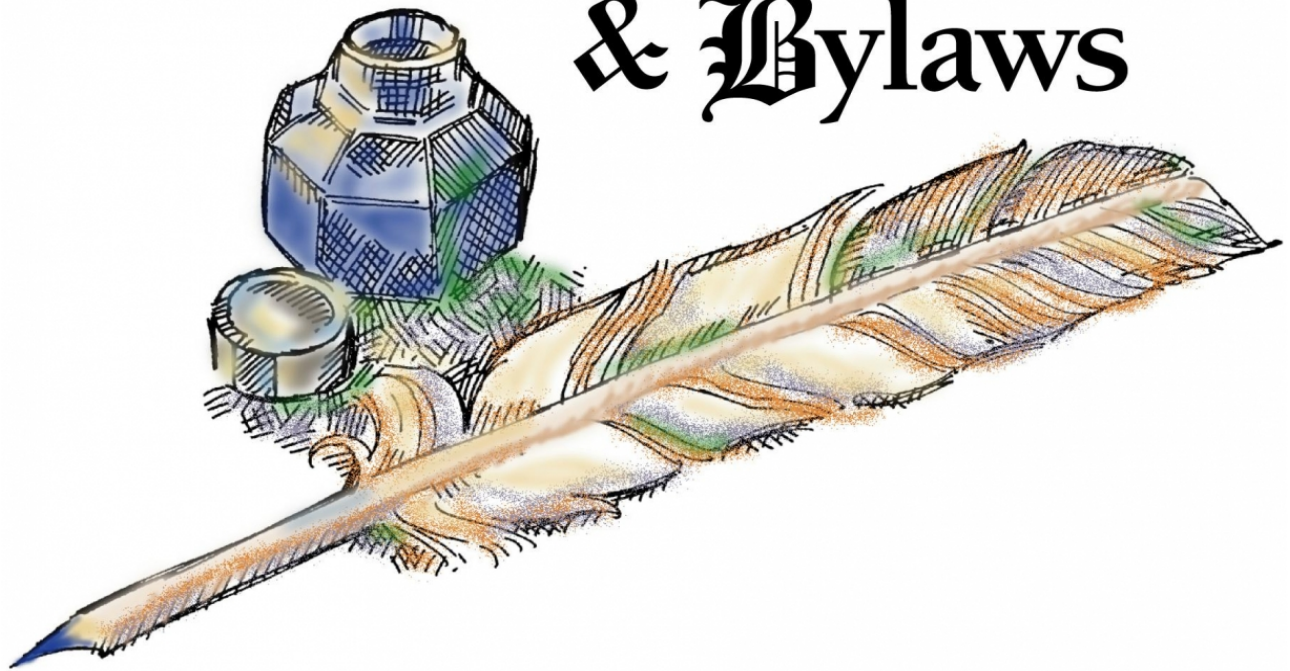


REVISED: JULY 2017

# HUNTSVILLE PRESBYTERY

## Church Constitution & Bylaws



CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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**The revisions incorporated in this edition of the  
Huntsville Presbytery *Constitution and Bylaws*  
were approved on 15 July 2017 at Blackburn  
Chapel CPCA, Huntsville, Alabama.**



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**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
OF  
THE HUNTSVILLE PRESBYTERY  
OF  
THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (CPCA)**

**(Revised July 2017)**

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

The name of this organization shall be *The Huntsville Presbytery*, consisting of the following nineteen (19) congregations: Blackburn Chapel, Briar Fork, Bright Hope, Cedar Grove, Chelsea, Church Street, Lewis Chapel, Madkins Chapel, Moses Temple, Mount Sinai, Mount Zion, New Heaven, New Hope, Pleasant Grove, Saint Elizabeth, Saint James Number 2, Triana, Union Hill, and West End.

**ARTICLE II**

**Purpose and Mission**

**Section 1. Purpose:** The purpose of the Huntsville Presbytery is set forth in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America *Constitution*, 5.0 Presbytery, Confession of Faith, (current edition).

**Section 2. Mission Statement:** The mission of the Huntsville Presbytery as a presbytery of the Alabama Synod and the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America is to function pursuant to the *Constitution* of the Confession of Faith and more specifically to:

- a. Provide pastoral oversight over ministers and sessions.
- b. Work with church sessions to enhance church growth, leadership skills, and spiritual development.
- c. Provide guidance for new church development.
- d. Take special oversight of churches that do not have the services of a minister.
- e. Support the missions of the Alabama Synod and the General Assembly.
- f. Train and license candidates, ordain licentiates to the ministry, and install pastors, associate/assistant pastors who are associated with the Huntsville Presbytery.
- g. Secure immediately the ordination credentials from a minister when the minister leaves the denomination. Presbytery will follow guidelines and procedures established by the General Assembly for rescinding the credentials of clergy who are no longer members of the CPCA (**Appendix A, page 22**).

**ARTICLE III**

**Members and Attendance**

**Section 1. Membership:** Membership of the Huntsville Presbytery shall consist of the following:



**a. Ministers and Elders** as set forth in the *Constitution*, 5.0, specifically 5.1, Confession of Faith, (current edition). Composed of active elders, elected as session representatives, and ordained ministers.

**b. Candidates and Licentiates:** Individuals that are Candidates, and Licentiates for the ministry will participant at the Presbytery's meetings, nonvoting, on committees with the privilege of full discussion and debate in the committee meetings.

**c. Youth Advisory Delegate(s):** Each Church Session shall select and send to each Presbytery meeting at least one youth as a delegate from the Session. The youth delegate shall participate in the Presbytery meeting, without voting privileges, and on committees with the privilege of full discussion and debate in committee meetings.

**Section 2. Attendance Requirement:** All members are required to attend each meeting. When it is necessary to be absent, the minister or session representative (elder) must send a written communication to the Presbytery, which explains the reason for the absence and request to be excused. Elders that are representatives and fail to be present at each session of the Presbytery shall be reported to the appropriate Church Session for such action, as the Church Session deems appropriate. Unexcused absences of ministers and Church Sessions shall be disciplined pursuant to the *Rules of Discipline*, 1.3, Confession of Faith.

## ARTICLE IV Meetings

**Section 1. Regular Meeting:** The Huntsville Presbytery shall hold two meetings annually, a *Spring (May) Presbytery meeting*, and a *Summer (July) Presbytery meeting*. The Spring Presbytery meeting will be held for one day only – Saturday before the third Sunday in May. The Summer Presbytery meeting begins on Wednesday morning before the third Sunday in July and continues through Friday. Four persons (ministers and session representatives) consisting of at least one minister and one elder shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 2. Called Meeting:** A *called meeting* is a meeting of the Presbytery held at a time other than the Spring Presbytery or Summer Presbytery. A called meeting shall meet at the call of the moderator or at the petition of any six members of the presbytery consisting of at least two ministers and two elders representing different sessions (Confession of Faith, Section 5.8). The called meeting announcement must be issued 10 days prior to the meeting date, stating the meeting purpose, date, time, and place. Only the business stated in the announcement shall be transacted.

**Section 3. Place of Meeting:** The meeting place of the Huntsville Presbytery is determined by vote of the members in session.

## ARTICLE V Officers

**Section 1. Officers:** The officers of the Presbytery are Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Engrossing Clerk. Minister and Elders must fill the offices of Moderator and Vice Moderator. Elders, as Moderator and Vice Moderator, must be an elected representative to the Presbytery at the time of election and during each year of service.



- Section 2. Moderator:** **a.** The Moderator performs those duties set forth in the *Rules of Order*, 1.0 Moderator, Confession of Faith.
- b.** The Moderator has the authority to appoint all select/ad hoc committees as deemed necessary by the Presbytery, and or the Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB).
- c.** The Moderator is an advisory member of all boards and agencies and can attend their meetings as his/her schedule permits.
- d.** The Moderator visits each of the congregations/churches as necessary.

**Section 3. Vice-Moderator:** The Vice-Moderator performs those duties set forth in the *Rules of Order*, 2.0 Vice Moderator, Confession of Faith.

- Section 4. Stated Clerk:** **a.** The Stated Clerk performs such duties as outlined in the *Rules of Order*, 3.0 Stated Clerk, Confession of Faith, and as prescribed by the Presbytery.
- b.** The Presbytery's HPEB prescribes such other duties as may be required and or necessary due to the Stated Clerk's responsibility to the HPEB.
- c.** The Stated Clerk records the minutes of each session of the Presbytery and have sufficient copies printed and mailed to each member (Ministers and Church Sessions) of the Presbytery within 90 days following the meeting of the Presbytery. Also, mail copies to others the Presbytery identifies.
- d.** The Stated Clerk receives the Boards and Standing Committees' annual reports 30 days prior to each Summer Presbytery's meeting so that copies may be incorporated into the preliminary minutes and mailed to all Members, Candidates, Licentiates, and Youth Delegates prior to the setting of the Presbytery.
- e.** The Stated Clerk provides a report form to each Church Session clerk for completion and return to the Stated Clerk prior to or during the Presbytery's Summer (July) meeting.
- f.** The Stated Clerk provides to each member and Youth Advisory Delegate (YAD) the appointment of select/ad hoc committee members. This will inform them of their committee assignment prior to the Presbytery's meeting.
- g.** The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Moderator, makes referral of all items that come before the Presbytery.
- h.** The Stated Clerk makes arrangements for administrative support (clerical, typewriters, computer, and reproducing equipment) as needed for the Presbytery meetings.
- i.** The Stated Clerk secures an appropriately engraved gavel and presents it to the retiring Moderator at the end of the Moderator's term of service.

