Presbytery of Charlotte
Committee on Ministry
Policy and Reporting Form for Validated Ministries and At-Large Members

In the Presbyterian Church (USA), most Ministers of Word and Sacrament are called and installed as a pastor, co-pastor, or an associate pastor of a particular congregation. The *Book of Order* states, "*They are responsible for a quality of life and relationships that commends the gospel to all persons and that communicates its joy and justice*" (2019-2021, G-2.0504).

A Minister of Word and Sacrament may also be engaged in missional work as approved by the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery (COM) or by the denomination. This is known as a validated ministry. Teaching Elders in validated ministries are active ministers of the Presbytery and expected to take part in Presbytery meetings where they may speak, vote, and hold office.

Definition of a Validated Ministry

The *Book of Order* explains what it means to be engaged in a validated ministry in Section G-2.0503 (2019-2021). It states:

> 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 ministry of others;
> (3) give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word;
> (4) be carried on 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 in correspondence with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2019-2021, G-5.0201).

It is the ministry that is validated, not the minister. So, for example, if the Chaplain at a long-term care facility retires, the position continues to be a validated ministry in the Presbytery of Charlotte. However, no pastoral relationship can be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the Presbytery. Therefore, the retiring chaplain must be dismissed by the Presbytery and the incoming chaplain must approved by the Presbytery.

Types of Validated Ministries in the Presbytery of Charlotte

Each Presbytery determines which ministries are considered validated ministries. As of January 1, 2021, the Presbytery of Charlotte recognized 58 validated ministries. These included numerous and varied forms of service within the geographical bounds of the Presbytery.

1. **Congregational Ministries:**
   a. Temporary supply pastor, interim pastor, or transitional pastor (not installed).
   b. Organizing pastor or co-pastor of a fellowship sponsored by this Presbytery
   c. Pastoral ministry to a congregation belonging to another denomination with which the Presbytery is in full communion.
   d. Pastoral residency at a church or in a clinical pastoral education setting with regular, substantive supervision.

2. **Denominational Ministries**
   a. Staff positions of the Presbytery of Charlotte, Synod of the Atlantic, or General Assembly that are related by organization, accountability, or structure to governing bodies, agencies, mission projects, ministry units, or seminaries.

3. **Missional Ministries**
   a. Local or international evangelism.
   b. Administration or employment in mission projects such as homeless shelters, food banks, healthcare facilities, day care programs, pre-school programs, after-school programs and human services programs.
   c. Chaplaincy in the following types of organizations: prisons; the military; a police and fire service; health care organizations; retirement and long-term care facilities, non- and not-for profit agencies that serve the poor; and programs that serve people struggling with addictions and mental health issues.
   d. Partners in mission in connection with a church outside the United States of America.
   e. Ministers who serve an organization sponsored by two or more denominations.
   f. Nondenominational ministries that serve particular groups of people such as those who speak English as a second language and those facing discrimination due to immigration status.
   g. Nondenominational ministries that address housing inequities, addiction issues, marriage and family services; and racial, social, and economic injustice.
   h. Employment with an interdenominational organization such as the Charlotte Crisis Assistance Ministry, CROP Hunger Walk, Heifer International, and the American Red Cross.

4. **Educational Ministries**
   a. Teaching in an institution of secondary education.
   b. Teaching at a college or university, including Queens University, Davidson College, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and Johnson C. Smith University.
   c. Teaching, Chaplaincy, Admissions, and Administration at a seminary, including Union Presbyterian Seminary–Charlotte.
   d. Chaplains employed in a school serving children in grades K-12

5. **Spiritual Formation and Counseling Ministries**
   a. Pastoral care or pastoral counseling within a church or with other agencies, including hospice and health care facilities, and retirement communities.
   b. Spiritual formation for individuals of all ages, including children, adults, older adults, and people with disabilities.

6. **Validated Ministries outside the Jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Charlotte**

Other validated ministries may be determined by the Committee on Ministry (COM) on a case-by-case basis according to the particular facts and circumstances, consistent with description of ordained office found in G-2.0101 and meeting all the standards set forth above in G-2.0503.

A validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Charlotte must demonstrate a theological understanding of mission and ministry within the Reformed Tradition. It must also countenance the participant's full and free expression of faith.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament who are called to a validated ministry beyond the jurisdiction of the church shall give evidence of a quality of life that shares the Ministry of Good News. They shall participate in a congregation, in their presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships. They shall be eligible for election to the higher councils of the church and to the boards and agencies of those councils (G-2.0503).

Process
If the Ministry has already been validated
Validation applies to a particular, approved work of ministry. It is not a status conferred on the minister. A minister who has been received on the basis of a particular ministry may not take up a different specialized ministry without the Presbytery's approval given through the appropriate Cluster of the Committee on Ministry.

An ordained minister who wishes to be received as a member of the Presbytery of Charlotte on the basis of a call to ministry that has previously been validated shall communicate with a Co-Moderator of the appropriate Cluster of the Committee on Ministry[1]. Candidates considering or seeking a call to a validated ministry should consider the possibility carefully and prayerfully in concert with the relevant Cluster. Candidates can be considered for ordination to a current validated ministry if they have been 1) certified ready to receive a call and 2) have completed the final examination by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) where they are enrolled.

The Cluster Co-Moderator or a Presbytery staff member will send a copy of this policy statement to the applicant. The applicant must return a written request to become a member of the Presbytery of Charlotte; a description of the proposed call; and an explanation of how the requirements for validated ministry will be fulfilled (G-5.0201).

If the applicant is currently affiliated with the Presbytery of Charlotte, the appropriate Cluster will review the written material, description of proposed ministry, and potential match. If the applicant is not currently affiliated with the Presbytery of Charlotte, the applicant will review these topics with the Transfers Subcommittee of COM which shall include Cluster representatives. Either the Cluster or Transfers Subcommittee will vote whether to approve the applicant to the validated ministry and whether to receive the minister in the Presbytery of Charlotte. The outcome of the vote shall be reported to the Co-Moderators of COM. Subsequently, it will be reported to the Presbytery as an action taken on behalf of the Presbytery. The minister will be received by the Presbytery of Charlotte in accordance with current procedures

If COM declines to validate a minister to a previously validated ministry, or decides to withdraw approval from a particular ministry, the minister may appeal to the Presbytery. The Presbytery's decision will determine and settle the matter except for the minister's access to judicial process.

When a minister engaged in a validated specialized ministry leaves that work, the minister is automatically designated as an at-large member of this Presbytery pending further changes; this is an action taken by the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and does not require any action by COM. (Note: The annual reporting requirement applies to all at-large minister members.)

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[1] The appropriate Cluster is the Cluster in which the validated ministry is physically located, not the residence of the applicant.

Process: When a Particular Ministry Has Not Been Previously Validated
A request to validate a ministry can be made by an organization, church, candidate, agency, or other governing body. The request must be submitted in writing to the appropriate Cluster Co-Moderators. It should fully describe the proposed ministry and the rationale for seeking validation. The Co-Moderators will distribute this policy and the written request to the members of the cluster. Action taken by Presbytery in July, 2012, directs the Cluster to schedule two meetings, at least thirty days apart, to consider the request with all appropriate parties.

The following questions may help the Cluster discern whether a particular ministry is consistent with the requirements for a validated ministry[2]. Questions 1-5 below are paraphrased from the 2018 edition of the *Committee on Ministry Handbook* prepared by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina and available online at http://presbycc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-COM-Handbook-4.pdf.
The remaining questions were prepared by the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Charlotte.

Questions Regarding Validation of a Particular Ministry
1. Does the position involve teaching the faith and equipping the saints for the work of ministry (G-2.0501)?
2. What is the theological justification for this position? Is the position consistent with the Reformed Tradition?
3. How and to whom would the applicant report? What level of supervision and oversight will be provided? Will they be paid presbytery?
4. Does the position require an earned Master of Divinity degree and ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament? Can the position be effectively fulfilled by a ruling elder or person who is not ordained? If the position can be filled by a ruling elder, it is not appropriate as a validated ministry.
5. How can this position help the candidate grow into fuller and deeper expression of service? How can it empower the candidate to use God's gifts in ministry?
6. Similarly, is this ministry consistent with the mission of the Presbytery of Charlotte?
7. The final questions ask how the individual will continue active involvement in the work and worship of a particular church *and* in the life and work of the Presbytery of Charlotte.
8. What are the financial implications and obligations associated with validating this ministry? Since the purpose of a validated ministry is serving people and enabling them to serve others, this implies that a validated ministry is not primarily concerned with profit-making.

