

### **Assessment and Appraisal of Pastors**

Each congregation in the Presbytery will conduct an annual appraisal of all installed, designated, or stated supply pastors of the church. This appraisal also includes review of compensation. The annual review of Session minutes by the appropriate Presbytery Committee will look for documentation that this review has been conducted. Absent such documentation, the minutes will not be approved. If there was a change of pastors during the year of session minutes under review by the Presbytery Committee on Minutes, an “exit interview” with the departing pastor, noted in the minutes, will suffice in place of an annual review.

Some guidelines and ground rules for the annual appraisal are:

- A. Criteria for the appraisal must have been established and agreed upon by both the session and the pastor(s) at least three months prior to the actual conducting of the appraisal with such criteria being documented in the minutes of the Session. The simplest criteria are:
  - 1) What we want the pastor to keep on doing
  - 2) What we want the pastor to do less of or stop doing
  - 3) What we want the pastor to do more of or start doing.
  
- B. The pastor and the session must agree on the purpose(s) of the appraisal. These may include:
  - 1) The creation of goals and objectives for the future.
  - 2) Identifying areas where forgiveness needs to be asked for and granted.
  - 3) Building and deepening relationships through self-disclosure and feedback.
  - 4) Strengthening open and honest communication between all parties.
  - 5) Identifying problem areas AND generating solutions for those problems.
  - 6) Clarifying understandings and expectations for both the pastor and the session regarding the work to be done and the results to be accomplished.
  - 7) Affirming the current and directing the future performance of the pastor.Again, the purposes agreed upon should be documented in the Session minutes.
  
- C. The process should be marked by the quality of “speaking the truth in love” and should never be used to punish, attack or condemn.
  
- D. At the conclusion of the evaluation process the Session should conduct an evaluation of the entire process using, perhaps, the following questions:
  - 1) Were the criteria used in the evaluation appropriate and helpful?
  - 2) Were the criteria established and agreed upon by both the session and the pastor(s) at least three months prior to the evaluation being initiated?
  - 3) Were the purposes for conducting the evaluation clear and appropriate?
  - 4) In light of what we have learned from this experience:
    - a) what would we do the same next time
    - b) what would we do differently next time

The following list of evaluation criteria is based on the vows taken at ordination and / or installation of pastors, elders or deacons in the Presbyterian Church USA in the Book of Order. Outward evidence or manifestations of living according to these vows are not always that easy to see or describe. Therefore, Pastors or Sessions choosing to use these vows as criteria for evaluation may wish to, first of all, use them as a self-assessment and then see what the Session or the appropriate committee of Session would add to the self-assessment--in light of the original purpose of the assessment.)

What are some recent activities or behaviors that would serve as evidence:

1. a That you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior?
1. b That you acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church?
1. c That through him you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
  
2. a That you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal?
2. b That the Scriptures are God's Word to you?
  
3. a That you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do?
3. b That you are being instructed and led by our confessions as you lead the people of God?
  
4. That you are functioning as a minister of the Word and Sacrament (or elder or deacon) in obedience to Jesus Christ? Under the authority of scripture? Continuously guided by our confessions?
  
5. a. That you are being governed by our church's polity?
5. b. That you are abiding by its discipline?
5. c. That you are a friend among your colleagues in ministry?
5. d. That you are working with your colleagues in ministry subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
  
6. a. That you are seeking in your own life to follow the Lord Jesus Christ?
6. b. That you love your neighbors?
6. c. That you are working for the reconciliation of the world?
  
7. That you are furthering the peace, unity and purity of the church?
  
8. That you are serving the people with:
  8. a. Energy?
  8. b. Intelligence?
  8. c. Imagination?
  8. d. Love?

- 9. a. That you are a faithful minister?
- 9. b. That you are proclaiming the Good News in Word and Sacrament?
- 9. c. That you are teaching faith?
- 9. d. That you are caring for the people?
- 9. e. That you are active in the government and discipline of the church by serving in the governing bodies of the church?
- 9. f. That in your ministry you are showing the love of Jesus Christ, and the justice of Jesus Christ?