



# *Leadership Referral Services*

OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

8207 Traditional Place, Cordova, TN 38016 \* (901) 276-4572 Ext. 263 \* [www.cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs](http://www.cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs)

## **GUIDELINES FOR SEEKING A NEW PASTOR FOR YOUR CHURCH**

When either the pastor or the session decides that the pastoral relationship should be dissolved, contact is made with the Presbyterial Board of Missions, or its equivalent agency, to communicate that desire. If, after consultations and due consideration, the Presbyterial Board concurs in the dissolution request, it makes an appropriate recommendation to presbytery. Presbytery, 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 Presbyterial Board requesting a 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; a student about to graduate and accept a first pastorate; or a student still in school.

The material that follows is for the use of sessions and 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.

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

Following are the steps to be taken, in proper order, by sessions and search committees as they engage in the process of seeking a new pastor. Section One (page 2), is the listing of the steps in an abbreviated form, and Section Two (page 3) is the listing of the steps with more detailed information and suggestions. Section Three (page 8) has some helpful suggestions for the search committee, and Section Four (page 9) includes: a sample letter when dissolving a pastoral relationship, creating a church profile on-line, suggested responsibilities of search committee, letters to possible candidates from the search committee, sample for evaluating personal information forms, hearing a prospective pastor preach, suggested interview

questions for use by search committees, proposed contract, sample letter for issuing a call, sample letter to presbytery when call has been issued, response to prospects whose PIFs have been received, but who will not be considered for the position, letter to prospects the search committee would like to interview, 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, letter to those no longer under consideration and letter to Leadership Referral Services at conclusion of process.

## SECTION ONE

### Summary of Procedures for Churches Seeking Pastors

The steps in abbreviated form are:

- Step 1        Session, usually in conjunction with the pastor, contacts the Presbyterial Board of Mission requesting a dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
- Step 2        Session notifies the Leadership Referral Services of the intention to begin the search process, creates a profile at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/> and downloads a copy of the Guidelines to assist them in their search for a pastor.
- Step 3        Session, on receipt of the Guidelines, names a search committee and defines its responsibilities.
- Step 4        Session determines who is to be responsible for completing the Church Information Form (CIF).
- Step 5        Utilizing the Leadership Referral Service. Including creating a Church Profile and completing the Church Information Form. Once completed, approved by the session, and sent to the Leadership Referral Services to be uploaded to the website at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/>. **NOTE:** *Churches that have had a CIF on file previously may request a copy of their CIF to aid in completing an updated form.*
- Step 6        Search committee establishes the process for evaluating the Personal Information Forms (PIF) to be received.
- Step 7        Search committee obtains names of prospects for the position and receives Personal Information Forms utilizing the Leadership Referral Services website at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/>.
- Step 8        Search committee studies and evaluates the PIFs, seeks counsel of the Presbyterial Board, and ranks the candidates (prospects) for the position in priority order.
- Step 9        Search committee hears candidates preach and interviews them.
- Step 10       Search committee selects the best candidate, counsels with the Presbyterial Board, and discusses the suggested terms of the contract with the candidate.

- Step 11 Search committee and session finalize the terms of the proposed contract.
- Step 12 Session ascertains the will of the congregation regarding issuing a call.
- Step 13 Session issues a call, in keeping with the terms of the contract, subject to the approval of the Presbyterial Board and/or the presbytery.
- Step 14 Search committee is discharged.
- Step 15 Session makes request to the Presbyterial Board 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 #10) decides not to consider the position, the 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 #7 and repeats the process until a successful conclusion to the search is realized.*

## **SECTION TWO**

### **Listing of the Steps with More Detailed Information and Suggestions**

#### **Step 1 Dissolving the Relationship**

The pastor submits written resignation to the session.

The session, usually in conjunction with the pastor, communicates in writing to the Presbyterial Board requesting a dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Ordinarily, the Presbyterial Board concurs in the request to dissolve the pastoral relationship and recommend its approval to the presbytery. It is also normal for the Presbyterial board to name a moderator of the session, subject to the approval of the presbytery. See sample letter Appendix A, page 8.