At the first cluster meeting, members hear to proposal and ask relevant questions necessary to make a determination. The guests are excused, and members of the cluster and COM discuss the request.

At the second meeting, members of the COM Leadership Team, COM Transfers Subcommittee, and others with information about this or other types of validated ministries will also be invited to attend. Participants have an opportunity to gain further information, pose additional questions, and listen to further thoughts from those making the request. After all questions have been addressed, the guests are excused and the group will vote whether to validate the ministry. The results of the vote are reported to the Co-Moderators of the COM and the relevant parties. If the vote is affirmative, it will be reported to the Presbytery as an action taken on behalf of the Presbytery.

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[2] Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. (2018). *Commission on Ministry Handbook*, p. 9, Available at http://presbycc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-COM-Handbook-4.pdf

Annual Reports
The presbytery shall review annually the work of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation (G-2.0503). All Teaching Elders in validated ministries shall submit annual reports detailing their activities and growth in the validated ministry. This report is due to the Presbytery office on January 31 of the succeeding year.

Ministers who fail to submit an annual report by the due date will not be listed as being in good standing with the Presbytery of Charlotte.

Ordinarily, ministries are re-valuated at the May meeting of the Presbytery of Charlotte.

Other Categories of Membership

Member-at-Large
There are two additional categories of membership in the Presbytery: minister-at-large and honorably retired. A member-at-large is a person who is no longer engaged in ministry that complies with all of the criteria of validated ministry. This may be due to family responsibilities or personal circumstances known to the Presbytery. *A member at large shall comply with as many of the criteria in G-2.0503a as possible and shall actively participate in the life of a congregation. A member at large is entitled to take part in the meetings of the Presbytery and to speak, vote, and hold office. The status of Member-at-large shall be reviewed annually (G2.0503a).*

Honorably Retired
Upon request by the member, the Presbytery may designate a minister honorably retired because of age, physical disability, or mental disability (G2-05-03c). Honorably retired members are encouraged to participate in the life of a congregation as able. There are no reporting requirements for ministers who are honorably retired.

Presbytery of Charlotte
Annual Reporting Questions
For Ministers in Validated Ministries and Members-at-Large

This form shall be used by ministers-at-large and ministers currently serving in a validated ministry who are requesting a re-validation of that <u>same</u> ministry.

Name _____Date _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone Numbers _____ Cell _____

Email Address _____

ECCLESIASTICAL STATUS?
_____ Ministry Validated by the Presbytery of Charlotte   Part-time ____ Full-time ____
_____ Ministry directly related to the PC (USA)   Part-time ____ Full-time ____

ANNUAL NARRATIVE

Ministers serving in Validated Ministries are required to respond to Items 1-5 annually in a brief, narrative report. Responses may be submitted electronically, by mail, or orally to the COM Liaison.

At-Large ministers are required to complete items 4 and 5 in a brief narrative report. Responses may be submitted electronically, by mail, or orally to the COM Liaison.

1. Describe any changes over the past year in your job title, description, duties, or supervision of your validated ministry.
2. Describe some of the high points and challenges of your ministry this past year.
3. With which congregation were you personally active this year? How did you participate with this congregation and with the Presbytery of Charlotte?
4. Each Minister is encouraged to perform ecumenical, ecclesiastical, and religious activities including, but not limited to, preaching and administering the sacraments. Please report when, how, and with whom you fulfilled this requirement.
5. How can the Presbytery of Charlotte support your ministry?

SIGNATURE
By signing this application, I certify that the contents and the statements in the application are a true and correct representation of my activities:

_____
Name

_____
Signature

_____

Date