

Guidelines for Committee on Ministry Church Liaisons
Presbytery of Northern Kansas

Annual Review of Staff including Ordained Staff

*The session . . . has the responsibility . . . to provide for the administration of the program of the church, including employment of nonordained staff, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies, and the annual review of the adequacy of compensation for all staff, including all employees. – Book of Order **G-10.0102n**.*

The *Book of Order* G-10.0102n, cited above, calls for a review of the “adequacy of compensation” for all staff. The review described in this document should be conducted at a different time than the compensation review.

Introduction

The Committee on Ministry Church Liaisons should assume the responsibility of reminding the sessions of the section of the Book of Order reproduced above. This document briefly describes the session responsibility related to review of all church staff and provides information that might be helpful to the session on these matters. The Liaison should present the section Suggestion to Each Session to each church annually and discuss its implementation during the Triennial Visit.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has developed a very useful handbook titled, *Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees*. This publication is available in hard copy from the church headquarters and is available on-line at <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/guidelines-session-personnel-committee/>

The following paragraphs are taken from that document as an introduction to the task that each session has with respect to an annual review of all staff.

The term staff refers to all persons employed by the session: ministers, or lay people. Full-time or part-time support or program staff refers to those working in particular area of ministry. Ministers in the Presbyterian Church are called by the congregation to that work. They are not simply employees of the congregation or the session. They are responsible to the people of the congregation, of course, but not to them alone. The Presbyterian system of checks and balances gives them membership in, and a primary accountability to, the presbytery. They have been ordained to be Ministers of Word and Sacrament for the whole Church. (Each particular church, similarly, is linked to the larger church primarily through the presbytery, in which its minister and elder representatives have voting membership, and to which it has responsibilities.)

As a session works with staff and encourages the full use of the gifts and talents of each staff member, a shared ministry evolves. Valuing each person’s worth and seeing the work of each as a part of the ministry of the church puts meaning into the words of the Book of Order: “The church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity. [As such,] the church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality which God has made available to people in Jesus Christ.” (G-3.0200) When a particular church treats each staff member as a valued partner in ministry, it becomes a sign to the world of a new reality. These guidelines are provided with this concept of ministry in mind.

Suggestion to Each Session

As congregations call new pastors and other pastoral relationships are approved, COM liaisons will review with sessions their plans for ongoing staff support and annual reviews.

The Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Northern Kansas believes it is essential that each staff person in each congregation have the opportunity to have an annual review each and every year. This review is a session responsibility. It can be conducted by a session personnel committee which should seek input from all constituencies of the congregation especially the entire session membership.

Help Available

The *Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees* mentioned above contains very useful information on the purpose of these reviews and suggestions on how they should be conducted.

The annual review of ordained staff is of particular concern to the Committee on Ministry and may incorporate a variety of factors at the discretion of the session. Several examples of written instruments for annual reviews and goal setting may be downloaded from the PNK website at: <http://www.pnks.org/>. (downloads available by September 2007)

The Presbytery of Northern Kansas periodically conducts training workshops for Personnel Committees. It will be helpful for representatives from congregations to attend those workshops. A schedule of times and locations of for the workshops can be obtained from the Presbytery Office.

Suggestions for Review

The session may wish to start the process with (a) a discussion of annual goals for the session and/or (b) a self-evaluation submitted by the minister. However, the matter of goal setting with the ordained staff is viewed as particularly important, and specific suggestions concerning that aspect of the reviews are made below:

1. The annual review of the ordained staff, particularly the pastor, should include an evaluation of the accomplishments of the year and how those accomplishments compare to the goals for that time period.
2. The annual review should also include a listing of goals for the coming year and an agreement between the pastor and session on those goals. A priority list of these goals is desired, if not required, for all parties to have a clear understanding of what will ensue for the next year.

Finally, with the hope of gaining greater insight into the current and future directions of a church's mission and service, it is strongly recommended that each church be asked to forward copies of their Annual Goals for the Session and the Annual Goals for the Minister to the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry by February 1 each year.