- Section 5. Engrossing Clerk:** **a.** The Engrossing Clerk serves under the direction of the Stated Clerk as the official recorder of the minutes of the Presbytery.
- b.** The Engrossing Clerk serves as Stated Clerk Pro Tem during the absence of the Stated Clerk.

## ARTICLE VI

### Nomination, Election, Term of Office, and Compensation

- Section 1. Nominations:** **a.** Nominations are made by the Committee on Nomination and may be made from the floor by any voting member of the Presbytery. Two votes must be taken, the first vote to close the nomination and the second vote to elect the nominees.
- b.** When more than one person has been nominated, voting shall be by secret ballot. A group of representatives, under the direction of the Stated Clerk, counts the ballots. The Stated Clerk



certifies the count. (Each ballot is read aloud so that other members may tally if they so desire).

- c. If more than two persons are nominated and no nominee receives a majority of the votes counted, the vote then is taken in the same manner on those leading nominees who together received a majority of the total vote cast on the preceding ballot.

**Section 2. Election:** The election shall be made at the time the Committee on Nomination makes its report and the elected assumes office at the close of the Presbytery. The majority vote of the membership present is necessary to elect one to office.

**Section 3. Term of Office:** **a. Moderator and Vice Moderator.** The elected Moderator and Vice Moderator are elected to serve a one-year term and are eligible for reelection for up to three more terms. The individual may not serve more than four consecutive terms in the same office.  
**b. Stated Clerk and Engrossing Clerk.** The Stated Clerk and Engrossing Clerk are elected for a term of three years, and may succeed himself/herself. The term for each of these offices begins August 1 and expires in three years on July 31. The individual may not serve more than four consecutive terms in the same office.

**Section 4. Compensation:** The elected officers are compensated as set forth in the approved Presbytery financial plan for the current year.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Organizational Structure, and Composition**

**Section 1. Organizational Structure:** The organizational structure of the Huntsville Presbytery consists of Boards, Standing Committees, Select Committees, and Auxiliaries as follows;

**a. Boards:**

- (1) Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB)
- (2) Budget and Finance
- (3) Judiciary

**b. Standing Committees:**

- (1) Christian Education
- (2) History
- (3) Ministry
- (4) Missions and Evangelism
- (5) Nomination
- (6) Planning the Presbytery's Annual Meeting

**c. Select Committees:**

- (1) Audit of the Financial Records
- (2) Christian Education Report
- (3) Church Sessions Records
- (4) Communications
- (5) Executive Board Report, Elected Officials' Reports, and the Huntsville Council Report
- (6) Historical Report



- (7) Memorials
- (8) Missions and Evangelism Report
- (9) Resolution/Resolutions of Thanks
- (10) Statistics

**d. Auxiliaries:**

- (1) Cumberland Presbyterian Youth Fellowship (CPYF)
- (2) Huntsville Presbytery Council of Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members
- (3) Junior Missionary Society
- (4) Missionary Society
- (5) Sunday School Convention

**Section 2. Composition.** The Presbytery elects the membership composition of boards and standing committees. The members of the Board of Judiciary, Committee on Ministry, and Committee on Nomination shall be ministers and elders only. The term of office for elected board members, and standing committees is a three-year term, not to exceed nine (9) consecutive years. Exceptions are permissible as approved by the Presbytery. One cannot serve on more than one standing board/committee simultaneously, and be elected to membership on either until she/he consents to serve. All officers are elected annually at each Organizational Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Boards/Committees Meetings, Budget, Annual Reports, Vacancies, and Limitations**

**Section 1. Board/Committee Meetings.** The Moderator calls a united organizational meeting consisting of boards, standing committees, and executive boards of auxiliaries, within three months after the close of the Summer Presbytery. During this meeting boards and standing committees are provided time to hold their annual election of officers. The elected secretary of the boards/committees provides the Stated Clerk with a list of the officers and members of their boards/committees along with their addresses and telephone numbers. Each board, committee, and auxiliary may also meet at other times as deemed necessary.

**Section 2. Budget.** The Huntsville Presbytery (boards, standing committees, and auxiliaries) operate on a unified budget. Each board, standing committee, and auxiliary will submit to the Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB) a budget for the upcoming year which will be consolidated into the annual budget of the Presbytery, and administered by the Board of Budget and Finance. Each proposed budget should be submitted along with each annual report. The Presbytery's primary source of income is an assessment of 10 percent on the annual income of each congregation and each member (ministers) of the Presbytery. Benevolent, Bequest, and Building funds are excluded from congregations' annual income/assessment.

**Section 3. Annual Reports.** Each board, standing committee, and auxiliary prepares and submits a report of its activities, achievements, and future plans to HPEB at its regular meeting held the second Tuesday in April of each year. The reports of the boards and standing committees must include members name, class, officers, and recommendation for reelection of eligible members, etc. The reports should contain a summary of the past year's actions and any recommendations deemed appropriate to their function. These reports will be reviewed by HPEB, consolidated into



preliminary minutes and mailed to the membership at least 30 days prior to the Summer Presbytery meeting.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** A member of boards and standing committees will nullify his/her membership by not attending two meetings unless of a providential nature. The Moderator has the authority to appoint individuals to fill all vacancies, elected or appointed, occurring after the close of the Summer Presbytery meeting. The appointed individuals serve until the next upcoming Summer Presbytery meeting.

**Section 5. Limitations.** All boards and standing committees are under the direction and control of the Huntsville Presbytery and none of their actions shall conflict with the actions of the Huntsville Presbytery. The Huntsville Presbytery must approve all actions of boards and committees

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Boards/Committees Composition, Function, and Authority**

#### **Section 1. Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB):**

**a. Composition:** The HPEB shall be comprised of the following sixteen (16) members. It has five officers - Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Engrossing Clerk, and Chaplain. The Moderator shall designate the Chaplaincy to any one of the board members:

- (1) Moderator
- (2) Vice Moderator
- (3) Stated Clerk
- (4) Engrossing Clerk
- (5) Chairperson, Board of Budget and Finance
- (6) Chairperson, Board of Judiciary
- (7) Chairperson, Committee on Christian Education
- (8) Chairperson, Committee on History
- (9) Chairperson, Committee on Ministry
- (10) Chairperson, Committee on Mission and Evangelism
- (11) Chairperson, Committee on Nomination
- (12) President, Huntsville Presbytery Missionary Society
- (13) President, Huntsville Presbytery Sunday School Convention
- (14) Advisor, Cumberland Presbyterian Youth Fellowship (CPYF)
- (15) President, Huntsville Presbytery Council of Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members
- (16) Member at Large

#### **b. Function/Responsibility:**

- (1) The HPEB functions in the capacity of planning, of overseeing, and of ensuring the implementation of mandates given it by the Presbytery.
- (2) Coordinate the desired goals for the Presbytery and assure that the goals are in line with those set by the Synod, General Assembly, and the *Constitution*.
- (3) Oversee the functions and responsibilities of boards and standing committees and give them guidance when necessary.
- (4) Study the organization of the Presbytery and propose changes deemed necessary.





- (5) Review the work and projects of other boards, committees and make recommendations as appropriate to the boards, to committees, and to the Presbytery.
- (6) Review all pastoral relationships with congregations and has oversight of pastoral installations. Contact the congregation within 30 days after the congregation's pastor position is vacated, and work diligently with that congregation until a pastor is installed. Take special oversight of the congregation that does not have the service of a minister; and with concurrence of the session, appoint a minister to moderate until one is permanently called.
- (7) This board, along with the Board of Budget and Finance, reviews the budget requests of Boards, Committees, and Auxiliaries, and proposes a unified budget to the Presbytery.
- (8) The quorum for this board is any six members present.
- (9) The normal agenda and order of business (subject to change) for the HPEB are set forth in the Rules of Orders, 7.0, Confession Faith.

**c. Authority.** Upon the adjournment of the Huntsville Presbytery and during the period the Presbytery is not in session, the HPEB, in addition to the function/responsibility sighted above, is empowered to act on behalf of the Huntsville Presbytery when emergencies arrive, and a called meeting of the Presbytery is not feasible. It reports directly to the Huntsville Presbytery. Its work ultimately is directed by and must be approved by the Huntsville Presbytery. All functions not lodged in the boards and standing committees are assigned to the Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB).

## **Section 2. Board of Budget and Finance:**

**a. Composition.** The Board of Budget and Finance is comprised of seven (7) members. It shall have three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary; all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting.

