

PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

GUIDELINES ON VALIDATED MINISTRY AND MEMBERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The Committee on Ministry deals with *ministries* and *ministers*. The committee annually recommends to presbytery various *ministries* to be validated [and, as a corollary, may from time to time recommend that a particular ministry **not** be validated].

The committee also recommends to presbytery that teaching elders [*ministers*] accepting – or continuing in – a call to any such validated ministries be admitted into – or continued in – membership in the presbytery, and that candidates accepting a call to some types of validated ministries be ordained to those calls and thereby admitted both to membership in the presbytery and more fundamentally to the office of teaching elder.

The Book of Order [G-3.0306] requires that each presbytery establish written criteria to guide its decisions about validating ministries; these Guidelines put forth those criteria, outlining the principles and standards that the Committee on Ministry applies when considering each case, each individual, who comes before us either for membership or for the validation of ministry.

These Guidelines are organized as follows:

- Part I [satisfying G-3.0306] sets forth thirteen types of ministries that can be validated in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, along with the criteria and standards according to which the committee will consider these and other ministries.
- Parts II through VIII [pp. 3-6] have to do with membership in the presbytery.
 - Parts II-IV specify the process by which an already-ordained minister accepting a call to a validatable ministry can become a member;
 - Part V deals with continuing on the membership roll while continuing to serve in a validated ministry;
 - Part VI deals with a member who accepts a call to a validated ministry beyond the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
 - Part VII deals with at- large membership during a period when a member is no longer engaged in a validated ministry;
 - Part VIII describes the circumstances under which certain ruling elders are temporarily made members of the presbytery;

VALIDATED MINISTRIES

I. MINISTRIES WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS THAT CAN BE VALIDATED:

A. Congregational

1. Pastor, co-pastor, associate pastor [permanent; installed] or designated pastor [fixed term; installed] of a congregation belonging to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
2. Intentional Transitional Pastor, Bridge Pastor, Supply Pastor, or other temporary, uninstalled pastoral ministry to a congregation belonging to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
3. Organizing pastor or organizing co-pastor of a fellowship sponsored by the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
4. Teaching elder serving as Christian educator, musician, or administrator of a congregation belonging to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
5. Pastoral ministry to a congregation belonging to another denomination with which the PC(USA) is in full communion or to a Union or Federated Church affiliated with the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;

B. Denominational

6. Ministries in other service of the PC(USA) that are related by organization, accountability, or structure to governing bodies, agencies, mission and ministry units or seminaries;

C. Missional:

7. Administrators or workers in mission projects such as homeless shelters, food banks, healthcare facilities, daycare programs, after-school programs and human service programs;
8. Chaplaincies or other similar work at educational institutions, health care institutions and organizations, corrections facilities, and similar institutions within the geographical bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
9. Work in interdenominational organizations such as councils of churches, CROP, and the Heifer Project;
10. Ministries beyond the jurisdiction of this church whether faith-based or not, dealing with such issues as housing programs, drug and alcohol addiction, marriage and family problems, etc.;

D. Educational:

11. Pastoral Education services such as teaching theology or religion or related subjects at a seminary or other educational institutions;

E. Spiritual and Counseling Service:

12. Spiritual Direction and Formation;
13. Pastoral Counseling services;

- F. And such other ministry or ministries, as determined by the Committee on Ministry [COM] on a case-by-case basis according to the particular facts and circumstances, consistent with the description of ordained office found in G-2.0101 and meeting all of the standards set forth in G-2.0503 requiring that a validated ministry shall:
1. demonstrate conformity with the mission of God's people in the world as set forth in *Holy Scripture, The Book of Confessions*, and the Book of Order of this church;
 2. serve and aid others, and enable the ministries of others;
 3. give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;
 4. be carried out in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery in addition to any organizations, agencies, and institutions served; and
 5. include responsible participation in the deliberations, worship and work of the presbytery and in the life of a congregation of this church or a church with the PC(USA) (G-5.0201).

MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

II. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS OF AN ALREADY-ORDAINED PC(USA) TEACHING ELDER REQUIRES A. AND B.:

- A. Acceptance of a call, within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery, to one or more of the ministries listed above, which may be declared validated;
- B. Completion of the process of examination and approval by the Committee on Ministry, followed by examination and approval by the entire presbytery.

III. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS OF AN ORDAINED MINISTER OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION REQUIRES EITHER A. OR B.:

- A. Transfer of ministerial status to PC(USA), and full membership in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, if the minister so desires [G-2.0505]
 1. Acceptance of a call as [Installed] Pastor, Associate Pastor, Co-Pastor or Designated Pastor of a congregation belonging to the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
 2. Fulfillment of the requirements of G-2.06 as established by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
 - a. These requirements include education and ordination exams.
 - b. Under certain circumstances, some of the requirements of G-2.06 may be waived or modified by a three-fourths vote of the presbytery.

