

COM 101
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Introductions and prayer

Responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry

Overview of work of COM

Tools and resources available to help with the task

Statistics and tools used in Grace Presbytery

Sign up for Hot Topics! for expanded conversations on particular areas of interest

Closing prayer and blessing

Responsibilities of the COM

To serve as pastor and counselor to the ministers and Certified Christian Educators of the presbytery,

To facilitate relations between congregations, ministers, and the presbytery; and

To settle difficulties on behalf of presbytery when possible and expedient”.

(G-11.0501)

The committee shall

- Visit regularly and consult with each minister of the presbytery (*rolls determination*)
- Make recommendations to presbytery regarding calls (*approval of calls*)
- Visit with each session of the presbytery at least once every three years (*triennial visits*)
- Counsel with churches regarding calls for permanent pastoral relations, visiting and counseling with every committee elected to nominate a pastor or associate pastor (*PNC liaison/pastoral search process*)
- Counsel with church churches regarding the advisability of calling a designated pastor
- Counsel with sessions regarding stated supplies, interims, temporary supplies, CLPs (*temporary pastoral leadership of a contractual nature*)
- Serve as an instrument of presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the churches (*crisis intervention/conflict resolution*)
- Exercise wise discretion in determining when to take cognizance of information concerning difficulties within a church
 - May take initiative to bring information to attention of session
 - May offer help as a mediator
 - May act to correct the difficulties, if requested to do so by the parties concerned, or if this authority is granted by the presbytery for the specific case.
- Be open to communication at all times with ministers, elders of sessions, sessions, and Certified Christian Educators within the presbytery’s bounds

And may look to Synod and General Assembly for information and assistance in the matter of ministers and pastoral relations.

(G-11.0502)

Additional responsibilities:

Work with ministers

- joining another denomination (G-11.0416)
- transferring to the PC (USA) from other denominations (G-11.0404)
- transferring from other presbyteries (G-11.0402)
- seeking release from the exercise of ordained office (G-11.0414a)
- dissolution of pastoral relationships (G-14.0600)

Work with commissioned lay pastors (in some presbyteries)

Overview of the work of COM

The GA Handbook for Committees on Ministry - does not supersede Book of Order or own presbytery's policies, but is a really good piece of work filled with lots of helpful information

As it talks about good COM work – it states:

“Congregations, like the people who are part of them, are gifted and flawed, faulty and faithful, often messy and always thoroughly human.”

- The Key: Building relationships with congregations and church professionals
Nurturing healthy ministries
- The Need: Sensitivity, faith, and openness to God's surprises
Tough-minded and tenderhearted
Confidentiality - critical
Support of the wisdom of the majority

That the COM is responsible for the health of ministry in the presbytery is a daunting call. But – with God's help, and through the corporate wisdom granted us through the faith we share – we endeavor to face the challenges and, hopefully, do no harm.

Organization of the COM – different possible styles

Book of Order specifies that COM “. . . shall consist of equal numbers of elders and ministers with a membership of at least six” (G-11.0501b)

- Functional Subcommittees
- Committee-of-the-Whole (more likely in smaller presbyteries)
- Geographic Subcommittees
- Permanent Liaison Generalists (teams of 2 or more, assigned to specific churches and ministers)

Some COM's co-opt specialists to work with mission studies, congregations experiencing conflict, etc.

The **COM TOOL KIT** is a great source of information:
<http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/com/toolbox.htm>

CALL PROCESS GUIDEBOOK

**A GUIDE FOR
THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY,
SESSIONS,
PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEES,
AND PASTORS**

**Committee on Ministry
Grace Presbytery
Presbyterian Church (USA)**

LEVEL ONE The Pastor/Session Request Dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship

Packet Contents

COM Liaison	Clerk	Departing Pastor		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	1.01
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	1.02-04
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Checklist	1.05
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Items for a Session Meeting	1.06-07
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Involuntary Termination Guidelines	1.08-09
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grace Presbytery Guidelines for Severance	1.10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sample Agreement for Termination	1.11
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Board of Pensions Vacancy Dues	1.12
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Board of Pensions Service Termination Form	1.13-14
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Terms of Dissolution Form	1.15
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggestions to the Pastor	1.16
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Request to Dissolve Pastoral Relationship Form	1.17
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guidelines for Pastoral Courtesy	1.18-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sample “Farewell” to Congregation from Pastor	1.21
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outline of the Congregational Meeting	1.22
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		** Congregational Meeting Report Form	1.23
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	++ A Service of Dissolution	1.24-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Suggestions for Immediate Pulpit Supply	1.26
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Cover letter to Occasional Supply List	1.27
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Budget Considerations	1.28
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Explanation of Terms	1.29-30
<input type="checkbox"/>			COM Liaison: Exit Interview Suggestions	1.31
<input type="checkbox"/>			Discernment Conversation	1.32

