

Securing Pulpit Supply (Guest Preachers) During a Pastoral Vacancy Presbytery of Ohio Valley

When a congregation is without pastoral leadership the session is responsible to secure guest preachers. The session may choose to delegate that responsibility to one or two ruling elders who are members of the session. There are several possibilities the session can explore.

- Ruling elders may preach, and it is possible that some in the congregation would be willing to preach occasionally.
- The presbytery maintains a list of people who have indicated their willingness to be guest preachers and have been approved by the Committee on Ministry. The list is on the presbytery's website at http://povpc.org/Documents/com/supply_pastor_listing.pdf . Note that some of those on the list are teaching elders who may officiate at the Lord's Supper as well as preach, while some are ruling elders or seminary students who may not officiate at the Lord's Supper.

The Committee on Ministry wishes to encourage fair and responsible preaching arrangements for the sake of the congregation and for the sake of the supply preacher. If the same person preaches for any congregation for three Sundays out of any six, and if the session wishes to have that person continue as a steady or occasional guest preacher, the session should be in contact with their moderator or COM liaison as soon as possible.

Any pulpit supply arrangement shall be through a Committee on Ministry approved contract if the supply preacher is serving more than three Sundays in any six (6) week period.

If the session wishes to have a particular supply preacher lead worship more than three Sundays they have several options:

- They may work with the moderator of the congregation and the Committee on Ministry (COM) to complete an Extended Pulpit Supply Agreement with a particular teaching elder, ruling elder, or candidate for ministry.
- They may work with the moderator of the congregation and the COM to secure the services of a stated supply pastor or an ecumenical supply pastor.
- They may work with the moderator of the congregation and the COM to create a pool of pulpit supply resources for their congregation. The pool shall contain three or more qualified persons who are approved by the Committee. The congregation may utilize those persons in any combination or sequence provided that no single person is serving more than three Sundays out of six Sundays.

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