

**Peace River Presbytery
Committee on Ministry
DESIGNATED PASTOR**

- The designated pastor (DP) is a plan wherein carefully selected pastors and churches may be matched by the Committee on Ministry (COM), thereby greatly reducing the time required to call a pastor (see G-15.0501). The DP is selected by the congregation for a term of two to four years, with the option to make it permanent at the end of the designated term. The terms of call are approved by presbytery, the same as a pastor nominated by the usual process (see Policy #2).
- The Designated Pastor plan is ordinarily used when a church is in significant conflict or in significant economic distress and needs two to four years to address the conflict or the economic problems before a permanent pastor is called.
- After consultation and approval of the COM, any congregation may call a DP. The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and the minister will evaluate each other in a manner similar to the usual process (see Policy #2).
- The terms of the call, including the length of time of the contract (two, three or four years) will be agreed upon at the beginning of the term with the COM.
- The COM requires that the churches entering the plan agree to accept one of the first five recommendations made to them by the COM, or they will be dropped from the plan.

Questions and answers about the Designated Pastor Plan

1. ***What is the DP plan?***
The DP plan is an alternative way to call a pastor which the COM may recommend to a congregation under special circumstances, such as financial issues or serious conflict within the congregation.
2. ***Why is such a plan desirable?***
There are extenuating circumstances when a congregation would best be served by avoiding a long search for a new pastor.
3. ***How is this different from a stated supply relationship?***
Churches often feel that a stated supply relationship is temporary and may be terminated on short notice. The DP plan provides for a 2, 3 or 4 year period of consistent leadership. Because the DP is called and installed, the congregation and the pastor are able to gain a sense of self-assurance in their ministry.
4. ***Does the DP plan take away a congregation's right to select a pastor?*** Not at all.
The congregation still elects a Pastor Nominating Committee. The difference is the number of ministers whom the PNC will consider. The COM will recommend a limited number of pastors, but no more than eight who have been pre-screened. The PNC will consider only those persons.
5. ***Does the DP plan restrict a pastor's freedom to locate?*** Yes, as to time.
The COM, however, will assist every pastor seeking relocation in order to facilitate relocation in the shortest possible time.
6. ***Under what circumstances should the DP plan be considered?*** When churches need:
 - (a) time to test new possibilities for growth or to gain a firmer financial position before entering a permanent pastoral relationship;
 - (b) stability after a conflict;

- (c) a few years for planning a new mission or ministry;
- (d) self-confidence in their ability to call a pastor rather than continuing in a stated supply relationship; or
- (e) an alternative way to call a pastor when the usual referral system has not been effective.

7. ***What if the PNC cannot decide on one of the persons recommended by the COM?***

At any time the COM can recommend, or the PNC may request, that the DP plan no longer be pursued and the usual calling procedure be used.

8. ***How does a presbytery know what ministers may be open to the DP plan?***

In many cases the COM is aware of ministers in their own or nearby presbyteries who would find an immediate move to be helpful. There are other ministers who prefer this kind of service as an alternative to the usual calling procedure. Also, the General Assembly is able to provide PIFs of interested ministers.

9. ***What steps need to be taken?***

- a) The COM discusses this alternative with the session and secures their agreement to proceed.
- b) A congregational meeting is called to elect a PNC and approve the DP process.
- c) The plan is outlined to the congregation; and a PNC is elected.
- d) The COM meets with the PNC to explain its requirements for forms and process, and outlines the suggested time line. PNC completes all these requirements.
- e) The COM provides the PNC with the names of persons whom they have pre-screened and who are interested in a call as a DP.
- f) PNC considers these persons. The PNC, COM and the candidate selected agree on terms of call, including the contracted time of the call.
- g) PNC asks session to call a congregational meeting; the congregation hears the report of the PNC and elects the pastor in the usual manner. The pastor is installed in the usual manner.
- h) One year prior to the ending date of the call, the session, the DP, and the COM conduct a review of the ministry.

10. ***What happens if the arrangement turns out to be satisfying to both the congregation and the minister?***

If, when the review is held one year prior to the end of the contract, the pastor and the session want to continue the pastoral relationship beyond the agreed upon term, the congregation is asked to join in making a request to continue the relationship either for another specified period of time or to proceed to call the minister as the permanent installed pastor. The COM recommends that the presbytery approve this change in the terms of call.

11. ***But what if the relationship is not satisfactory?***

Normally the contract with the DP ends at the agreed upon time. One year prior to the end of the contracted time, the congregation, the minister and the COM meet and agree to discontinue the relationship at the end of the contract period. The minister will then have up to one year to secure a new call.