### **b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Formulate the annual Presbytery's budget.
- (2) Receive all budget requests from the boards, committees, and auxiliaries of the Presbytery.
- (3) Coordinate all matters related to ministerial relief.
- (4) The members of this board are the trustees of the Presbytery.
- (5) All the board members must be bonded, or as a minimum, the members responsible for signing the checks.
- (6) All financial reports of this body shall be itemized to denote purpose each check was issued, and a receipt for each check must be filed.
- (7) Receipts for reimbursement must be official and submitted prior to issuance of all checks.

**c. Authority.** This board has full responsibility for managing and for controlling all financial matters of the Presbytery.

## **Section 3. Board of Judiciary.**

**a. Composition.** The Board of Judiciary is comprised of thirteen (13) persons (ordained ministers and elders only) and has three officers, chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary; all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting. In order to perform the functions under the *Rules of Discipline* when required, the board will establish from its members two subcommittees consisting of six (6) members each: (1) Judiciary Committee and (2) Disciplinary Commission.



**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Review all judicial issues submitted to the Presbytery and or Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board for deliberation thereon. All such issues must first be received by the Presbytery and or HPEB and thereby referred to the Board of Judiciary. Judicial issues consist of those things requiring interpretation and or application of the Confession of Faith, the *Huntsville Presbytery Constitution and Bylaws*, rules, regulations and like matters. The board will examine all minutes of the General Assembly, Synod, and Huntsville Presbytery, and such other records as are referred to it, and report its findings to the Presbytery.
- (2) The board must have at least four (4) of its members in attendance at each meeting of the Presbytery to advise on all judicial questions that may be referred to members for advice, counsel, and interpretation.
- (3) The board has the full responsibility for rendering opinions and interpretations on all judicial issues, and matters related to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.

**c. Authority.** Its work ultimately is subordinate to that of the Presbytery and is subject to the Presbytery for validation of its work.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Standing Committees, Composition, Function, and Authority**

**Section 1. Committee on Christian Education:**

**a. Composition.** The Committee on Christian Education shall be comprised of seven (7) persons (five ministers/elders, two deacons, and or laypersons). It shall have three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, all officers are elected annually at each Organizational Meeting.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Recommend to the Presbytery Christian educational goals and objectives, which will strengthen the work of Christian education at both the congregation, and Presbytery levels.
- (2) Assist in the development of Christian education programs within local congregations.
- (3) Endorse and recommend appropriate resource materials.

**c. Authority.** This Committee has the full responsibility for managing and implementing Christian education programs at the Presbytery level.

**Section 2. Committee on History:**

**a. Composition.** The Committee on History is comprised of seven (7) persons (ministers, elders, deacons, and laypersons). It has three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Collect and preserve the history and to promote the knowledge of the history of the churches, organizations, auxiliaries, and people of the Huntsville Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA).
- (2) Establish and maintain a library, archives, and museum for the acquisition and care of such material and records as may be germane to the purpose of the committee.
- (3) Serve as the Presbytery's liaison with other judicatory historical agencies, and committees of the denomination.
- (4) Work with local churches in compiling and preserving histories of the churches.

**c. Authority.** This committee has the full responsibility for managing the process of collecting and preserving the history of the churches within the Huntsville Presbytery.





### **Section 3. Committee on Ministry:**

**a. Composition.** The Committee on Ministry is comprised of eleven (11) persons (**ordained ministers and elders only**). It has three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary; all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Receive, give pastoral guidance, instruct, examine, and nurture all persons referred to it by the Presbytery and or HPEB as a person entering the ministry.
- (2) Follow guidelines and requirements established and approved for candidates, and licentiates, and shall require the candidates and licentiates under its care to complete all requirements.
- (3) Determine when a candidate for the ministry is “ready” for the next step, which is licentiate, and shall recommend such to the Presbytery.
- (4) Give regular attention to the growth and progress of each candidate and licentiate, and give special attention to those who require it.
- (5) Recommend to the Presbytery licentiates to be ordained: Licentiate must complete the requirements pursuant to the *Constitution*, 6.30, Ordination of Ministers.
- (6) Issue, with the Presbytery’s approval, the call for revocation of licensure and ordination credentials when a minister leaves the Huntsville Presbytery.

**c. Authority.** This committee has the full authority to guide the ministerial candidates/licentiates during that period leading up to their ordination; and nurture, and encourage vocational development of ordained ministers who do not pastor.

### **Section 4. Committee on Mission and Evangelism.**

**a. Composition.** The Committee on Mission and Evangelism is comprised of seven (7) members. It has three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Recommend to the Presbytery missions and evangelism goals and objectives, which will strengthen the work of missions and of evangelism at both the congregation and Presbytery levels.
- (2) Develop and promote home, church, and foreign missions and evangelism movements.
- (3) Assist local congregations within the Presbytery with creation and development of mission and evangelism programs.
- (4) Recommend resources appropriate for mission and evangelism, and coordinate programs at the local level.

**c. Authority.** This Committee has full responsibility of managing and implementing mission and evangelism programs at the Presbytery level.

### **Section 5. Committee on Nomination:**

**a. Composition.** This committee is comprised of seven (7) persons (**ordained ministers and elders only**). It has three officers: chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary, all officers are elected annually after each Summer Presbytery meeting.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

- (1) Nominate to the Huntsville Presbytery qualified persons to fill all vacancies in elected offices, boards, and standing committees.
- (2) Receive from the Stated Clerk all recommendations for upcoming vacancies that have been submitted by Church Sessions and others.



(3) Make its report early in the meeting of the Presbytery, such as the first day.

From the Floor Nominations by members of the Huntsville Presbytery.

Any member of the Huntsville Presbytery, at the time of election, may make nominations from the floor provided personal consent of the person nominated has been obtained.

**c. Authority.** This committee has the full responsibility of ensuring that a slate of officers is nominated for an election and nominees to fill all boards and standing committees vacancies.

#### **Section 6. Committee on Planning the Presbytery's Annual Meeting:**

**a. Composition.** The Committee on Planning the Summer Presbytery meeting is comprised of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Engrossing Clerk, President of Sunday School Convention, President of CPYF, President of Missionary Society and President of Junior Missionary Society.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

(1) Plan the summer meeting program of the Huntsville Presbytery and its auxiliaries.

(2) Meet with the host church and arrange for administrative support and meeting places for auxiliaries.

**c. Authority.** This committee has the full responsibility of planning, of organizing, and of acquiring all supplies, materials, and equipment needed for the administrative support for the Summer Presbytery Meeting.

#### **Section 7. Member at Large**

**a. Composition.** Any member in good standing of the Huntsville Presbytery may be elected to this position.

**b. Function/Responsibility.**

(1) Member-at-large is defined as one who participates fully in all aspects of Huntsville Presbytery and or HPEB work and decision-making (including voting privileges), but does not represent a specific Huntsville Presbytery and/or HPEB particular constituency.

(2) A member at large represents the general membership on issues of interest or concern, particularly those that arise outside of the standing committee structure.

### **ARTICLE XI**

#### **Regular Select Committees, Other Select Committees, Chairperson, Functions**

**Section 1. Regular Select Committees.** The select committees as set forth in Article VII, Section 1, paragraph c. shall be the regular select committees of the Huntsville Presbytery, appointed by the Moderator, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, to study reports and consider other matters that may be referred to them.

**Section 2. Other Select Committees.** The Presbytery, at will, may create other select committees as the need arise, and the Moderator, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, will appoint the committees and provide instruction.

**Section 3. Chairperson.** The first person named on a committee is considered the chairperson, unless otherwise specified. However, once the committee convenes, if it desires, it may select a new chairperson.



**Section 4. Functions.** The select committees examine the reports of boards and standing committees and determine if the boards and standing committees have worked within the established guideline/bylaws. Determine if the committees have dealt with those issues that were assigned, and carried out their responsibilities in a timely and appropriate manner.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Guidelines to Sessions on Calling a Pastor and Staffing for Ministries**

**Section 1. Calling a Pastor.** Reference is made to, *Constitution* 4.0 Session, 4.5a. Pursuant to the spirit and intent of paragraph 4.5a, A Session of a particular church must inform the Committee on Ministry when a vacancy is created at the church when the pastor leaves a church (i.e., dissolution, resignation, death, etc.) for guidance and for instruction. The Session must continue to work closely with the Committee on Ministry as it works thorough all prescribed steps in calling a Pastor (**Reference: Appendix C, page 25**).

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **General Rules**

**Rule 1. Membership Eligibility.** All ministers of the Huntsville Presbytery, licentiates, candidates, elders, deacons, and laypersons of congregations are eligible for membership on boards and standing committees of the Huntsville Presbytery. The exceptions to this are the Board of Judiciary, the Committee on Ministry, and the Committee on Nomination, must due to their ecclesiastical nature, consist of ministers and elders only.