The session and/or search committee might wish to consider 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 interim pastor are available from the Leadership Referral Services.)

If it is going to be weeks or months before the presbytery meets to formally dissolve the relationship, it is accepted practice for search committees to proceed with the pastoral

selection process. Some presbyteries direct their Board of Missions to approve the dissolution of the pastoral relationship pending final approval by presbytery at its next meeting.

## **Step 2 Initiating the Search Process**

The Search Committee Guidelines are available to download at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/>. Upon downloading the Guidelines and appropriate forms, the session and/or search committee 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 3 Naming the Search Committee and Defining Its Responsibilities**

When the session has received and reviewed the Guidelines, it names the search committee, if this has not already been done. 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. It is also advisable to find a good cross-section of members to represent the congregation (i.e. Older members, newer members, youth, young married, retired, etc.) The session defines the suggested responsibilities of the search committee. See Appendix C, page 9, for possible responsibilities.

## **Step 4 Taking a Look at Yourself**

The interim between pastors is often an excellent time for a congregation to review its goals, set new ones, and think about its expectations of itself and its prospective pastor. At this point, some congregations may wish to take the time do an in-depth self-study with the intention of self-discovery and the planning of objective and goals for the future. (The Missions Ministry Team can make recommendations of materials for this purpose.)

## **Step 5 Utilizing Leadership Referral Service Online**

Leadership Referral Service is now an online, fully automated service. We no longer receive/send Church Information Forms (CIF) or Personal Information Forms (PIF). It is a two-step process: Creating a Church Profile Online and Filling out the Church Information Form (CIF)

### **a. Create a Church Profile Online**

The session will decide who is responsible for creating the Church Profile and completing the CIF (i.e. the search committee, a special committee named by the session, the session itself or a committee).

You must complete your online profile with a username and password. See Appendix B, page 9 for complete instructions. Once the profile has been completed you will be able to view resumes and/or post a job. Also, Ministers will now know that the church is looking for a new pastor (or other church position).

b. Download and complete the Church Information Form (CIF)

This form, along with an instruction sheet (needs to be updates), is available on the LRS website at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/>.

Once the form is completed, it should be reviewed and approved by the session. Once approved, please email or USPS mail it to the Director of Congregational Ministries. It will be uploaded to the Opportunity List webpage on the LRS website at <https://cpcmc.org/pdmt/lrs/>. (A copy of the CIF will then be available to download by those potentially interested).

### **Steps 6-8 Develop the Prospective Pastor**

Once given permission to access the ministers in the system, you can click on the ministers who have profiles in the system. A number identifies ministers at this stage of the process. There is no commitment for either of you currently. As a church, you are simply gathering resumes or PIFs to consider. Once you have a few to review, then your committee will go through a time of discernment and one minister/candidate will stand out among the others.

Prospective pastors might come from various sources, including; the LRS website; the Presbyterian Board; the session; the search committee itself; members of the congregation and even former members or interested friends. 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 to no more than 10 to 12.

This list of 10-12 should be further studied and prioritized by the committee through various ways, including reviewing the PIFs, making an initial contact to determine the degree of interest (see Appendix D, page 10), contacting those who have reason to know something about the prospect's abilities, 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 a #1, #2, #3 order prior to any formal interviews.

After the search committee has narrowed their list to those most desired, having already looked at the PIFs, it should evaluate and rank them according to its predetermined process. Some presbyteries require prior Board approval before contacting potential pastors. If this is the case in your presbytery, be sure the appropriate presbyterial agency has given approval prior to contacting individuals. If that is not required, it is, nevertheless, a good practice to get

prior approval, at least from those ranked high enough to be interviewed. This practice, potentially, at least, can save some embarrassment and possible conflict later.

### **Steps 9-11 Hearing Candidates Preach and Conducting Interviews**

Even though it may not be the primary consideration, the search committee will want to know something of the candidate's preaching ability. This can be determined in several ways.

These ways include:

- a. requesting videos or recordings of one or more sermons,
- b. visiting the churches being served by the candidates and participating in the worship services (see Appendix F, page 12, for suggestions on visiting churches),
- c. making inquiry of those who are likely to know something about the candidates' preaching ability, or
- d. 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.

