

4.300 COMMITTEES OF PRESBYTERY: COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY, CHURCHES WITHOUT MINISTERS

4.301 Guidelines for Churches without Ministers

- A. The appointment of a new moderator by the Presbytery makes that person a member of the session of that church. The moderator and the session are then responsible to the Presbytery through the committee on Ministry (COM) and their Area Representatives for keeping the Presbytery informed in regard to the current plans of that church. The moderator and the session shall review the provisions found in the Book of Order Chapter 10, "The Session" (G 10.000ff), and regarding moderators G 10.0103, G 7.0306). Both moderator and session shall be knowledgeable with respect to the principles, strategies, and policies of the Presbytery's COM.

- B. The Presbytery of Northern Waters is concerned that moderators and sessions go beyond just keeping the church going. The time when the church is without an installed minister can and should be a creative one in activating lay persons to carry on the ministry: in deepening involvement in and commitment to local mission, and in experimenting with new ventures of service and witness. There is a need for the session to look critically and creatively at many aspects of congregational life, worship practices, budget allocations, condition of church and manse properties, etc., through planning and evaluation processes.

- C. At the first meeting of the session, this paper will be read and thoroughly discussed, making the following points:
 - 1. A representative of the COM will introduce the moderator to the session; explain the role of COM and the session's responsibility to the moderator.
 - 2. The session is responsible for all moderatorial expenses, (e.g. meals, mileage, telephone, etc.) related to session meetings, as set by Presbytery. An honorarium shall be given when a moderator leads worship services, administers communion, etc. It is required that the church pay the Presbytery approved amount per meeting to the moderator plus the Presbytery-approved reimbursement rate for mileage.
 - 3. The session is responsible for payment of vacancy dues to the Board of Pensions, even though there is no minister, for the first year after a pulpit is declared vacant. These dues are equal to 12% of the previous minister's salary and housing.
 - 4. The session is responsible for pulpit supply, in consultation with COM representatives and in accordance with presbytery policies. The local church shall pay all costs connected with pulpit supplies. The presbytery requires that supply ministers receive the Presbytery-approved minimum for one service and the Presbytery-approved amount for a second service plus the Presbytery-approved reimbursement rate for mileage.

5. The congregation under the direction and with the assistance of the COM will elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).
6. The session shall normally meet monthly with the appointed moderator present, and minutes of the meetings shall be properly kept.
7. The sacraments shall be regularly and properly administered.
8. The session and its committees shall carry on the regular work of the church:
 - a. Pastoral Care
 - b. Congregational Meetings
 - c. Stewardship Programs
 - d. Budget Preparation
 - e. Salary Review
 - f. Church Education
 - g. Reception and Dismissal of Members
 - h. Calling on Prospective Members
 - i. Examination and Reception of Candidates for Church Membership
 - j. Instruction of Parents Concerning the Baptism of their Children
9. The session is responsible for working with COM representatives to develop future plans and strategy for performing God's mission in the world.
10. After each session meeting, the clerk of session shall send a copy of the minutes to the moderator.