**Rule 2. Attendance of Boards and Committees Meetings.** If a member of a board or committee misses two consecutive meetings, except for providential hindrances that are excused by the presbytery, his/her membership to the board or committee is automatically nullified.

**Rule 3. Membership Limitation.** A person shall not serve concurrently on more than one board or standing committee of the Huntsville Presbytery, with the exception of the HPEB, due to its construct.

**Rule 4. Commissioners.** All commissioners must be ministers and elders due to the ecclesiastical nature of the work usually assigned

**Rule 5. Retiring Moderator.** The retiring moderator serves until the close of the Summer Presbytery meeting, at which time the newly elected moderator shall begin serving.

**Rule 6. Review of reports of Boards, Standing Committees, Select Committees, and Commissioners.** The following shall govern how the Presbytery considers the reports of the elements of its body and the work of its commissioners.

- a. Reports of the Moderator, Stated Clerk, boards, and standing committees shall be referred to an appropriate select committee for review except as set forth in paragraphs b, c, and d below.
- b. Reports of the Judiciary, Committee on Ministry, and Committee on Nomination shall not be referred to a select committee, but will be acted upon directly by the presbytery.
- c. Reports of Commissioners and Select Committees are brought directly to the Presbytery for review and for action



- d. The Huntsville Presbytery will not refer any concerns, which are related to judiciary, ministerial, or nominating in nature to any select committee; instead, these will be referred to Board of Judiciary, Committee on the Ministry, or Nominating Committee as appropriate.

**Rule 7. Called Meeting.** Meetings of the Huntsville Presbytery other than the Spring Presbytery in May, and Summer Presbytery in July are hereby-designated *called meetings*. All actions at the called meeting shall be limited to the agenda items stated on the announcement (reference: Confession of Faith, *Constitution*, sections 3.00 and 5.8).

**Rule 8. Huntsville Presbytery Fiscal Year.** The Huntsville Presbytery fiscal year is May 1 through April 30.

#### **ARTICLE XIV Parliamentary Authority**

The most current editions of the Confession of Faith, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church/ Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, shall govern this assemblage in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order this assemblage may adopt.

#### **ARTICLE XV Amendments of These Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be amended by providing in writing an announcement of the proposed amendment to all members 30 days prior to the meeting date, and must be approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members present.



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## **APPENDIX A**

### ***Procedures to Obtain Credentials from Ministers Who Have Left the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.***

**(Adopted by 130<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, June 2004)**

#### **Report to the GA all ministers who credentials have been revoked**

Any member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America who leaves the denomination thereby forfeits all his/her offices, rights and privileges in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.

#### **Recommendation XV:** Implementation of the following procedure:

1. The Presbytery must request the minister's ordination credentials immediately.
2. The minister must return ordination credentials immediately.
3. If the minister does not return the credentials the presbytery will notify all presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly Office in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.
4. A legal notification in the newspaper.
5. The person will not be allowed to preach, administer the sacraments in any Cumberland Presbytery Church in America.
6. If the person returns he/she should be received in the same manner as though he/she had never been in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.
7. If the person left the CPCA in good standing, he/she will be allowed to preach with the permission of the church session. However, the person will be excluded from performing any of the sacraments (e.g., Holy Communion and Baptisms) as well as weddings and burial committals, or any other rights that are afforded an ordained minister of the Huntsville Presbytery in good standing.



## ***APPENDIX B***

### ***Huntsville Presbytery Standard Agenda***

**Formal Openings of the Summer Huntsville Presbytery-** The Summer Presbytery meeting begins on Wednesday morning at 8:00 before the third Sunday in July and continues through Friday. The meeting will conclude on Saturday if there are ordinations. Four (4) person (ministers and session representatives) consisting of at least one minister and one elder) constitutes a quorum.

#### **A. Wednesday Morning Opening**

**-8:00 a.m. – Call to Order**

- Song
- Scripture
- Constitutional Prayer
- Recess (Until Thursday Evening for the Opening Worship Service)

#### **B. Huntsville Presbytery Wednesday Evening Fellowship**

**Special Fellowship coordinated and planned by the Wednesday Evening Fellowship Committee which is an appointed committee.**

- 7:00 p.m. In Concert w/Male Chorus Review
  - Fellowship and Food

**-8:30 a.m. Wednesday Morning – (CYPF and Sunday School Convention convene)**

**-7:00 p.m. –Wednesday Evening Worship Service:**

- (Joint Sunday School Convention and CPYF Worship Service)

#### **C. Thursday - CYPF and Sunday School Convention continues (One Half Day)**

- 8:30 a.m. --Business Sessions
- 12 Noon – Business Usually Concludes

#### **D. Thursday Evening Opening Worship Service of the HUNTSVILLE PRESBYTERY**

**-6:30 p.m. – Registration**

**-7:00 p.m. –Order of Worship**

- Prelude/Processional
- Call to Worship
- Congregational Hymn of Praise
- Scripture Reading
- Invocation
- Welcome (*Presented by Host Church*)
- Song
- Confession of Sin and Declaration of Pardon/Words of Assurance
- Litany



- **Presenting of the Gifts of Offering/Offertory Prayer**
- **Response of Praise (Gloria Patri)**
- **Song**
- **Sermon**
- **The Celebration of the Lord's Supper**
- **Presbytery Called to Order**
- **Roll Call**
- **Constitutional Prayer**
- **Hymn**
- **Benediction**

**D. Friday - Huntsville Presbytery Business Session and Missionary Society Convene**

**- 8:00 a.m. Friday Morning (until close)**

- **8:00 a.m. –Registration**
- **8:30 a.m. –Opening of the First Business Session**

**E. Saturday - Reserved for Ordinations**





## **APPENDIX C**

### ***Session Guidelines for Calling a Pastor and Staffing for Ministries***

#### **Section 1. Calling a Pastor.**

Pursuant to the spirit and the intent of paragraph 4.5a, a Session of a particular church must inform the Committee on Ministry when a vacancy is created at the local church, or when the pastor leaves a local church (i.e., through resignation, death, etc.) and for guidance and for instruction. The Session must continue to work closely with the Committee on Ministry as it works through prescribed steps in calling a Pastor (reference: *Constitution* 4.0; Session 4.5a). Sessions are to follow these guidelines for seeking a pastor.

#### **FOREWARD**

The Huntsville Presbytery, through its Committee on Ministry (COM), is the agency that has primary responsibility for assisting churches that are seeking pastors and pastors who are seeking to relocate under the jurisdiction of the Huntsville Presbytery. In our system, the Committee on Ministry, or its equivalent, is the agency charged with the oversight of churches and the establishment and or dissolution of, the relationship between pastors and churches. The Committee on Ministry makes recommendations to the presbytery regarding the establishing and dissolving of pastoral relationships. Further, in our system the session is the agency responsible for negotiating or approving the terms of the contract, extending the call on behalf of the congregation, and working most closely with the pastor in the ministry of the church. When a pastor resigns, and the process for filling the pastoral vacancy begins, each of these agencies plays an important part in the process. It is the purpose of this manual to help all concerned understand and work with and through the process which will take place as one pastor leaves and another is secured.

#### **SECTION 1a**

##### **Summary of Procedures for Churches Seeking Pastors**

##### ***Introduction***

When either the pastor or the session decides that the pastoral relationship should be dissolved, contact is made with the Huntsville Presbytery, Committee on Ministry (COM), to communicate that desire. If, after consultations and due consideration, the COM concurs in the dissolution request, it makes an appropriate recommendation to the Huntsville Presbytery and/or Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB), if it approves the request, declares the pulpit vacant and appoints a moderator for the session.

These ***Guidelines*** are meant to provide a step-by-step process for the church seeking a new pastor from the time the first contact is made with the COM requesting dissolution of the pastoral relationship to the successful conclusion of the search.



Although the *Guidelines* are written primarily with the position of pastor in mind, they can easily be adapted and used by churches seeking associate or assistant pastors or other staff positions. The term "pastor" is used with the understanding that it may mean an ordained minister currently serving another church; an ordained minister serving somewhere other than in the pastorate, but who is interested in a pastorate; The material that follows is for the use of Sessions and/or Session appointed search committees engaged in the process of searching for a new pastor. The steps described, if followed in an orderly manner, can enable the church to avoid many pitfalls and embarrassments. These steps are in keeping with the *Constitution of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and Huntsville Presbytery By-Laws*.

### **Steps to Be Taken by Churches Seeking a New Pastor**

Following are the steps to be taken, in proper order, by Sessions and/or Session appointed search committees as they engage in the process of seeking a new pastor. **Section 1a.**, lists the steps in an abbreviated form, and **Section 2** is the listing of the steps with more detailed information and suggestions.

