

POLICY ON PULPIT SUPPLY DURING VACANCY

Between the time that a pulpit becomes vacant and a temporary or stated supply or interim pastor is appointed, the session has the responsibility of filling the pulpit. This is an opportunity for the congregation to invite a variety of preachers to lead worship. This can include elders from the congregation exercising one of their roles as elders. Thus, the pulpit may be filled by one or a combination of the following:

1. A minister or elder on the Presbytery's Approved Preaching List
2. A minister of another denomination
3. A commissioned lay pastor or student in the CLP program.
4. Elders from the congregation
5. Candidates under care of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

In our Presbyterian form of government, the presbytery is responsible for approving pastoral leadership in consultation with a congregation. Thus, when a congregation desires to have someone fill the pulpit on a continuing basis, the Committee on Ministry will work with the session as to the best ways of doing so. Until that time, the following policy will govern how often an individual may fill the pulpit.

1. Persons other than those on the Approved Preaching List need approval of the Committee on Ministry if they are to fill the pulpit more than once during a vacancy (see F6 and F7 in COM manual). When there is an extended period of vacancy before an interim or supply pastor is secured, the session may request a variance of this provision through the COM liaison.
2. A minister or an elder on the Presbytery's Approved Preaching List may preach no more than six times in a three month period.
3. A minister of another denomination who is not a member of Presbytery may preach no more than six times in a three-month period. Other requirements enumerated in the COM manual on page B7 must also be met.
4. Graduates of the Lay Preachers Academy are not to be engaged for extended periods in the same pulpit (for example, four consecutive weeks) without the prior approval of Presbytery (see Approved Preaching List, Graduates of the Lay Pastor Academy). A student in the CLP program must adhere to the same policy.
5. The moderator shall aid the session in obtaining pulpit supplies as approved by presbytery.

If there is a desire for an individual to fill the pulpit more that described above, it may be the time for a conversation about appointing that individual as a Temporary or Stated Supply.

The Approved Preaching List has been established to ensure that those who lead worship in our churches will demonstrate Reformed theology.

Rationale for three-month period mentioned in 2 and 3 above: A person selected to serve as a temporary, stated supply or interim pastor may not be available for several months thus necessitating weekly pulpit supply until the temporary pastor is available.

Adopted by COM 9/10/08