

Description of a Presbytery Associate

Scope of Work/Overview

Provide liaison between the Presbytery and the congregation/pastor of a church or churches in stressful circumstances (financial, membership, facilities etc.).

Further actualize the Presbytery's partnership with and support of congregations by intentionally deploying human resources to that end.

- As desired and welcomed by a local church or churches: through discussions and caring outreach (representing the Presbytery) the Presbytery Associate(s) are to work with the congregation/pastor to determine a variety of directional options for the congregation/pastor to review, always emphasizing that any actual direction will be up to the congregation/pastor.
- The role of the Presbytery Associate is to provide a caring liaison and people resources and other limited resources as available. However, the role is to outline realistic options, including making no changes, so that the congregation may determine its future, knowing the realistic consequences—if any.
- Provide occasional respite for the pastor by brokering the people resources of the Presbytery.
- Provide regular updates to the congregation/pastor as well as the Presbytery's Vision and Mission Leadership Council (through its appropriate sub-committee or project team) all discoveries and/or findings.
- Receive training, supervision, support and guidance from the Presbytery's Vision and Mission Leadership Council (through its appropriate sub-committee or project team) via regular or periodic meetings or workshops.

Other assumptions and parameters:

- This strategy is in keeping with and a direct result of the vision/mission statement set forth by the Mission and Vision Leadership Council (formerly the Presbytery Leadership Council) and the Presbytery, sustaining a focus on congregations (partnerships, relationships and diversity).
- The vetting and matching of possible Presbytery Associates, drawn from the Presbytery's pool of Parish Associates, Ministers-at-large, and Honorably Retired, and stressed congregations/pastors will be performed by the Presbytery Council (through its appropriate sub-committee or project team) the COM, the Presbytery Associates' Team and Presbytery staff.
- Possible Presbytery Associates may possess or call on others to provide the necessary financial, organizational, facilities management, development etc. expertise and skills required.
- The significant change of the Book of Order, the Form of Government, provides Presbytery with broad leeway regarding how to reconstitute the role of Parish Associate.
- The new staff design (limiting staff time and resources), financial constraints and our decreased ability to—currently---increase revenue streams warrant a look at what resources are currently being appreciably underutilized---in this case our human resources in the form of Parish Associates, Ministers-at-large, and our Honorably Retired.
- The Mission and Vision Leadership Council (through its appropriate sub-committee or project team) shall facilitate communications between the other key committees of Presbytery: F&P, COM, Council liaisons etc.
- The Presbytery Associates will be recognized, as appropriate, so as to formally sanction their work on behalf of the Presbytery with our congregations/pastors.

Next Steps

- COM working with the F&P will help to identify congregations in stressful circumstances (financial, membership, facilities etc.) and make a referral to the Presbytery Associates' Project Team.
- Identify, recruit, and vet (for appropriate match) current Parish Associates, MAL's, HR's and others that may be interested in this form of ministry.
- Sustain lines of communications, reporting and oversight for each team of Presbytery Associates
- The project team to establish on-going and regular method of communicating with the Presbytery Leadership Council, the F & P and the COM.
- Begin connections with congregations in stressful circumstances (financial, membership, facilities etc.).
- Establish timeline parameters for each team of Presbytery Associates

(The Rev.) Gregory L. Chan