

PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN KANSAS
COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
POLICY ON VALIDATED MINISTRY

- I. G.-2.0502 – 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 presbytery itself, and no pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of presbytery
- II. G-2.0503 – A teaching elder is a member of presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry *validated* by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by that presbytery, or honorably retired. 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 ministries 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 and 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 a *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.

It is incumbent to interpret these guidelines and to make determination as to what does and does not constitute validated ministry in particular situations.

It shall be the policy of the Presbytery of Northern Kansas that each request for validation of ministry shall be treated as a unique situation, with each request being given fair consideration by the Committee on Ministry and the Presbytery. Such requests will be considered as they adhere to the *Book of Order* mandates and as they are informed by the following general guidelines:

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TENT-MAKING SITUATIONS

A tent-maker is a teaching elder who responds to a call in the ministry and who also seeks other employment to supplement his/her salary. To qualify as a tent-maker, a teaching elder should be serving a congregation on a regular basis in a called or contracted position.

NON-VALIDATED POSITIONS

If a minister is working full or part-time in a non-validated position, validation may be considered if the minister is actively circulating a PIF or is available to serve congregations within the presbytery on an as needed basis. The minister must continue to demonstrate commitment to participate actively in the life of the presbytery.

SPECIALIZED MINISTRY QUALIFICATION ISSUES

1. The presbytery shall be guided by the list of designations in G-3.0306 in determining if a minister's non-parish work qualifies for validation. Anyone serving within these capacities (as outlined in G-3.0306) needs to be able to explain to the Committee on Ministry in what way his/her work constitutes ministry. For instance, someone who has "administrator" or "social worker" in their title or job description does not automatically qualify as working in a validated ministry.
2. Presbytery decisions on validation need to be guided by its understanding that a validated ministry in some way "shares the ministry of the good news." (G-2.0503). It is not sufficient to identify oneself as functioning in one's profession in a Christ-like manner.

TIMELINE FOR VALIDATION PROCESS

Each year the Committee on Ministry will contact all teaching elders who are not serving one of the congregations of the presbytery or the presbytery itself and request that they submit an annual report form describing their ministry. The Steering Committee of COM will review these forms and may set up an interview with the teaching elder. The Steering Committee will make recommendations to the Committee on Ministry as to which teaching elders should be considered as serving in a validated ministry. COM will then vote on whether to sustain those recommendations and forward them to the presbytery for its action. Teaching elders who are not considered to serve in a validated ministry shall be notified of the Committee on Ministry's decision.

PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN KANSAS
Teaching Elder Response Form

Please attach separate sheets to respond to the following questions.

1. To whom are you directly accountable? To a board of directors? A supervisor? No one? If there is accountability, please explain the nature of the accountability. Also, provide the name of the chair of a board or the person who is your direct supervisor as well as his/her address and phone number.
2. Please provide a description of your ministry, including those to whom you minister and your understanding of validated ministry as defined by The Book of Order references provided.
3. Does your organization or do you personally carry any personal/professional liability insurance? If so, what kind, and in what amount? If none is carried, please so indicate.
4. Are you currently enrolled in the denominational pension plan for retirement benefits and health insurance? If not, were you ever a member, and at what point did you discontinue service? Please provide information about how you are covered for medical and retirement benefits if other than the Board of Pensions.
5. How are you compensated? What was your income from the ministry you describe above during the past 12 months?
6. In what ways are you currently serving in presbytery, synod and/or General Assembly? In what ways would you be willing to or like to be involved?
7. In what congregation are you involved as a participant?
8. In what specific ways can the Presbytery be supportive of you and your ministry?

Note: Responses should be mailed to the Presbytery Office by February 15th