The 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 elaborating on points in the PIF, etc. The search committee will want to review its priority listing, select the top three in priority order, and counsel with the Presbyterial Board regarding its intentions.

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. See Appendix G, page 12 for sample interview questions. A part of the formal interview will be discussing and negotiating terms of the proposed contract. The search committee and session finalize the terms of the proposed contract. See Appendix H, page 14, for sample contract form.

## **Steps 12-15 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 search committee and 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. Considering the vote, the session will decide 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, considering the results, the session will decide 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 Presbyterial Board receives written communication to this effect, along with a request for approval of the relationship. The communication to the Board also includes the terms of the call and, subject to the approval of the presbytery, may also include a request that the new pastor be installed. See Appendix J, page 17.

If “no,” then notify the candidate by personal letter stating, in general terms, why he/she was not chosen (see Appendix K, page 17 for sample letter). Then the 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 LRS of the successful completion of the process (see APPENDIX K, Page 17, for sample letter). If an online job was posted, it will need to be removed. With the successful completion of the process, all PIFs that have been received from ministers and/or the LRS should be returned or destroyed. The PIFs 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 THREE

### Some Helpful Suggestions for the Search Committee

The following suggestions are offered to the search committee to aid it in doing its job well as it engages in the pastoral search process. The task in which the search committee is engaged will significantly affect the life of the congregation and requires spiritual guidance.

#### ***Members of a search committee should:***

1. Schedule regular meetings, elect chair, vice chair, and secretary.
2. Open and close all meetings with a prayer.
3. Before interviewing a prospective pastor, be sure the candidate's qualifications are in keeping with the skills and abilities in the CIF and that the committee is of one mind regarding the qualifications they are looking for- be familiar with a candidate's background and credentials.
4. When interviewing, utilize the suggested interview questions (Appendix F, page 12), but do not be limited by these questions.
5. After interviewing, set a specific date by which the session will reach a final decision. Except under unusual circumstances, this time period should be no longer than two weeks.
6. 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, Appendix I, page 16).
7. When a person has been secured for the position, notify all others who have been under consideration, expressing appreciation for their willingness to have been considered.
8. Keep the session and congregation informed of progress.
9. Keep the appropriate Presbyterial agency informed of progress.
10. Keep clear and accurate records of all matters germane to the committee's task.
11. Avoid speaking for the committee unless authorized to do so.
12. Avoid setting up artificial barriers of age, sex, race, or marital status.
13. Avoid making a commitment to a minister concerning a call during preliminary communications or interviews.
14. 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.
15. Contact LRS when a pastor has been called and the search has been completed.

## SECTION FOUR

### APPENDIX A

#### Sample Letter When Dissolving Pastoral Relationship

When a pastor or associate/assistant pastor of a church submits a resignation, the session, usually in conjunctions 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 progress.

Sincerely,  
F.W. Wright  
Clerk of Session

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

### APPENDIX B

#### Creating a Church Profile Online

1. You must complete your online profile with a username and password. Go to: <http://lrs.cumberland.org/church-registration#/> and fill out the form.
2. Click on REGISTER. You will receive an email notification that you have registered.
3. Once you have clicked on REGISTER, click on COMPLETE CHURCH PROFILE.
4. Once you have clicked on COMPLETE CHURCH PROFILE, complete as fully as possible. The more information you can submit, the more likely ministers will take a closer look at the church. Click on SUBMIT when finished with this page.
5. You can then click on VIEW RESUMES or POST A JOB.
6. Clicking on POST A JOB and fill out the form. Once finished, click SUBMIT.
7. Once this page is filled out and SUBMIT is clicked, you will receive a notification.

After submitting, the posting should be approved within 24 hours. Once this occurs, you will receive an email notification.

Once given permission to access the ministers in the system, you can click on the ministers who have profiles in the system. You WILL NOT know the minister as they are identified only by a number at this point in the process. If you see some resumes that interest you, click a button to send an email. They will then either respond with more information or will send an anonymous reply that they are not interested in discussion.

