

# CHAPTER II

## SESSION OBTAINS TRANSITIONAL PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Session is charged with providing appropriate pastoral leadership during the transition period.

### A. FUNCTION OF COM

The function of COM is to assist the Session of the church which is currently without a Pastor. The Session has direct access to COM through the moderator appointed by the Presbytery, and through the COM liaison assigned to the church.

### B. PROVIDING TEMPORARY WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

During the time between the departure of the installed pastor and the arrival of a transitional pastor, Session is responsible for providing Worship leadership for the Congregation in consultation with the COM (W-2.0303). The Presbytery has a list of available preachers. *See the Presbytery website.*

### C. FORMATION OF TRANSITIONAL PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE (TPSC)

1. COM liaison meets with Session at the earliest possible point to inform them of procedures to form a TPSC. *See Section D below for descriptions.*
2. Working with the COM liaison, the Session is responsible for determining goals for the church in the transitional period, prior to electing a TPSC search committee.
3. Session appoints a TPSC and establishes a budget for the search committee. The first step for the TPSC should be to recommend to the Session, in consultation with the COM Liaison and the Personnel Committee (or whoever assumes that function), a position description which reflects the specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound goals for the Church during the transitional period. Session shall provide boundaries for salary negotiations. COM liaison guides TPSC through the search process. The search committee's work shall be conducted in confidence.
4. TPSC presents nominee and terms of call to Session for vote. Candidate is usually present to meet with the Session and excused from the meeting for the vote.
5. Session requests COM approval of the Terms of Call, the position description, the goals for the Transitional Pastor, and membership in Presbytery if Transitional Pastor is not currently a member. After a favorable vote, a one year contract (renewable annually) is signed with the Transitional Pastor. The TPSC continues to meet regularly as ongoing support to the Transitional Pastor from the first day of appointment until the last day of the call.

6. The Transitional Pastor Contract below includes this agreement:

*“The Session agrees to participate in a process for reviewing the Transitional Pastor’s performance and the church’s progress in the transition in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Presbytery COM.”*

That process is as follows:

- a. The COM Liaison, one member of Personnel Committee or Session and one member of TPSC will meet with the Transitional Pastor as close to 90 days into the contract as possible to briefly discuss progress on the transitional tasks (see I C 4) as well as the goals established for the church during the transitional period. Follow up meetings will be scheduled at intervals not longer than 6 months to continue to track progress and to support the congregation and the TP.
- b. The Personnel Committee or Session representative will prepare a confidential written summary, signed by all those in attendance. This evaluation is an attempt to reflect the assessment of Congregational health as well as Transitional Pastor performance. Any signer shall have the opportunity to attach a response to any disputed issue. Every party shall receive a copy of the summary.
- c. Once the Session reviews the summary, the Clerk will send the report as confidential correspondence to the Moderator of COM. Reports will be maintained in confidential files at the local church as well as at Presbytery.
- d. At the end of the transitional period, two steps shall be taken:
  - i. An exit interview shall be held with the Transitional Pastor, COM liaison, and Personnel Committee or Session representative.
  - ii. A written evaluation of the church’s health and challenges going forward shall be written by the Transitional Pastor. The Session shall review the summary, and it shall be signed by all those in attendance. Any signer shall have the opportunity to attach a response to any disputed issue. Each signer shall receive a copy of the summary. The evaluation shall be given to the Clerk of Session, and the Moderator of COM, as they prepare for work with the Installed Pastor.

#### D. TEMPORARY PASTORAL RELATIONS

When a non-installed clergyperson or individual otherwise qualified as approved by COM temporarily serves a chartered church in transition, contracting with them to fulfill specified duties, they/he/she shall be considered a “Transitional Pastor”.

Recognizing that there are different roles and tasks to be undertaken in different situations, the Presbytery of Los Ranchos has affirmed various types of transitional ministry. These types can be found below. The Session, in coordination with COM, through the liaison, will

determine which form the transitional ministry will take. It may be that more than one model will be used by the congregation as it moves through different stages of the transition process.

Notwithstanding the various pastoral roles described below, for purposes of the goal setting and evaluations, all transitional pastors are to be evaluated as described here.

Transitional pastors may be considered as candidates for the installed position as a part of a fair and open search, per the requirements of the Book of Order, G-2.0504c.

## E. TYPES OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY

There are a variety of duties and responsibilities for transitional pastors, one or several of which may be used in a particular church as it transitions between Installed Pastors. Here are the types of transitional ministry currently in use in Los Ranchos Presbytery.

“Intentional Transitional Pastor” – An Intentional Transitional Pastor (ITP) shall be a member of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos. The ITP is called by the Session to serve as Pastor, co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor when the Congregation is without an Installed Pastor in that position. This relationship may not be established or dissolved without concurrence of the Presbytery. An ITP must have successfully completed Interim Ministry education, as approved by COM (e.g. Presbyterian Church (USA) Week I and/or Week II) or begin obtaining such Interim Ministry education during their first year of service. ITPs are contracted to guide the Congregation in engaging in those tasks necessary to equip and enable the Congregation to welcome their next Installed Pastor including Session-established goals for this period. Contracts shall be for up to 12 months, renewable with approval of COM, and they shall include provision for a period of financial support at the conclusion of this service.