#### ***The steps in abbreviated form are:***

- 1) Session, usually in conjunction with the pastor, contacts the Committee on Ministry (COM) requesting dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
- 2) Session contacts the COM and asks for assistance in searching for a pastor.
- 3) Session, on receipt of advice and instruction from the COM defines its responsibilities and the responsibilities of their appointed search committee if one is to be appointed.
- 4) The Session determines if the Session and/or and appointed search committee will conduct the necessary search process. ***Note: Separate search committee is optional but if appointed will work under the jurisdiction of the Session; reporting all actions to the Session for approval/disapproval.***
- 5) The Session establishes the process for evaluating the resumes and dossiers to be received from the candidates.
- 6) The Session/Search Committee obtains names of prospects for the position and receives resumes/dossiers on potential candidates/pastors.
- 7) Session/Search Committee studies and evaluates the resumes/dossiers; seeks the counsel of the COM as needed and ranks the candidates (prospects) for the position in priority order.
- 8) Session/Search Committee hears candidates preach and interviews them.
- 9) Session/Search Committee selects the best candidate, counsels with COM and discusses the suggested terms of the contract with the candidate.



- 10) Session/ Search Committee finalizes the terms of the proposed contract.
- 11) Session ascertains the will of the congregation in regards to issuing a *call*.
- 12) Session issues a *call*, in keeping with the terms of the contract, subject to the approval of the COM and/or the Huntsville Presbytery/HPEB.
- 13) Search committee is discharged.
- 14) Session makes request to the Presbytery/HPEB for approval of the *call* and may request approval of plans for the installation of the new pastor.

**NOTE: In the event the candidate (Step # 9) decides not to give further consideration to the position, the Session/Search Committee proceeds with the second candidate on the list in the priority order established, and then with the third, in the event the second person did not wish to give further consideration. In the event all the priority prospects wish to be taken out of consideration, the Search Committee goes back to Step # 6 and repeats the process until a successful conclusion to the search is realized.**

## **SECTION 2.**

### ***DISSOLVING A PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP AND INITIATING THE SEARCH PROCESS***

**Step 1 - The pastor submits written resignation to the session.**

**Step 2 -** The Session, usually in conjunction with the pastor, communicates in writing to the Committee on Ministry (COM), requesting dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Ordinarily, the COM concurs in the request to dissolve the pastoral relationship and recommends its approval to the Huntsville Presbytery/Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board. It is also normal for the COM to name a moderator of the session, subject to the approval of the Presbytery/HPEB. (**Sample A, page 38**).

The Session might wish to consider calling the appointed moderator as interim pastor, with the expectation that leadership in the pastoral search process would be one of the responsibilities. If it is not possible to use the moderator (appointed) by the presbytery, the Session and/or Search Committee might want to consider securing an interim. (**NOTE: Resources on the role of the interim pastor are available from the COM and/or HPEB.**)

### **Step 3. Initiating the Search Process**

If the *Guidelines* have not already been received, the Session contacts the COM and asks for a copy of the *Guidelines* to assist them in the search for a pastor. (**NOTE: When the COM is aware of a vacancy, it will automatically forward a copy of the Guidelines, along with applicable advice and instruction to the Clerk of Session.**) On receiving the *Guidelines*, the Session or a Search Committee appointed by the Session, studies the *Guidelines* and familiarizes itself with the



step-by-step process involved in the search for and securing of a pastor. For this process to work as it is intended, it is important that no step be omitted or circumvented.

#### **Step 4. (OPTIONAL) Naming the Search Committee and Defining Its Responsibilities**

When the session has received and reviewed the *Guidelines*, it may elect to appoint a Search Committee. Usually, this committee consists of three to five persons, at least one of whom is a member of the session. In some cases, the session elects to serve as the search committee. However, it is suggested that the number serving should be limited to no more than five. ***The Search Committee will operate under the jurisdiction of the Session; reporting all actions taken to the Session for approval/disapproval.***

The Session defines the suggested responsibilities of the search committee (**Sample B, page 38**) for possible responsibilities.

#### **Steps 5-6 Developing the Prospective Pastor List**

Names of prospective pastors might come from various sources, including: the HPEB; the Session; the search committee itself; members of the congregation and even former members or interested friends. The Session develops overall guidance and selection criteria to be applied to resumes received. Specific guidance on additional relevant qualifying criteria shall be obtained from the COM.

**Step 7. Evaluation of Submitted Resumes and Ranking of Top Candidates.** Gathering names from such a variety of sources could conceivably result in a list containing several dozen names. If possible, the total list should be reduced, in whatever way is feasible, to no more than 10 to 12 before requesting resumes. This list of 10 to 12 will be further studied and prioritized by the Session/Search Committee through various ways, including reviewing the resumes/dossiers, making an initial contact to determine the degree of interest (**Sample D, page 39**), contacting those who have reason to know something about the prospect's abilities to obtain reliable reference checks, etc. A final list of 3 to 5 should result from this kind of prioritizing. This final working list of 3 to 5 should then be ranked in #1, #2, and #3 orders prior to any formal interviews.

- a. It is the purpose and intention of this process to make the most appropriate referrals possible to the church. A "perfect match" is not possible, but it is hoped that this process will result in potential leadership more "in tune" with the church's needs at a particular time in its life and ministry.
- b. Potential Candidates can be solicited for interest and availability and may be requested to submit their resumes/dossiers for consideration as a prospective pastor to the Session/Search Committee. The Session should determine the process by which they are going to evaluate the resumes/dossiers received (**Sample Evaluation, page 40**) for a suggested process.
- c. Certain factors govern the availability of each pastor's resume/dossier. The pastor has control over its release. Although most pastors indicate on their resume, dossier, or application documentation that it is free to be circulated, they have the option of



requiring their approval prior to circulation. In some instances, pastors do not have resumes or dossiers on file, or their resume and/or dossiers are out-of-date. In such cases, each pastoral candidate will be asked to submit a current resume or dossier in order to be considered for the vacant pastorate position. Experience has shown that many pastors fail to respond to such requests, leaving search committees to wait for information. In such cases, it would seem advisable that the search committee have a plan for "no response," e.g., a set time limit for dropping the name from consideration if the resume/dossier has not been received.

After the Session/Search Committee has received resumes/dossiers, it evaluates and ranks them according to its predetermined process. The Session is to ensure the COM has given approval/concurrence prior to contacting individuals as prospective candidates. A good practice to get prior approval, at least for those ranked high enough to be interviewed. This practice, potentially, at least, can save some embarrassment and possible conflict later on.

### **Step 8-11 Hearing Candidates Preach and Conducting Interviews**

Even though it may not be the primary consideration, the Session/Search Committee will want to know something of the candidates' preaching ability. This can be determined in several ways.

These ways include: requesting tapes of one or more sermons, visiting the churches being served by the candidates and participating in the worship services (**Sample E, page 41**) for suggestions on visiting churches), making inquiry of those who are likely to know something about the candidates' preaching ability, or inviting candidates to speak at a service of worship or fellowship gathering of the church.

This latter option should be exercised only when the Search Committee and/or Session are very serious about the person and plan to say "yes" or "no" before moving on to another. This method ***should not be used*** to "parade" several candidates before the congregation. Much caution should be exercised at this point. To parade several candidates before the congregation and then attempt to choose a pastor is fraught with dangers, including the possibility of polarizing, or even dividing, the congregation; creating a climate that would require "healing" before any pastor coming into the situation could move forward in leading the people in ministry; etc.

- a. The Session/ Search Committee may wish to hold informal conversations by phone, or it may wish to correspond with the candidates, asking for additional information, clarification, or elaboration on points in the resume/dossier, etc.
- b. The Session/Search Committee will want to review its priority listing, select the top three in priority order, and counsel with the COM regarding its intentions.
- c. The Search Committee arranges with candidate #1 for a formal interview and the opportunity for the candidate to meet members of the congregation in an informal setting such as a reception or fellowship meal (**Sample F, page 41**) for sample interview questions.
- d. A part of the formal interview will be discussing and negotiating terms of the proposed contract.



- e. The Session/Search Committee finalizes the terms of the proposed contract (**Sample G page 42**) for sample contract form.

### **Step 12 -14 Ascertaining the Will of the Congregation and Issuing the Call**

Ascertaining the will of the congregation is an important part of the process of choosing a new pastor. This might be accomplished in at least one of two ways.

- a. **Formal.** The congregation, having had opportunity to meet and talk to the candidate, hears the report and recommendation of the Session, including the terms of the proposed contract, and is asked to vote on the recommendation. Voting should be by ballot. The vote serves as an indicator and is not a binding, constitutional/vote. In light of the vote, the Session will make a determination regarding the issuing of a call.

- b. **Informal.** Most Cumberland Presbyterian churches have traditionally used this method. Members of the Search Committee and/or Session talk to members of the congregation asking for their impressions, comments, etc., and, in light of the results, the Session will make a decision regarding the call. Once the will of the congregation has been ascertained and the Session has made its decision, it is time to say "yes" or "no" to the candidate.

If "yes," then a call is issued, in keeping with the terms of the contract; and the COM receives written communication to this effect, along with a request for approval of the relationship. The communication to the COM also includes the terms of the call and, subject to the approval of the presbytery/HPEB, may also include a request that the new pastor be installed. (**Sample H, page 43**).

