

Covenant of Enduring Ministry

The Presbytery of West Virginia values enduring ministries and believes that shared expectations lead to long and healthy relationships. We believe that God calls ministers to work with congregations in order to help the church carry out Christ's mission in the world. Recognizing that congregations and ministers must be open to God's call at any time, we believe that continuity in pastoral leadership is beneficial to both congregations and ministers. We believe that the Ministry Committee plays an important role in promoting and maintaining continuity and health in pastoral relationships. To that end, the Presbytery has adopted the following:

- The process of lifting up basic expectations requires the pastor, PNC, session and Ministry Committee to engage in open and candid discussion of what each expects of the other. By bringing these expectations to light, openly discussing them and formally preserving them in a written covenant of expectations, the new relationship can be built on a solid footing.
- This covenant of expectations needs to be reviewed, and if necessary, revised after the first six months and thereafter, annually as part of the review of terms of call.
- We further believe that ordinarily the relationships between the ministers and the congregations are likely to be the most fruitful when those relationships continue over a period of several years. It is our intention to work together for at least five years.
- The covenant between pastor and session should strive to fulfill with God's help, vital hopes deemed essential to the health of the church, its pastor and relationship between them. It is in that loving, caring spirit that a covenant can have a positive impact. We look forward to a long and significant ministry.

The Ministry Committee understands this Covenant of Enduring Ministry to mean:

- that ministers and congregations will strive conscientiously to build a relationship that will last at least five years;
- that the congregation or the minister will consult with the Ministry Committee at the earliest possible opportunity if either have reason to believe that the relationship is not meeting the expectations outlined in the covenant;
- that the Ministry Committee will build a pastoral relationship with the minister and maintain a pastoral relationship with the congregation in order to encourage open communication, using available opportunities for communication, including but not limited to: informal gatherings at Presbytery meetings, peer groups, consultation with the Session and minister after the first six months of the pastorate, annual ministry review, triennial visits;
- that the Ministry Committee shall encourage and expect ministers to become involved in the work of the Presbytery;
- that Pastor Nominating Committees, Sessions, Candidates, and Ministry Committee Liaisons are expected to endorse this covenant and indicate their endorsement with a signature.

Pastor/Candidate Date

Clerk of Session Date

PNC Chair Date

MC Liaison Date

Name of Church _____