

Yellowstone Presbytery Policy on Non-PC(USA) pastors:

This is the Yellowstone Presbytery Policy for membership in the Presbytery for Persons serving as Pastors in other denominations. This policy shall not replace or be considered primary to the provisions of the Book of Order of the PC(USA). In event of any conflict the interpretation of the Book of Order will govern all decisions made by this council. For this reason, some of the existing provisions of the Book of Order 2017-2019 are quoted herein and any future changes in the provisions noted here will also govern if or when adopted.

Part 1.

We will be guided by the Book of Order PC(USA) provision on unity: F1.0302a

Unity is God's gift to the Church in Jesus Christ. Just as God is one God and Jesus

Christ is our one Savior, so the Church is one because it belongs to its one Lord, Jesus Christ. The Church seeks to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone. There is one Church, for there is one Spirit, one hope, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:5-6).

Because in Christ the Church is one, it strives to be one. To be one with Christ is to be joined with all those whom Christ calls into relationship with him. To be thus joined with one another is to become priests for one another, praying for the world and for one another and sharing the various gifts God has given to each Christian for the benefit of the whole community. Division into different denominations obscures but does not destroy unity in Christ.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity, and is willing to seek and to deepen communion with all other churches within the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

In seeking the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ (G-5.0101), the General Assembly may authorize and direct that covenants, agreements, and statements of purpose and intent be developed with other Christian bodies. Such actions, when authorized and approved by the General Assembly, may address, but are not limited to, the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of ministers. All councils of this church are encouraged to engage in opportunities to minister together in mutual affirmation and admonition with other Christian bodies.

Part 2.

G-2.0505b Transfers of ministers of other denominations

In addition to these required standards of the Book of Order, this Presbytery shall require any transferred ordained person of another denomination outside those churches in full communion to become ordained and take the vows of ordination of the PC(USA). The persons to be admitted shall also clearly state they have no current desire to seek fellowship in any other denomination at the time of their examination. The whole presbytery will examine and vote on the admission of the transferred minister to the presbytery.

G-2.0506 Temporary membership for a period of service

In addition to the requirement of the Book of Order on these transfers or temporary assignments a candidate for a validated ministry will be required to become familiar with the general polity of the PC(USA) and shall accept the guidance of the Presbytery on all matters that they perform with or for the members of their fellowships who are members of the PCUSA. This will particularly require acceptance of the PC(USA) understanding of the sacrament of Baptism and the administration of the sacrament of Holy Communion. An unwillingness to accept and administer these sacraments according to PC(USA) understanding shall be grounds for refusing a transfer.

The Presbytery has granted its authority to provide temporary membership in this presbytery for validated ministry assignments to the PMT for approval and the reviews as required of the Book of Order.

Temporary memberships can be for a specific term of office or if indeterminate shall be renewed annually by a vote of the Pastoral Ministry Team.

G-5.0202 Full Communion

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion with those churches so recognized by the General Assembly. Full communion shall include the mutual recognition of baptism and the orderly exchange of ministers, as defined by ecumenical agreement. Councils of this church are encouraged to engage in opportunities to minister together in mutual affirmation and admonition with churches with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion.

We are already in communion with and accept transfers to and from:

The "Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" (ELCA)

The "Reformed Church in America" (RCA)

The "United Church of Christ" (UCC)

The "Korean Presbyterian Church in America" (KPCA)

The Presbytery can accept into its membership any ordained pastor, preacher, minister of word and sacraments into any Minister of Word and Sacrament position in this Presbytery upon verification of credentials supplied and examination for membership according to the same standards all Minister of Word and Sacrament are examined. If a merger or congregational relationship with one of these denominations churches is involved additional requirements may be established by each church's governing bodies.

Part 3.

For all other trained Pastors this presbytery can and shall require more information on the candidate for Minister of Word and Sacrament. Such additional criteria may include competing training in PC(USA) Polity, a background check, college transcripts and other credentials that will validate sufficient education and skills needed for the ministry contemplated. In all cases membership in this Presbytery as a Minister of Word and Sacrament will conform to G 2.0607.

G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a Minister of Word and Sacrament without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a Minister of Word and Sacrament shall include:

- a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
- b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;
- c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
- d. examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

G-3.0306-G-3.0401

Every Minister of Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides unless approval is received from a Presbytery of origin and gives Yellowstone Presbytery notice of approval for the Minister to serve out of bounds of the jurisdiction of his or her presbytery.

G-2.0610 Accommodations to Particular Circumstances

When a presbytery concludes there are good and sufficient reasons for accommodations to the particular circumstances of an individual seeking ordination, it may, by a three-fourths vote, waive any of the requirements for ordination in G-2.06, except for those of G-2.0607d. If a presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why a candidate should not be required to satisfy the requirements of G-2.0607d, it shall approve by three-fourths vote some alternate means by which to ascertain the readiness of the candidate for ministry in the areas covered by the standard ordination examinations. A full account of the reasons for any waiver or alternate means to ascertain readiness shall be included in the minutes of the presbytery and communicated to the presbytery to which an inquirer or candidate may be transferred.

G-2.0701 Ordination

Ordination to the ordered ministry of Minister of Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to ordered ministry. Such a person shall have fulfilled the ordination requirements of the presbytery of care and received the call of God to service to a congregation or other work in the mission of the church that is acceptable to the candidate and to the presbytery of call.

Part 4. Revisions and review policy

This policy will be subject to review at a minimum of every two years and recommendations for changes will be submitted for review by the Pastoral Ministry Team of the Yellowstone Presbytery and subject to adoption by a simple majority vote of the presbytery until such time as it may become permanent policy.

Adopted by the Presbytery of Yellowstone on November 2, 2018