### **APPENDIX C**

#### **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 assigned by the session, and forward it as soon as possible to the LRS. The preferred way is in Word format by email attachment.
2. Develop a prospect list (see Section II, page 4).
3. Review and rank PIFs 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 PIFs (or others who might have reason to know of the person's qualifications), listening to recordings/videos 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 LRS informed of progress.

**APPENDIX D**  
**Letters to Possible Candidates from the Search Committee**  
**(Should be individually written)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Reverend Mr/Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_,

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 you send your Personal Information Form (PIF) via email, USPS mail or through the LRS website (NOTE: provided the church has posted the job online). We will allow two weeks for your affirmative decision to be considered and for the receipt for your Personal Information Form (PIF) and, thus, an indication of your interest. If, after that time, we have not heard from you, or have not received your PIF, we will assume you are not interested.

You will realize, of course, that in indicating your willingness by seeing that we get your completed PIF, 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,

**APPENDIX E**  
**Sample for Evaluating Personal Information Forms**

Many churches review a significant number of PIFs. 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.") \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evaluation

1. Present position (PIF Part I, Basic Data).
2. Educational Background (PIF Part I, Formal Education).
3. Relation of person's present strengths/future interests to pastoral skills we have listed (PIF Part III and CIF Part III).
4. Experience-Consider length of service, size of congregation, and type of community in which person has served (PIF Part III, 2-4).
5. Special qualifications viewed in PIF (Not limited to any specific component of PIF).
6. View of role as pastor (PIF Part II, various questions).
7. Theological perspective and personal beliefs (PIF Part II, Number 2B)
8. View of preaching-or education, or evangelism (PIF Part II, Numbers 2F, 2G and 2H)

Total points \_\_\_\_\_

Average rating score of this person \_\_\_\_\_

My own comments:

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## **APPENDIX F**

### **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.
  1. Does the service begin promptly at the set time?
  2. Does the service run smoothly?
  3. Does the minister read the Scripture well and carefully?
  4. Is the pulpit manner compelling?
  5. Are the prayers helpful?
  6. Is the sermon easily followed, well organized, and applicable to life?
  7. Is the congregation attentive?
  8. 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.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **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 OUO 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 expectation 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 congregation 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 form the question 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.

**APPENDIX H**  
**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 R \_\_\_\_\_ 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 automobile 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 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 Missions Ministry Team.)

(12) That the \_\_\_\_\_ Church agrees to reviews 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. \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Minister's name)

\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk of session (name)

for \_\_\_\_\_ Cumberland Presbyterian Church Session.

Date signed: \_\_\_\_\_ by official action on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

Addendum to the Proposed Contract The 1988 General Assembly directed that the Missions Ministry Team 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 day 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.)

### **APPENDIX I**

#### **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,

**NOTE:** *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 considerations 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.*

**APPENDIX J**  
**Sample Letter to Presbytery When Call Has Been Issued**

Dear Presbyters,

We have issued a call to Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as our pastor (associate, assistant pastor) and he/she has accepted, subject to presbytery 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 notified. We further request that a date be set for the service of installation and that a commission be named for this purpose.

Respectfully,

**APPENDIX K**  
**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 PIFs HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, BUT WHO WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR THE POSITION**

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

This is to acknowledge receipt of your PIF. 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.

**B. LETTER TO PROSPECTS THE SEARCH COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO INTERVIEW**

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

We greatly appreciate receiving your dossier. If you have not downloaded our Church Information Form (CIF) please note it is on the Leadership Referral Service website. 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 not 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 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. We hope you will have patience with us.

May God's blessings be upon you,

**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 not 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 LEADERSHIP REFERRAL SERVICES AT CONCLUSION OF PROCESS**

An email to the Director of Congregational Ministries with the following information is acceptable. If you choose to write a letter and mail it, the address is:

Cumberland Presbyterian Church Missions Ministry Team  
LRS  
8207 Traditional Place  
Cordova, TN 38016  
lrs@cumberland.org

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 or her ministry with us on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

**At this time, please destroy any PIFs the Search Committee may have in its possession.**

**Congratulations on finding a new pastor!**