“Bridge Pastors” - With the approval of COM, Session may contract with clergypersons or individuals otherwise qualified as approved by COM to serve as a Bridge Pastor to a position in which there are not the “transitional issues” that require an ITP (e.g., Associate positions or following an extended ITP, when there is a short vacancy between pastors, etc.). Bridge pastor contracts shall be for no more than 6 months, but may be renewed for no more than 3 months with COM’s approval.

“Supply Pastors” - Supply Pastors serve Congregations in which there is no active search for an Installed Pastor (i.e. there is no Pastor nominating committee in place, and the Congregation does not anticipate calling a Pastor to an installed position). Supply Pastors are appointed by COM in consultation with the Session, and their services shall be governed by a contract of not more than 12 months at a time, renewable with the approval of COM. Duties of the Supply Pastor shall be defined and approved by COM, particularly in regard to celebrating the sacraments and moderating Session.

#### F. ASSOCIATE PASTOR(S) (remaining on staff)

If a church now has an Associate Pastor on its staff, it is in order for the Session to realign their/his/her duties and compensation during the period you are without a Pastor. The status as Associate Pastor does not change, but they/he/she may be asked to perform some of the former Pastor's functions or be relieved of some previous duties to assume additional Pastoral duties.

The official relationship of an Associate Pastor to a church is established by that Congregation. Associate pastors may be considered as candidates for the installed position as a part of a fair and open search, per the requirements of the Book of Order, G-2.0504c.

#### G. LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

During the period when the church is without an installed Pastor, the Session must assume additional, full leadership responsibility for the life of the church. The Transitional Pastor will also support the Session. This need not be a period to "mark time." Rather, it can be a time for honest evaluation of your church and a time of spiritual renewal.

**TRANSITIONAL PASTOR CONTRACT**

The following Contract Agreement between

The Session of \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church  
of \_\_\_\_\_, California

And

The Reverend \_\_\_\_\_

And

The Presbytery of Los Ranchos through its Committee on Ministry

Is for the purpose of providing Transitional Pastoral services to  
\_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church  
of \_\_\_\_\_, California  
within the bounds of The Presbytery of Los Ranchos

**1) TYPES OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY:**

Please select one:

- Intentional Transitional Pastor (ITP)
- Bridge Pastor
- Supply Pastor

**2) GOALS FOR THIS MINISTRY:**

Please list goals and duties for this transitional pastor:

**3) ACCOUNTABILITY:**

During the length of this Contract, the Transitional Pastor shall be accountable to the Session and to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos through its Committee on Ministry. The Session agrees to participate in a process for reviewing the Transitional Pastor's performance and the church's progress in the transition in accordance with the procedures adopted by the Presbytery Committee on Ministry.

**4) CANDIDACY:**

Transitional pastors may be considered as candidates for the installed position as a part of a fair and open search, per the requirements of the Book of Order, G-2.0504c.

**5) LENGTH OF SERVICE:**

The Session, the Transitional Pastor, and the Committee on Ministry agree that this Contract shall be for \_\_\_\_\_.

This is a \_\_\_\_\_ full time;  
\_\_\_\_\_ part time, position. Hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_,  
beginning (date) \_\_\_\_\_ through (date) \_\_\_\_\_.

**6) TERMS OF CONTRACT:**

The Transitional Pastor will be compensated as follows:

*(Begin typing amounts just to the right of the "\$" and amounts will line up)*

Salary	\$
Housing allowance	\$
Pension	\$
Medical deduction (reimbursable)	\$
Dental benefits (reimbursable)	\$
Social Security	\$
Auto allowance (reimbursable)	\$
Study leave allowance (Reimbursable)	\$
Other (reimbursable)	\$

Study leave: 2 weeks annually

Vacation: 30 calendar days annually

Moving: Should it become necessary for the Transitional Pastor to relocate, the Session agrees to pay reasonable moving costs.

**7) EXIT PROVISIONS AND COMPENSATION CONTINUATION**

**Bridge/Supply Pastor**

Thirty days' notice shall be given by either party to end the contract before the agreed upon date.-  
Severance will not be provided.

**Intentional Transitional Pastor**

*Recognizing that a Minister in an Intentional Transitional Pastoral Relationship may be placed at an economic disadvantage if employment is terminated prior to completion of the contract, the following covenant is made between the Session, the TP, and the Presbytery through its COM to provide clear requirements for all parties.*

**1. ITP Initiated.** The ITP may terminate this agreement with 30 days written notice and with no compensation continuation provision following the termination of the ITP Pastor Relationship.

**2. Session Initiated:**

[Select #2a, #2b, or #2c, as applicable, or as each might be modified as agreed by the Session, the TP and COM.]

**2a. Session Initiated: For Original Month-to-Month Contract (No Stated Term).** The session may