If "no," then notify the candidate by personal letter stating, in general terms, why he/she was not chosen (**Sample I, page 45**). Then the Session/Search Committee needs to approach candidate #2 and continue the process until a pastor is secured.

When a call has been issued and accepted, notify the COM of the successful completion of the process (**Sample H page 44**). With the successful completion of the search process, all resumes/dossiers that have been received from ministers should be returned or destroyed. The resumes/dossiers are not for general distribution and use and, thus, should not be left available to others not involved in the search process.

The search committee, having fulfilled its responsibilities, is discharged by the Session.

## **SECTION 3.**

### **Instructions and Guidance for the Session and/or Search Committee**

The following instructions are provided to the Session or Search Committee if such a committee is appointed by the Session. These instructions and recommended process will aid Sessions and/or Search Committee in doing its job well as it engages in the pastoral search process. The task in which the Session/search committee is engaged will significantly affect the life of the



congregation and requires spiritual guidance. The Search Committee if one is appointed will keep the session informed of progress. Session or Members of a Search Committee should:

- a. Schedule regular meetings, elect chair, vice chair, and secretary.
- b. Maintain accurate and up to date records of events and processes utilized in the pastoral search. Records should include a documented chronology of overall actions taken in the event of higher level judicatory review and/or audit.
- c. Open and close all meetings with a prayer.
- d. Before interviewing a prospective pastor, be sure the candidate's qualifications are in keeping with the skills and abilities as outlined by the Session and the Committee on Ministry. Ensure the Search Committee is of one mind regarding the qualifications they are looking for—be familiar with a candidate's background and credentials.
- e. When interviewing, utilize the suggested interview questions (**Sample F, page 41**) but do not be limited by these questions.
- f. After interviewing, the search committee provides the Session with findings and recommendations.
- g. The Session will render the final decision on recommended pastor selections.

When a person who has been interviewed is not chosen, send a personal letter stating, at least in broad terms, the reasons for the decision (**Sample D page 39**). When a person has been secured for the position, notify all others who have been under consideration, expressing appreciation to them for their willingness to have been considered.

When a pastor has been secured, the Session contacts the Committee on Ministry, informing them that the search has been completed. (**Section 2, page 45**). The Session keeps the Committee on Ministry informed of search progress; keeps clear and accurate records of all matters germane to the task.

Avoid setting up artificial barriers of age, sex, race, or marital status. Avoid making a commitment to a minister concerning a call during preliminary communications or interviews.

If a candidate is invited to your church to preach or for an interview, plan to say "yes" or "no" before moving on to another candidate.





**Section 4. Staffing for Ministries.** Pursuant to 2.51 of the *Constitution*, all ministries of the congregation belong to and are under the auspices of the Church Session. And just as the Session calls a pastor, associate, or assistant pastor (*Constitution* 4.5a), it could also call ministers to augment the staffing of other ministries, such as Mission and Evangelism, Christian Education, etc. This would provide for further utilization of ordained ministers. Presently there are ministries at the Presbytery level identified in Appendix D. All ministries must be under the auspices/direction of a court/judicatory (i.e., session, presbytery, synod or General Assembly), and all ministries at the congregation level are under the court of the Church Session.





## ***APPENDIX D***

### ***MINISTRIES LODGED AT THE HUNTSVILLE PREBYTERY***

#### **Section 1. Identification/Definition of Huntsville Presbytery Ministries**

- a. Men's Ministry
- b. Wellness Ministry (Includes Mental, Physical, Psychological Health, and overall well being)
- c. Christian Education
- d. Senior's Ministry
- e. Family Ministry (Including Marriage/Parenting)
- f. Children's Ministry
- g. Mission and Evangelism
- h. Women's Ministry
- i. Music Ministry
- j. Chaplaincy (as a ministry, Chaplaincy includes working in support of organizations and agencies such as Huntsville Hospital, Crestwood, nursing homes, etc.)
- k. Prison Ministry
- l. Singles' Ministry
- m. Young Adult Ministry
- n. Youth Ministry

#### **Section 2. Established Ministries**

- a. Serving as a pastor or as an associate/assistant pastor referenced in the Confession of Faith, and as a recognized ministry of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA).
- b. Legal authority for establishing new ministries is referenced in *Constitution* 5.6.c. Ministries identified in Appendix D, as well as all ministries of the Huntsville Presbytery, are under the direction of the Committee on Ministry (COM).



## ***APPENDIX E***

### ***PROCEDURES FOR REMOVAL OF ORDAINED MINISTERS FROM THE HUNTSVILLE PRESBYTERY ROLL***

1. **Purpose.** This standard operating procedure (SOP) provides procedures on how to remove ordain clergy from the roll of the Huntsville Presbytery due to non-attendance.
2. **Scope.** Huntsville Presbytery (HP) of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA)
3. **Policy.** The HP, in conjunction with the Committee on the Ministry (COM), must ensure that procedures are followed in accordance with the references outlined in section 5 below; the guidance in section 4 below must be followed for removal of ordained ministers from the HP roll.
4. **Procedures and Responsibilities.** The following *Rules of Discipline, 1.0, Confession of Faith*, (current edition) will be executed to ensure that an ordained minister is afforded due process when considering removal from the HP roll for non-attendance:

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE**

**1.1** Discipline in the church is a positive expression in the spirit of love and helpfulness of concern both for the offender and for the church. Its purpose is that the life and work of the church may be orderly, conducive to the spiritual growth of the members, and corrective of weaknesses, mistakes and offenses by individuals and judicatories. Appropriate reasons for discipline are actions contrary to the faith and practice to which, according to the scriptures, all Christians are called, or which are contrary to the government of the church.

**1.2** Discipline in the church should be appropriate to the nature of the error or offense. All acts of discipline, both for individuals and judicatories, should be weighed carefully, keeping in mind the purpose of discipline.

**1.3** The various approaches in discipline have the same purpose and generally should begin with counseling and only then proceed to the more severe approaches. Discipline may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Counseling is the effort to encourage and assist the person or judicatory to correct what is wrong, to remedy deficiencies, and to learn and grow spiritually through the experience;
- b. Admonition is a formal action to identify the weakness, mistake, or offense of a person or judicatory and to urge or order its correction;
- c. Suspension of a member of a church is a temporary exclusion from the right to vote in a congregational meeting and a removal from any position of leadership, including the session and diaconate. For a minister it is a temporary prohibition against the performance of the duties of the office. For a judicatory it is a temporary withdrawal of its power to act and a denial of



representation in higher judicatories. Suspension may be for a definite or indefinite period of time;

d. The act of deposing is the revoking of the ordination of a minister, elder, or deacon and removal from the office.

#### **5. Procedures for Deposing or Revoking a Minister's Credentials.**

- a. The presbytery must request the minister's ordination credentials immediately.
- b. The minister must return ordination credentials immediately.
- c. If the minister does not return the credentials, the presbytery will notify all presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly Office in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA).
- d. A legal notification in the newspaper.
- e. The person will not be allowed to preach, administer the sacraments in any Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.
- f. When and if the person returns he/she should be received in the same manner as though he/she had never been in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America.

#### **6. Responsibilities.**

- a. Steps 1.0 through 1.3 will be executed by the Committee on Ministry and the Board of Judiciary.
- b. *Procedure for Deposing*, steps "a-d" will be executed by the Office of the Stated Clerk.

#### **7. References.**

- a. Rules of Discipline, 1.3, Confession of Faith, current edition,
- b. 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly, *Report to the GA all ministers whose credentials have been revoked*. Recommendation Number VI: Implementation of the procedure, June, 2007,
- c. *Constitution and Bylaws of the Huntsville Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America (CPCA)*, rev. July 2017.



## ***APPENDIX F***

### ***STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR the DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION and JUDICIARY COMMITTEE***

1. This *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Disciplinary Commission and Judiciary Committee* clearly defines the duties and the authority of both the **Disciplinary Commission** and the **Judiciary Committee**. The Judiciary Committee and Disciplinary Commission are required by the *Huntsville Presbytery Bylaws*, Article IX, Section 5; and the *CPCA Rules of Discipline (RoD)*, 2.5. These are ancillary subcommittees of the Board of Judiciary (BOJ), which when performing a function under the Disciplinary of Persons (ministers) Rules, take on the role of commissions and are therefore authorized to “deliberate and conclude any business submitted to them.” The SOP includes the following procedures:

#### **A. Disciplinary Commission**

1. Receive complaint(s) (RoD 3.401)
2. Investigate complaint(s) (RoD 3.401 *comment*)
3. Counsel with the Accused (RoD 3.402)
4. Consider the charge(s) (RoD 3.403)
5. Suspend or place limitation on the Accused (RoD 3.404)
6. Report in writing to Judiciary Committee

#### **B. Judiciary Committee**

1. Impose disciplinary actions if required (RoD 3.405)
2. Hold hearing (RoD 3.407)
3. Conduct hearing pursuant to RoD 3.408
4. If found not guilty, follow RoD 3.409
5. If found guilty, follow RoD 3.410

