COM Ministry Model

Liaisons

Every member of COM serves as a liaison to connect with congregations. We want to give liaisons more training, and we want to free their ministry time by streamlining processes and focusing on their relationships with congregations. The hope would be that the average COM member spends approximately four hours per month on their ministry with COM.

Therefore, every COM gathering will be focused on training and equipping members for their relational work as liaisons. COM will meet four times each year and each meeting will be a two-hour training session. Training topics will include topics such as basic liaison training, salary and Board of Pensions information, and handling pastoral transitions.

Liaisons will have a primary role with congregations with three areas of focus – nurturing a relationship between the congregation and the COM/presbytery, supporting all aspects of pastoral transitions, and encouraging the health of the congregation's ministry by offering resources as needed.

Rather than triennial visits, the liaison will be given specific tools and suggestions for an ongoing relationship with regular contacts. Liaisons will report on their work to their clusters at regular cluster meetings.

Clusters

COM will continue to work in four geographic clusters. Each cluster will be led by co-moderators, ideally a pastor and a ruling elder and ideally in two different COM classes.

Clusters will meet regularly to hear updates from liaisons and to determine action items that will go to the Leadership Team. Cluster meetings should ordinarily be one hour in length and if possible accessible electronically. Clusters will continue to appoint Session moderators, and approve pastoral contracts for interims and temporary pastors. Clusters will be charged to meet with interim pastors serving congregations in their cluster for updates and supervision.

When a congregation enters a pastoral transition and prepares to seek interim pastoral leadership, PIFs for the interim search will come from the presbytery via the General Presbyter or the COM co-moderators. The liaison will be the contact person with the interim search to provide PIFs through this process.

The work of the Transfers sub-committee will now be done at the cluster level. When a PNC proceeds to final candidate face to face interviews, the liaison is responsible for ensuring all candidates have passed an "exec check" before travel plans are made. The liaison and at least one other member of the cluster (ideally a ruling elder and a minister as a pair if possible), the transfers coordinator and the general presbyter meet with each of the final candidates (ideally in person when the candidate is visiting but electronic meetings also work). Neither of the two COM members should have a relationship with the church or with the candidate. At that time, each final candidate will complete a background check release form. Those forms will be held until the PNC has discerned their first choice and at that time, the background check will be run on that candidate. The background check will be run by the

presbytery staff and cost paid by presbytery funds. If there are concerns on the background check, the general presbyter will contact the liaison and the PNC to discuss next steps.

If there are no concerns, an offer is made. If the first candidate doesn't accept the call, the next candidate's background check is run prior to an offer being made and the process repeats.

Clusters will also handle transfers for any pastors coming to a previously-validated ministry in that region and for pastors who want to join "at large" and reside in that region. The cluster will consider any request for a new validated ministry in that region and will report a recommendation to the Leadership Team for final consideration.

When a congregation hires an interim or temporary supply pastor, or calls a new pastor, the liaison will be a primary contact for that new person. The liaison will meet with the new pastor, ideally in the first week of service, and review items in a COM welcome packet together.

Special sub-committees

The Certifications sub-committee will continue to function and work with any non-PCUSA pastor who wants to become a pastor in our presbytery.

The CLP sub-committee will continue to function and work with any ruling elders who are studying to prepare for service and with any CLPs currently serving.

Other sub-committees can be formed as needed by the Leadership Team, to handle specific roles or tasks of the committee's work.

Leadership Team

A Leadership Team will be comprised of the two co-moderators of COM and the co-moderators of the four COM clusters for a total of ten members. The Leadership Team will act on all COM business that emerges from the cluster meetings. The Team will meet 4-6 times per year for one hour each time and members of the Team may join electronically by Zoom. The Leadership Team will also approve any additions or changes to the presbytery's pulpit supply list. Ordinary action items will be handled by omnibus motion so that the majority of meeting time is used on the unusual and exceptional action items to meet the needs of our congregations. The Team will prepare the presbytery report and recommend action items for the presbytery.