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++ = worship liturgy

LEVEL TWO

The Session Secures Temporary Pastoral Leadership and Engages in Mission Study

Packet Contents

COM

**Liai- Clerk Pastor
Son**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	2.01	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	2.02-2.05	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Checklist	2.06-2.07	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Background: What's an Interim Pastor?	2.08	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Temporary Leadership Report Form	2.09	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Church Profile Outline/Form	2.10-2.11	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Suggestions	2.12	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Sample Contract With A Temporary Pastor	2.13-2.15
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	++ A Worship Litany	2.16-2.17
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welcoming Suggestions	2.18	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission Study Suggestions	2.19-2.22
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Feedback regarding Interim Pastor	2.23-2.25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explanation of Terms	2.26-2.27
<input type="checkbox"/>		Pastoral Relationships - chart	2.28	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Checklist – Meeting with the Session	2.29	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Checklist – Helping with a Mission Study	2.30	
<input type="checkbox"/>		Background – Designated Pastors	2.31-2.33	

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LEVEL THREE

Electing and Organizing the Pastor Nominating Committee
(PNC)

Packet Contents

COM Clerk
Liaison

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	3.01
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	3.04
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Checklist	3.05
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	So You've Been Asked...How Do I Know It's For Me?"	3.06
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outline of the Congregational Meeting	3.07-08
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Report Form for Congregational Meeting	3.09
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	++ Commissioning Service for the PNC	3.10-12
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explanation of Terms	3.13-14
<input type="checkbox"/>		COM Liaison's Checklist for the Session Meeting	3.15
<input type="checkbox"/>		COM Liaison's Checklist for Meeting with those Preparing to Nominate the PNC	3.16

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Packet Contents

COM	PNC		
Liaison	Moderator		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	4.01-02
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	4.03-08
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Checklist	4.09
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizing the PNC	4.10-11
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible Study for PNC	4.12-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Completing the Church Information Form (CIF)	4.14-15
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing Matters	4.16
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget Considerations	4.17
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Current Grace Presbytery Compensation Worksheet	4.18-21
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	** Report Form to Presbytery: Approving the CIF	4.22
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggestions for Marketing the Position	4.23
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privacy Guidelines	4.24-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggestions for Reading PIFs and Listening to Tapes	4.26
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suggestions for Conducting Reference Checks with Pastoral Candidates	4.27-29
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Materials for Interviewing Candidates:	
		Suggestions for Conducting Telephone Interviews	4.30
		Interviewing Pastoral Candidates	4.31-33
		Additional Interview Questions	4.34-35

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Packet Contents

COM	PNC		
Liaison	Moderator		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit and Criminal Background Checks	4.36-37
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grace Presbytery’s Welcoming and Examination Process	4.38
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explanation of Terms	4.39-40
<input type="checkbox"/>		Team Building for the PNC	4.41-42
<input type="checkbox"/>		COM Liaison’s Checklist: Training the PNC	4.43
<input type="checkbox"/>		Clearance Procedures for the PNC	4.44-45
<input type="checkbox"/>		The First Call	4.46-47
<input type="checkbox"/>		Policy Regarding Reception of Ministers	4.48
<input type="checkbox"/>		The Welcoming Team Interview	4.49
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix A: PC(USA) Church Information Form (CIF)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix B: PC(USA) Personal Information Form (PIF)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix C: Skills Definitions (common to CIF and PIF)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix D: Yoked Congregations	

