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- B) serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others.
- C) gives evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word.
- D) is carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the Presbytery.
- E) includes responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the Presbytery and in the worship and service of a congregation.

3.) Evaluate your experience in reaching the goals set for your ministry (as stated in the original agency/organization application). What successes have there been? What disappointments? Be specific.

4.)How have you participated in the deliberations and work of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina? Be specific.

5.)How have you participated in the worship and service of a local PC(USA) congregation? Please be specific and identify the congregation.

6.)What suggestions can you make to the Committee on Ministry that will enable the Committee to better facilitate and support your validated ministry?

For office use:

Date Presbytery extended validation of ministry _____

***Validated Ministry Annual Report
Agency/Organization Form***

Date of application _____

Name of Organization _____

Name and title of person completing this form

Address _____ City _____ State/ZIP _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

In _____ (date), the Presbytery of Western North Carolina approved the work of _____ in your organization for one year, meeting the requirements of validated ministry within the Presbyterian Church (USA). Because this minister continues to be accountable for his/her work to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, we ask that you complete this form and send it to the Presbytery office by _____(date). You may use additional paper as necessary.

1.)Have the goals of your organization changed, and if so, in what ways? Please be specific.

2.)In what ways has the job description of the minister changed? Please be specific.

3.)How does your organization provide direct oversight of the work of this minister?

4.)In what way, and to what degree, has the minister met the expectations of your organization for his/her work? In what ways has the minister failed to meet those expectations.

5.)Please comment on the character and conduct of the minister in carrying out the ministry.