

COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT

This Covenant/Contract between the session of _____ Church of _____, IN, elder _____, a member of _____ Church of _____, and the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is for the purpose of providing pastoral services to the _____ Church for a period of _____, beginning _____ and ending _____.

DEFINITION

“The commissioned lay pastor is an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. This commission is valid only in one or more congregations, new church development, or other validated ministries of the presbytery designated by the presbytery. Such an elder is selected by and receives training approved by the presbytery. The elder shall be instructed in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. The elder shall be examined by the appropriate committee of presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction mentioned previously. An elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in a particular congregation may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions of a commissioned lay pastor again until appointed to a particular congregation by the presbytery. The commission shall be valid for a period up to three years as determined by the presbytery. It may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery. Presbytery shall regularly provide resources for the person’s spiritual and intellectual development. A review of the work of the commissioned lay pastor shall be conducted annually. Presbytery shall revoke the commission of any lay pastor who does not abide by these provisions or whose work is evaluated as not adequate to meet the needs of the particular congregation or the presbytery.” (G-14.0560-.0561)

COMMISSIONING

In consultation with the session of _____ Church and the Committee on Ministry regarding the strategy for mission for the church, elder _____ is commissioned for _____ years beginning _____ and is authorized to perform the following functions from G-14.0562:

- a. Administer the Lord’s Supper.
- b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism.
- c. Moderate the session of the congregation under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery.
- d. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.
- e. Have a voice and vote in meetings of the presbytery (such vote to be counted as an elder commissioner for purposes of parity).

ACCOUNTABILITY

The commissioned lay pastor is accountable to the session of the church and to the presbytery through its committee on ministry.

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

To provide prayer and spiritual support as members of the family of Christ.

It is agreed that if the congregation, the session, or the commissioned lay pastor experiences any suggestions, interference, or other difficulty with any former pastors of the church (installed or temporary), officers or members of the church, the matter will be dealt with promptly, and will be referred to the session and/or the committee on ministry. The session asks the commissioned lay pastor to deny any requests by, or for, any former pastor to conduct any services of worship, including baptisms, weddings, and funerals for any member.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR

To work under the supervision of the presbytery through the moderator of the session of Church. (G-14.0564)

—Please list and detail the job expectations of the commissioned lay pastor. —

EXPECTATIONS OF THE SESSION

To provide support and collegial consultation in working with the commissioned lay pastor and the presbytery to establish goals for the present and future ministry of the church.

To review, feedback and support the commissioned lay pastor's work through any appropriate committee at least every six (6) months.

To negotiate time away from _____ Church by the commissioned lay pastor to fulfill responsibilities in the larger church, attend continuing education events and maintain personal care.

To negotiate a new covenant/contract at least sixty (60) days prior to the end of this contract.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY

To provide support and consultative services to the commissioned lay pastor through the committee on ministry.

To assist the session and the commissioned lay pastor with emerging needs through the resources of the committees of presbytery.

To assign the Rev. _____ as session moderator, mentor and supervisor. (G-14.0564)

FINANCIAL AND TIME PROVISIONS

—Please attach the "ANNUAL SALARY REPORT/CHANGE OF CALL" for the current year. —

TERMINATION PROVISIONS

This agreement may be terminated by the session with sixty (60) days notice. The church shall pay full salary, housing and pension to the commissioned lay pastor for a maximum of three (3) months from notice of termination of this contract, until succeeding full-time church employment is secured by the commissioned lay pastor, or adjusted if part-time work is secured. Failure to negotiate a new contract prior to sixty (60) days from its expiration or notice of non-negotiation of a new contract shall be considered notice of termination.

This agreement may be terminated by the commissioned lay pastor with thirty (30) days notice, in which case payment beyond the thirty (30) day period will be forfeited.

Vacation and study leave compensation, if accrued, is to be paid in full at time of termination.

SIGNATURES

The session, being satisfied with elder _____ qualification and trusting that _____ ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby commits our congregation to this Covenant/Contract and invites _____ to accept this commissioned lay pastor position.

Clerk of Session _____ Date _____

Commissioned Lay Pastor _____ Date _____

COM Representative _____ Date _____