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Packet Contents

COM	Clerk	New	PNC		
Liaison of Pastor					
Session					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	5.01
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	5.02-05
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Checklist	5.06
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finalizing the Call	5.07
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grace Presbytery’s policy regarding loans	5.08-09
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			Welcoming the Pastor	5.10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			Congregational Meeting to Elect Pastor	5.11
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		** Pastoral Call Form	5.12-13
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			Board of Pensions Service/Salary Change Form	5.14-16
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		The Nature and Place of Ordination/Installation	5.17-18
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		** Ordination/Installation Commission Form	5.19-20
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		++ Sample Services for Ordination and Installation	5.21-27
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			** Terms of Dissolution Form for Interim/Supply	5.28
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			++ Service of Parting For Interim/Supply	5.29-30
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			** Search Process Evaluation Form	5.31-32
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Support and Feedback in the First Year	5.33
<input type="checkbox"/>				Six-Month Interview	5.34-35

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COM Handbook – highlights of what it includes:

- 14-page Glossary of “COM speak” (acronyms)
- Occasions for Com interface with churches
 - Staffing changes
 - Illness or death of pastor
 - Church growth or decline
 - Boundary violations by pastoral leader
 - Conflict
- Discussion of flexibility needed to serve churches of different sizes
- Small church challenges, strategies, and shared ministry possibilities
- Uniqueness of larger church searches
- Special challenges in assisting racial-ethnic and multicultural congregations, as well as immigrant ministries
- Triennial visits as opportunity to build relationships
 - Purpose, planning and paperwork (prep for the visit)
 - Dealing with resistance and suspicion
 - Reporting, referring, and reviewing (as follow-up)
- Congregational mission studies: when they occur, tips, resources
- Pastoral transition & search process
- Reference-checking hints
- Pastoral care for church professionals
- Responding to difficulties and conflict
- Sample covenants, agreements, forms and policies
- Relating to non-parish and ministers in specialized ministries
- Examination for membership
- Ministers of other denominations
- Certified Christian Educators and CLPs

Statistics from the COM world of Grace Presbytery

379 minister members

195 in active ministry (parish or validated)	51%
139 Honorably Retired	37%
44 At Large	12%
1 on Inactive Roll	

179 churches (and 5 New Church Developments, not included in this count)

95 have called Pastor	53%
50 have temporary pastoral leadership	28%
7 have a CLP or elder leadership	4%
27 have an assigned Moderator and no regular pastoral relationship	15%

Christian Educators

29 fully Certified Christian Educators
5 Certified Associate Christian Educators

Of 153 calls processed in 10-yr. period (1997-2006) – sources of those referrals

110 were through self-referrals	72%
27 were through denominational matching/referral system	17%
16 were through other sources (seminary, presbytery, or member referrals)	1%

Forced terminations over 10-yr. period (1997-2006)

Total of 41 termination packages totaling \$1.3 million

Packet Contents**COM****Liaison****Clerk****Pastor**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Packet Contents	6.01
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overview	6.02
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Suggestion for the Expectations Workshop	6.03
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Suggestion for Mission Study Part 2	6.04

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Other helpful COM resources

Prayer – permeating all that we do (plus, worshipping together as a committee)

Your presbytery's handbook, specific guidelines, policies and forms

Materials posted on **Church Leadership Connection**

(<http://www.pcusa.org/clc/resources.htm>)

Leadership Statistics <http://www.pcusa.org/clc/statistics.htm>

Pastoral Leadership Trends, Salary Issues, CIF/PIF comparisons, CLC numbers (people and positions) <http://www.pcusa.org/clc/statistics.htm>

Presbytery Compensation Minimums

<http://www.pcusa.org/clc/pdf/prescompmin.pdf>

Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees

<http://www.pcusa.org/clc/pdf/gspcguidelines.pdf>

which includes organization and structure of a personnel committee; help for adopting personnel policies, writing position descriptions, and annual reviews, etc., with samples provided. Excellent piece, often shared by our COM office.

Annual Statistical reports and Ten-Year Trends from Research Services, along with tools for mission studies www.pcusa.org/research/help/htm

Pastoral Call Form – sample form for use in preparing.

http://www.pcusa.org/clc/pdf/call_form.pdf

Handbook for COM: <http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/pdf/comhandbook.pdf>

Handbook for CLP programs <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/index.jsp>

Information on CLPs <http://www.pcusa.org/clp/index.htm>

Handbook: <http://www.pcusa.org/clp/pdf/clphandbook.pdf>

Educator Certification Handbook

http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators/educator_handbook.htm

Info on certification, etc. www.pcusa.org/christianeducators

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