- c. Completion of the process of preparation, examination and approval by the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, followed by examination and approval by the entire presbytery.
- B. Temporary membership in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos for the duration of the call, through one of the following:
 - 1. “Orderly Exchange” [G-5.0202; G-2.0506] if the minister is a member of a denomination included in the *Formula of Agreement* [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ; see Appendix C of the *Book of Order*] and its extensions [Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad and the Moravian Church in America; see Appendix E of the *Book of Order*], and thus in full communion with the PC(USA).
 - a. The ministry may be installed or temporary.
 - b. The minister is enrolled in the presbytery, during the ministry, with all rights and privileges.
 - 2. New immigrant ministers [G-2.0505] of denominations with which the PC(USA) is not in full communion, may be granted temporary membership while serving in a congregational or denominational ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos [G-2.0506].

IV. CORRESPONDING MEMBER

- A. Corresponding members have the right of voice but not vote when present at a meeting of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.
- B. Members of other presbyteries in the PC(USA) who are laboring within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos may be invited to sit as Corresponding Members for the duration of their service.
- C. Presbyters (teaching elders or ruling elders) in good standing in other councils of the PC(USA) or in any other Christian Church, who are present at any meeting of presbytery, may be invited to sit as corresponding members for that meeting only. [Bylaw 2.4]

V. CONTINUATION ON THE ROLL AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS, WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDS OF THE PRESBYTERY, REQUIRES A., B., C. AND D. IF APPLICABLE:

- A. Continuing as a Teaching Elder [a minister of Word and Sacrament] of the Presbyterian Church (USA), or as an ordained minister of a denomination with which the PC(USA) is in full communion, in conducting her or his ministry or ministries;
- B. Continuing to engage, within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery, in one or more of the validated ministries listed above;

- C. Responsible participation in the presbytery, including
 - 1. attending its meetings [~~and requesting an excused absence from the others~~] each year; and
 - 2. participation in other ways in the work of the presbytery most years.

- D. If engaged in specialized [non-congregational] ministry,
 - 1. annual re-validation of ministry by vote of presbytery upon recommendation by the COM [G-2.0503a]; and
 - 2. active participation in the life and worship of a congregation of this church or of a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA).

VI. CONTINUATION ON THE ROLL AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS WHILE LABORING OUTSIDE THE GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDS OF THE PRESBYTERY REQUIRES A. AND B.:

- A. Continuing as a Teaching Elder [a minister of Word and Sacrament] of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in conducting her or his ministry or ministries, in either of the following two scenarios;
 - 1. Accepting a call to, or continuing to serve in, one or more of the non-Installed ministries listed above which may be validated, within the geographic bounds but not under the jurisdiction of another Presbytery
 - a. while remaining resident within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, and
 - b. demonstrating to the Committee on Ministry why remaining a member of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, rather than transferring to the Presbytery within whose bounds she or he is performing ministry, best conforms to the mission of God's people, of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

 - 2. Accepting a call to, or continuing in, mission service outside the geographic bounds of the PC(USA), to one or more of the ministries listed above which may be validated. A Teaching Elder serving a church outside the United States may, with the approval of the presbytery upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, accept membership in that church without affecting her or his membership in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos. [G-3.0306]

- B. Annual re-validation of ministry by vote of presbytery upon recommendation by the Committee on Ministry.

VII. DESIGNATION OF A TEACHING ELDER AS A MEMBER-AT-LARGE IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS:

- A. A member-at-large is a teaching elder who
 - 1. has previously been engaged in a validated ministry
 - a. in the Presbytery of Los Ranchos; or

- b. in another presbytery, but now lives within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos;
 - 3. has not intentionally abandoned the exercise of ministry; but
 - 4. is not currently engaged in a ministry that complies with all the criteria for validated ministry specified in section I.F., above, as happens for example upon the termination of a previous call, or coming to the area with a spouse before receiving a new call, or coming to the area in pursuit of an advanced degree, or various other circumstances.
- B. A teaching elder is declared to be a member-at-large either
- 1. upon application by the teaching elder, approval and recommendation by the Committee on Ministry, and affirmative vote of the presbytery, or
 - 2. by recommendation of the COM, after determining that the teaching elder's ministry cannot be validated, and affirmative vote of the presbytery.
- C. A member-at-large is entitled to full participation in the presbytery, including voice, vote, committee service, election to presbytery offices and service in higher councils.
- D. The status of a member-at-large shall be reviewed annually
- 1. The member-at-large is expected to comply with as many of the criteria in section I.F. above [and G-2.0503a of the *Book of Order*] as possible, including especially
 - a. participation in the life of the presbytery; and
 - b. participation in the life of a congregation of this church or of a denomination in full correspondence with the PC(USA).
 - 2. The "at-large" status will be removed upon the teaching elder's acceptance of a call to a validated ministry, approval by the COM and affirmative vote of the presbytery.
 - 3. A teaching elder who has been a member-at-large for at least three years, but is no longer participating in the life of the presbytery or of a congregation, may be asked by the Committee on Ministry to discuss whether it would be advisable to seek Release from Ministry as a Teaching Elder [G-2.0507] until a validated call is in hand.

NON-MINISTER MEMBERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

VIII. RULING ELDERS GRANTED TEMPORARY FULL MEMBERSHIP WITH VOICE AND VOTE [G- 3.0301; BYLAW 2.5] WHILE:

- A. serving as officer of the presbytery, chairperson of a continuing committee, or member of the Presbytery Council, for the duration of her or his term of office; or
- B. serving as exempt administrative staff, for the duration of her or his term of employment.