

GUIDELINES FOR SESSIONS -- GUEST PREACHERS
MINISTRY COMMITTEE OF THE PRESBYTERY OF WEST VIRGINIA

A. Finding Someone to Serve as a Guest Preacher

1. The Book of Order gives to the session the responsibility for providing for the regular preaching of the Word (W-1.4004). Thus the session is responsible for securing guest preachers when needed. The session may choose to delegate this responsibility to its committee on worship, or other group or individuals.
2. A list of persons available for occasional supply including Presbyterian ministers, authorized lay preachers, and others is printed in the Presbytery Directory, is available on the website and is available through the office of Presbytery. (Although the names are listed alphabetically for the sake of convenience, churches seeking a guest preacher would do well not simply to go down through the list "from the top". Persons whose names are at the bottom of the list tend to be called upon less than those further up the list.)
3. Sessions are especially encouraged to call upon the authorized lay preachers who have been trained by the Presbytery.
4. If sessions need to seek guest preachers who are not on the list of suggested preachers, sessions are discouraged from engaging ministers and lay persons who are not either Presbyterian or members of other Reformed denominations including Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Reformed Church America and the United Church of Christ.

B. Arrangements Before the Guest Preacher Arrives

1. The guest preacher should be sent, in a timely manner, a Sunday bulletin or other paper illustrating the church's order of worship, along with any needed explanation of the order of worship.
2. The guest preacher should furnish the information needed for the worship bulletin, such as sermon topic and scripture readings, in a timely manner.
3. The guest preacher needs to be informed clearly of what parts of the service she or he is responsible for, and of what parts may be taken by another worship leader.
4. The guest preacher should receive information concerning anything special about this service, such as inclusion of one or both Sacraments, an installation, a special recognition; and how the guest preacher is expected to participate. Also, the guest preacher should be informed of any other unusual circumstances (such as many visitors being expected on the occasion of a family reunion, or the death of a member during the week prior).
5. The guest preacher needs to be told the time of the service(s), clear directions for finding the church, and where to park if parking is potentially a problem. The guest preacher should inform the session of his or her expected arrival time at the church.
6. If someone of the church wishes to extend a meal invitation, if possible do so in advance so all concerned can make plans accordingly.
7. A guest preacher needs to know of any architectural barriers that may be a problem. (For example, stairs may be a problem for some persons.)

C. Hosting the Guest Preacher

1. Someone needs to be at the entrance watching for the arrival of the guest preacher, to greet and welcome the preacher and to attend to any immediate needs (telling where to hang one's coat, where to find a drink of water, etc.).
2. A person -- perhaps a member of the Session or worship committee -- needs to discuss the details of the service, to clarify the flow of the worship, who is responsible for what, how entry is made into the sanctuary, where the preacher and other persons in the pulpit will sit, and any other details of the worship.
3. Make an office, study, or other quiet place available to the guest preacher for collecting his or her materials and thoughts, and for changing into pulpit gown if used.
4. Assure a hymn book and anything else needed is available in the pulpit.
5. If the guest preacher wishes to go to the door following the service to greet worshippers, designate a person to stand with her or him to make introductions.
6. A check for honorarium and expenses should be given to the guest preacher at the time of their service.

D. Compensation for a Guest Preacher

1. An honorarium is suggested of a minimum of \$125 for one worship service, plus an additional \$50 for additional worship services.
2. The guest preacher's expenses should be reimbursed in addition to an honorarium. If the person must drive more than 20 miles one way, travel reimbursement at the current IRS rate per mile, plus tolls, is suggested. Also, reimbursement should include an amount to cover any meals eaten away from home, unless other arrangements are made.
3. If necessary, provision should be made for overnight housing.

E. Presbytery Staff Persons as Guest Preachers

1. The General Presbyter attempts to visit in a number of churches as part of his/her responsibilities, and when available welcomes opportunities to preach and lead worship. No honorarium or reimbursement for expenses is expected. However, if the church chooses to cover expenses, the contribution will be submitted to the Presbytery.
2. For Presbytery staff persons other than the General Presbyter who serve as guest preachers, the "line-of-duty" principle applies. If the staff person's visit relates to that person's area of staff responsibilities, no honorarium or expense reimbursement is needed. If, however, the reason for the visit lies outside the staff person's usual area of responsibility, an honorarium and expense reimbursement will be appropriate. When arrangements are made, the church should clarify with the staff person regarding honorarium and expense reimbursement.