

****Use this as a Summary PAGE NOT in the COM Manual****

Connecting our Documents

(How our COM manual and COM chart interact)

"Nothing the Committee on Ministry does is more important than nurturing good relationships with congregations and church professionals."

****An Overview of Responsibilities****

The following areas of focus are noted, in brief, in order to raise awareness of the procedures the FRP has adopted and the COM is required to discharge.

The two forms of pastoral leadership in Flint River Presbytery are as follows:

Temporary pastoral leadership requires contracts between Sessions and pastoral leaders:

- 1) Stated Supply
serves a minimum of a year in a church
- 2) Temporary Supply
serves less than a year in a church which is not actively seeking an installed pastor
- 3) Interim Pastor
serves in a church which is actively seeking an installed pastor
- 4) Organizing Pastor
serves in a newly organized congregation
- 5) Parish Associate
appointed by the installed pastor, and whose responsibilities need to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Session and the Moderator
- 6) Designated Pastor
is an installed pastor for a designated time period, and serves no less than 2 years and no more than 4 years

Permanent pastoral leadership in Flint River Presbytery are as follows and requires Terms of Call between Congregation and pastoral leaders:

- 1) Pastor
- 2) Co-Pastor
- 3) Associate Pastor

Other helpful tips about pastoral leadership within the bounds of FRP:

The office of **Co-Pastor** shall not ordinarily be used for the purpose of conducting a pastoral search following the announcement of the intended retirement of the installed pastor of the congregation.

Minister members of Flint River Presbytery may also be designated as **honorably retired, member-at-large, or laboring outside the bounds**. These members are also under the care of the COM.

When a **pastoral leadership vacancy** occurs, the COM oversees a number of activities related to that congregation:

- 1) Conducts an exit interview with both the session and the pastor,
- 2) Appoints a session moderator,
- 3) Reviews options for temporary pastoral services,
- 4) Encourages a mission study by the session and/or congregation,
- 5) Appoints a liaison to work with the Pastor Nominating Committee once elected,
- 6) Requires and reviews commitment to equal opportunity practices in calling pastors,
- 7) Specifies the expected conduct of former pastors in relating to the congregation from which one is departed.

Under no circumstance shall a candidate for call be named by a pastor nominating committee to the session or congregation until that candidate has been examined and approved by the COM. Following COM approval, as the PNC works with a Session to establish a date for a congregational meeting, the PNC may share information with Session regarding the candidate, as deemed appropriate.

The COM is authorized to act on behalf of presbytery to both conduct examinations of particular pastoral candidates and also approve them. It is the policy of Flint River Presbytery that, upon examination and approval by COM and the subsequent congregational approval, the candidate is eligible to “move on the field”.

The COM is authorized by Flint River Presbytery to **approve the call of a minister of Word and Sacrament transferring from within the presbytery as well as from beyond the presbytery.**

The COM, in its duty to care for minister members, will regularly review with congregations their provisions for **continuing education, sabbatical leave, vacation, and compliance with minimum compensation requirements**. All congregations with pastoral leadership in Flint River Presbytery are required to take specific action annually on Terms of Call, *even if there is no change in the terms from one year to the next.*

The COM is authorized by Flint River Presbytery to inquire into **reported or discovered difficulties** in any member congregation with the intent to assist in settling those difficulties in the best interest of the congregation and all parties involved.

The COM is the arm of the presbytery which responds to needs and concerns arising from **alleged ministerial misconduct**, up to the point in the complaint or judicial process when a situation comes under the provisions of the Rules of Discipline. The COM is also responsible for care of congregations and individuals after a judicial matter regarding ministerial misconduct has been settled.

Finally, COM oversees the Gerald L. Voye School for Ruling Elders, which trains ruling elders for certification as **Presbytery Trained Ruling Elders** (TRE). The COM is responsible for examining and approving a TRE to be commissioned to a particular congregation or other validated ministry of the presbytery. A TRE so commissioned is a **Commissioned Ruling Elder** (CRE). A TRE may preach on an occasional basis when invited by a congregation of the presbytery. A CRE may, if authorized, moderate a session, administer the sacraments, provide pastoral care, and officiate at weddings and funerals within a particular congregation.