**[NOTE: NEITHER THE DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION NOR THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE WILL BE INITIATED UNLESS CHARGES ARE BROUGHT AGAINST A MINISTER OF THE HUNTSVILLE PRESBYTERY].**



## ***APPENDIX G***

### ***STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE PASTORAL INSTALLATION COMMISSION***

- A. Installation Commission must be made up of a quorum of the Huntsville Presbytery (at least 4 persons, one of which must be an ordained minister and one of which must be an ordained elder.
  - B. The Speaker for the Installation Service will receive a \$100.00 honorarium from the offering gathered at the service.
  - C. Remaining funds will be divided equally (50/50) between the Huntsville Presbytery and the church where the pastor is being installed.
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## ***APPENDIX H***

### ***STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR MINISTERS REQUESTING TO BE EXCUSED FROM PRESBYTERY MEETINGS***

- A. Stated Clerk/Engrossing Clerk will read the communication(s).
- B. The Stated Clerk/Engrossing Clerk will provide a copy of the roll to the Huntsville Presbytery to the Committee on the Ministry (COM), identifying ministers who either attended or failed to attend a presbytery meeting.
- C. The COM will then validate/authentication the communications.
- D. COM will forward a communication to the Huntsville Presbytery (HP) and/or Huntsville Presbytery Executive Board (HPEB) advising if the requests are approved/disapproved, not later than sixty (60) days after the close of a Presbytery meeting. Moreover, the COM will make recommendations to the Huntsville Presbytery for action regarding ministers not in compliance with attendance rules.



## SAMPLES SECTION

### SAMPLE A

#### *Sample Letter When Dissolving Pastoral Relationship*

When a pastor or associate/assistant pastor of a church submits a resignation, the session, usually in conjunction with the minister, requests the presbytery to dissolve the relationship. This request may be presented as follows:

The Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ has submitted his/her resignation to the session of \_\_\_\_\_ Church effective \_\_\_\_\_ (Date).

We join with him/her in requesting that the relationship be dissolved. Further, we ask that the presbytery name \_\_\_\_\_ moderator of the session, and we request the counsel and assistance of the presbyterial Board of Missions as we prepare to engage in the pastoral search process.

Sincerely,

P. W. Wright  
Clerk of Session

*\* If the session desires a particular individual, this would be the appropriate time to make such a request.*

### SAMPLE B

#### *Suggested Responsibilities of Search Committee*

The following are some suggested responsibilities for the search committee. These are to be understood as suggestions, and the session, in defining the search committee's responsibilities, need not feel "bound" or limited by this listing.

1. Complete the CIF, if so assigned by the session, and forward it as soon as possible to the DPS.
2. Develop a prospect list (see Section II, page 6).
3. Review and rank dossiers in an initial priority order.
4. Gather additional material for consideration by visiting in worship services conducted by the candidates, contacting references listed in the dossiers (or others who might have reason to know of the person's qualifications), listening to tapes of sermons, and/or holding informal conversations.
5. Review priority ranking and determine the top three to five candidates for the position.
6. Interview candidate #1, discuss proposed contract, and present him/her to the congregation.
7. Finalize proposed contract in conjunction with the session, after which further steps are the responsibility of the session.
8. Write personal letters to any candidates interviewed but not chosen.
9. Notify all who have been under consideration, thanking them for their willingness to have been considered. This communication comes after a pastor has been selected.
10. Keep the session, congregation, appropriate presbyterial agency, and DPS informed of progress.



SAMPLE C.

**Letter to Possible Candidates from  
the Search Committee**

*(should be individually written)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Reverend Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_:

Your name has been suggested to our Search Committee as one who might be a possible candidate for the pastoral position in our church. We are writing concerning your interest in being considered.

If your interest is such that you would like to pursue this matter further, we would like to request a copy of your Personal Information Form (dossier) from the Department of Professional Services for our consideration. We will allow two weeks for your affirmative decision to be considered and for the receipt of your dossier and, thus, an indication of your interest. If, after that time, we have not heard from you, or have not received your dossier, we will assume you are not interested.

You will realize, of course, that in indicating your willingness by seeing that we got your completed dossier, there is no commitment on your part or on the part of our Search Committee other than to pursue the matter further if both of us are interested. If this be the case, you will be receiving a copy of our Church Information Form for your perusal.

We look forward to hearing from you. We ask an interest in your prayers for God's guidance in this matter.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the  
Search Committee  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Church

SAMPLE D

**Sample for Evaluating Personal  
Information Forms**

Many churches review a significant number of dossiers. In order to speed and clarify what can be a long and confusing process, some search committees use a rating sheet.

The following is an example, adapted from one used by a church in search of a pastor. Here is how it is used:

1. Each member of the search committee rates the person whose PIF is under review on each of the eight categories. Rate each category from 1 to 10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest.
2. The ratings for the eight categories are then totaled.
3. The total is divided by eight for an average rating score.
4. Then the average rating score of each member of the search committee is totaled for that individual.
5. Each individual is discussed by the whole search committee, with particular reference to why various members ranked them high or low on the various categories.
6. Usually, the higher-ranked individuals are pursued further, and the lower-ranked individuals' forms are returned to the DPS or destroyed.

This procedure is not meant to make a very personal process mechanical, but, rather, is an example of how one search committee sought to bring some order to a difficult task of doing their homework. (See next page for "score sheet.")





## Evaluation

- ☐ 1. Present position (PIF\* Part I, Basic Data, Items 1-10)
- ☐ 2. Educational Background (PIF Part I, Formal Education, Item 11)
- ☐ 3. Relation of person's present strengths/future interests to pastoral skills we have listed (PIF Part III-A and CIF Part IV)
- ☐ 4. Experience—Consider length of service, size of congregation, and type of community(ies) in which person has served. (PIF Part III-B)
- ☐ 5. Special qualifications (PIF Part I, Item 12 and Part II, Number III B-D)
- ☐ 6. View of role as pastor (PIF Part II, Number II A and D)
- ☐ 7. Theological perspective and personal beliefs (PIF Part II, Number II U and C)
- ☐ 8. View of preaching—or education, or evangelism (PIF Part II, Number II E, F, and G)

Total Points

Average rating score of this person

*My own comments:*

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#### SAMPLE E

##### *Hearing a Prospective Pastor Preach*

When a search committee visits a church to hear a prospective pastor preach, the following suggestions may prove helpful to them.

- re-read the minister's PIF
- be on time for the service; verify time of service
- enter the sanctuary either singly or in pairs, not as a large group which would be noticeable
- avoid being more conspicuous than necessary lest you disturb both minister and congregation
- have a receptive and inquiring attitude
  - Does the service begin promptly at the set time?
  - Does the service run smoothly?
  - Does the minister read the Scripture well and carefully?
  - Is the pulpit manner compelling?
  - Are the prayers helpful?
  - Is the sermon easily followed, well organized, and applicable to life?
  - Is the congregation attentive?
  - Is the minister's custom at the close of the service acceptable?
- note activities announced in bulletin or from pulpit
- greet the minister simply and cordially as you leave the service

#### SAMPLE F

##### *Suggested Interview Questions for Use by Search Committees*

Questions believed to be helpful for enlightened decision-making include the following:

1. How would you describe (a) your basic work orientation, (b) your theology and view of the Bible, (c) fundamental purpose of the church/pastor/ congregation, (d) your mode of operation?
2. What goals do you have for your own personal growth in ministry?
3. What parts of the pastor's role do you enjoy the most?
4. In what areas do you feel you are most skilled?
5. How do you determine what priorities to put on tasks you must do?
6. What kind of continuing education do you think

is most helpful for a pastor and the congregation? What was the last continuing education opportunity in which you were involved? What did you learn from it?

7. What do you see as the primary roles of the church session?
8. What are your views about pastoral calling on members? Inactive members? Prospects?
9. How do you feel about OVO and other benevolences?
10. What are your thoughts relative to the pastor's role in the community?
11. Would you care to share any of your weaknesses with us?
12. What financial expectations do you have?
13. What are your feelings relative to an annual review of the congregation's program, leadership, and staff?
14. Do you feel long-range planning is important?
15. What are your future plans for continued personal and professional growth?
16. How would you go about introducing any change that you feel is needed in the congregation?
17. Being as honest as you can, what do you believe you have to offer to our parish that would serve us well?

*Although the next set of questions is not crucial to the decision on calling a pastor, search committees often raise them. We list them, recognizing your potential interest—encouraging the actual decision to be made on the bases covered in Section I above.*

1. What "extra-parish" church responsibilities do you now have and envision in the future (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly)?
2. How do you like to spend your free time?
3. What do you see as the role of your spouse and family in the life of the congregation?
4. What kind of relationship do you appreciate among other clergy, Cumberland Presbyterian and non-Cumberland Presbyterian?

