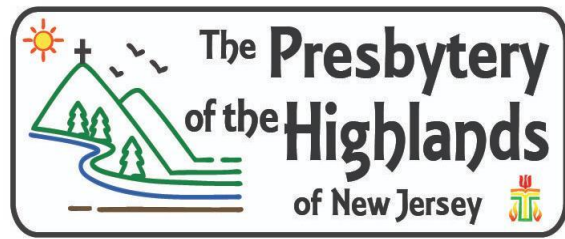


Commission on Ministry for the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey



Introduction

The Commission on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey exists to support, nurture, and oversee the life and ministry of both congregations and those called to serve them. Rooted in the Reformed understanding that ministry is a shared calling of the whole church, the COM seeks to foster healthy relationships among ministers, congregations, and the presbytery, ensuring that Christ's mission is carried out with faithfulness, integrity, and care.

To this end, the COM provides guidance, accountability, and pastoral support for Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Certified Christian Educators, and Commissioned Ruling Elders, as well as the congregations of the presbytery. Acting with the authority of an Administrative Commission (G-3.0307), the COM is entrusted with responsibilities that include oversight of pastoral relationships, support during times of transition, examination and reception of ministers, and the encouragement of peace and unity within congregations.

Purpose

The purpose of the COM is to sustain the vitality of ministry by walking alongside both leaders and congregations through seasons of call, change, challenge, and growth. In all its work, the COM seeks to embody the love of Christ, strengthen the witness of the church, and equip the presbytery for faithful service in its time and place.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) nurtures and cares for all teaching elder members of the Presbytery, for Certified Christian Educators, and Commissioned Ruling Elders while they are serving congregations in the Presbytery. The COM also nurtures and cares for the congregations of the Presbytery and the relationships between congregations and pastors.

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey confers the powers of an Administrative Commission on the Commission on Ministry (G-3.0307) in matters of:

- Receiving, dismissing and transferring Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the PCUSA (G-2.0502, G-2.0506, G-2.0507, G-2.0508, G-2.0509) and ministers for other denominations desiring to become members of the Presbytery (G-2.0505)
- Approving and oversight of the following elements of pastoral relationships between Pastors, Certified Christian Educators and Commissioned Ruling Elders and Congregations.

- Calls and Covenants (G-2.0504)
- Terms of Call including annual review and setting annual minimum Terms of Call (G-2.0804)
- Approval and Appointment of Ordination and Installation Commissions (G-2.0701, G-2.0805)
- Appointment of moderators (G-3.02001)
- Dissolution of all pastoral calls (G-2.0502, G-2.09)
- Approval of severance packages when required by the situation
- Commissioning Process of Ruling Elders, aside from the Commissioning Service, as stated in the CRE policy (G-2.10)
- All aspects of Boundary/Anti-Harassment Training of all minister members (G-3.0106), CREs, (G-2.1002), Inquirers/Candidates under care (G-2.0603), and Certified Christian Educators (G-2.1103)
- Approve of retirement status in accordance with the Presbytery policy on retirement (G-2.0503c)
- Approval of all validated ministries and ministry status and member-at-large status of continuing members of the Presbytery. (G-2.0503a, G-2.0503b)

Recommendations of the Commission on Ministry that require Presbytery approval are:

- The ordination examination of Candidates who are “Certified Ready for a Call” and will be serving in one of the Presbytery’s congregations or serve in a validated ministry within the bounds of the Presbytery.
- The Commissioning Service of Certified Christian Educators
- Administrative Commissions for dissolution of a congregation, or other issues concerning the congregations

The Commission on Ministry shall report to the next standing meeting of the Presbytery all actions taken on behalf of the Presbytery.

Responsibilities (conferred by the Presbytery to the COM, per G-3.0307)

- Maintains open communication, visits and consults with ministers and Sessions, through liaisons to congregations.
- Reports annually to the Presbytery, the type of work each minister is engaged in.
- Counsels with churches regarding calls for permanent and temporary pastoral relations, guiding and resourcing PNCs and Search Teams.
- Provides for the implementation of EEO for Ministers and candidates.
- Provides oversight and support to congregations without pastors.
- Promotes the peace and harmony of congregations. Inquires into the sources of congregational discord, counsels with sessions concerning reported difficulties within a congregation, advises the session as to appropriate actions to be taken, offering to help as mediator, and acting to correct difficulties, if requested to do so by the session or if the session is unwilling or unable to do so. (G-3.0303d)
- Provides encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations.
- Authorizes and trains specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord’s Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs for the

administration of the Sacrament. (G-2.1001; G-2.1002)

- Maintains and approves the Pulpit supply list.
- May set policies, process, and guidelines that provide for these responsibilities and assist the COM members with their work.
- Other responsibilities may be assigned to the COM by the Presbytery and/or the Administration and Coordinating Commission