*NOTE: Some of the above questions may have been answered by the pastor in the PIF and, thus, they are not necessary at the interview unless there is a desire to expand on an answer or explain answers further. In addition to the above questions, or in lieu of some of them, the committee might want to raise other questions of importance. Above all else, ask the questions with clarity! When interviewing a candidate, seek to frame the questions as precisely and concisely as possible. If the candidate's answer reflects a response that does not speak to the interest of the question, TRY AGAIN. Clarity and understanding are paramount.*



**SAMPLE G**

**PROPOSED CONTRACT**

This is a contract between the session of \_\_\_\_\_ Church and the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Church is sufficiently satisfied with the qualifications of the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as \_\_\_\_\_ to enter into this contractual agreement. \_\_\_\_\_ Church further believes that the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, by experience, training, disposition, and commitment, is especially suited to serve in this leadership position.

It is the intention of \_\_\_\_\_ Church to extend to the Reverend a call to assume the position of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, beginning on \_\_\_\_\_, and continuing for an indefinite period of time; and it is the intention of the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ to accept this call and for both parties to accept the following stipulations and agreements, namely:

- (1) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church does hereby promise the Reverend in the discharge of the duties that relate to this position, all proper support and encouragement;
- (2) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church does hereby obligate itself to pay the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, in consideration of the services to be rendered, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ per month for base salary;
- (3) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church obligates itself to provide a manse, with utilities paid, for the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ (or obligates itself to provide the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ per month for a housing allowance);
- (4) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to contribute on a matching basis up to 5 percent of the base salary into the denomination's retirement fund account of the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_;
- (5) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to pay the \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate family or individual coverage) medical insurance premium of the denomination's approved medical insurance program for the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_;
- (6) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to reimburse the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ per month for auto-mobile expense;
- (7) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to provide the expense of moving the household effects of the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_;
- (8) that the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ be allowed a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks' time annually for vacation, and that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church be responsible for the cost of pulpit supply during the \_\_\_\_\_ Sundays involved; (Many churches give a maximum of four weeks for pastors who have been serving in the denomination for ten years or more. Some churches also give an additional week or more for continuing education purposes.)
- (9) that the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ be allowed a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks' time annually for conferences, preaching missions, revivals, and/or other events (with the exception of judicatory responsibilities) that involve being away from the local community and/or local responsibilities, with the cost of pulpit supply being paid by the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_;
- (10) that the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ be allowed \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) weekly (excluding Sunday) for time off, with day(s) being chosen by the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ and being the same day(s) each week, so that the congregation may know the work schedule and call on his/her services during time off only for crisis situations;
- (11) that the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ be allowed sick leave and emergency time off (family sickness, death, parental, etc.) within reasonable limits, and this be reviewed as necessary by the church session. (Guidelines for suggested leave time are available from the GA Board of Missions.)
- (12) that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to review the salary and benefits promised the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ at least annually prior to preparing the budgets for the next year;
- (13) that this contract be for an indefinite period of time, with either party having the privilege and power to terminate it upon the giving of a minimum thirty (30)-day notice of intention and desire to do so; and
- (14) that this contract be entered into with the earnest hope and prayer of all concerned that God will bless the relationship to which the \_\_\_\_\_ Church and the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ commit themselves by their signatures to this contract, arrived at this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A. D. \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name) Clerk of Session  
for \_\_\_\_\_ Cumberland Presbyterian Church Session,  
by official action on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)  
Date signed: \_\_\_\_\_

45



### Addendum to the Proposed Contract

The 1988 General Assembly directed that the Board of Missions include with the standard contract a mobilization agreement for use by churches with pastors who are members of the armed forces reserves or the national guard (p. 211, Recommendation 5 of the 1988 Minutes). Following is the recommended form for such contractual agreements.

### Terms of Mobilization Agreement

Is a chaplain to (service) \_\_\_\_\_

As a military chaplain, (name) is subject to mobilization to active military service upon order of the President of the United States, the Governor of the State, and/or the U. S. Congress. In the interest of the calling agency, (church), and the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_ the following agreement is understood to take effect upon notice of mobilization.

1. (name) would be relieved from all responsibilities to the calling agency he/she is serving, upon effective date of mobilization.

2. The position of (title of position) would be held by (name) for a period of \_\_\_\_ on a leave-of-absence basis, during which time it would be determined when and if (name) would be able to return as (title of position) on a full-time basis.

\*\* (Suggested time is 90-120 days minimum)

3. The following terms of compensation would be paid for a period of \_\_\_\_ following the effective date of mobilization:

\*\*\* (30 days minimum is recommended)

a. Salary: \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_ (list here any other forms of compensation in the contract above that would be continued)

### SAMPLE H

### Sample Letter for Issuing a Call

When the decision is made to issue a call, the following sample letter might be used as a guide. A copy of the call should be communicated to the presbyterial Board of Missions and/or to the presbytery (see Sample Letter to Presbytery When Call Has Been Issued). A request for approval of the relationship in keeping with the terms of the call and a request for installation of the new pastor could be part of the communication to the presbyterial agency.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Church, being satisfied of your ministerial qualifications and being confident of your ability to minister to the diverse needs of this congregation, extends to you a call to serve for an indefinite period of time as pastor (associate, assistant pastor) of this church and to join with us in a ministry to the entire community. We commit ourselves to provide the support, cooperation, and encouragement necessary to enable you to fulfill this calling and in keeping with the terms of the enclosed contract\* (two copies are enclosed).

To indicate your acceptance\*\*, please sign one copy of the contract and return it to us. Retain the other copy for your files.

On your affirmative acceptance of the call, we will communicate with the presbytery regarding its approval and your installation.

Sincerely,

\*If a formal contract, such as the recommended one in Appendix G, is not used, the terms of the call, including annual salary, other financial commitments, e.g., retirement fund contributions, medical insurance, etc., and conditions such as vacation time, should be included as a part of the letter at this point.

\*\*If a formal contract is not used, indicate that an acceptance of the call can be communicated in writing by the pastor to the session.

### Sample Letter to Presbytery When Call Has Been Issued

Dear Presbytery:

We have issued a call to Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as our pastor (associate, assistant pastor) and he/she has accepted, subject to the presbytery's approval. A copy of the terms of the call (contract) is enclosed for your information.

We respectfully request that, at your earliest convenience, this call, along with the terms of the contract, be approved and our church so notified. We further request that a date be set for the service of installation and that a commission be named for this purpose.

Respectfully,





## SAMPLE I

### Sample Letters

The following sample letters are suggestions to the search committee as it seeks to fulfill its task. These letters, or similar ones, should be beneficial as the committee works with various prospects.

#### A. RESPONSE TO PROSPECTS WHOSE DOSSIERS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, BUT WHO WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR THE POSITION

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your dossier which you requested the Department of Professional Services to send for our consideration (or "which we requested from the Department of Professional Services," or "which the Department of Professional Services forwarded to us for our consideration.")

Our Search Committee has reviewed your dossier along with others. However, because of certain particular requirements of our church at this time, we will not be considering you for this position. We greatly appreciate the privilege of considering you.

#### II. LETTER TO PROSPECTS THE SEARCH COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO INTERVIEW

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

We greatly appreciated receiving your dossier. It is our understanding that a copy of our CIF has been forwarded to you. If that is not the case, please contact the Department of Professional Services in Memphis for a copy.

We would appreciate knowing if you are willing to be interviewed and considered further for this position. Please let us know about your willingness within a week to ten days from receipt of this letter.

You will realize, of course, that in indicating your willingness there is no commitment on your part or on the part of the Committee other than to arrange for an interview. We look forward to hearing from you.

#### C. LETTER TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE, BUT WITH WHOM THE COMMITTEE HAS NOT CORRESPONDED FOR TWO OR MORE WEEKS

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

We promised to keep you informed of the progress of our Search Committee in its search for a pastor.

At the present time, we are still considering and interviewing those who have agreed to be interviewed for this position.

While we wish we could be more definite, we want you to know that you are still under consideration by our Committee. We will keep you informed as to our progress. We would appreciate it if you would inform us of any change in your willingness to be considered. Frankly, we hope that you will have patience with us.

With every good wish,

#### D. LETTER TO THOSE NO LONGER UNDER CONSIDERATION

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Our Search Committee appreciated the opportunity to consider you (or "to interview you") for the pastoral position in our church. We promised to be in communication with you. After careful consideration, the Committee has narrowed consideration of candidates (or "has elected to continue our search"). Because of certain particular requirements of our church at this time, you will no longer be under further consideration for this position.

We greatly appreciate the privilege of considering you.

*"If there is a specific reason(s) why a potential pastor is not being chosen, and if this can be stated in an affirmative and helpful way, it should be included at this point as part of this letter."*

#### E. LETTER TO DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AT CONCLUSION OF PROCESS

Department of Professional Services  
Board of Missions  
1978 Union Avenue  
Memphis, Tennessee 38104

Dear Colleagues:

We are pleased to inform you that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church has successfully completed its search for a pastor. The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ has accepted our call and will begin his ministry with us on (date).

We are returning to your office (or "destroying") the dossiers we have received during this process.

Sincerely,

Chair of Search Committee  
or Clerk of Session

