

## **Suggested Recommendation for Full-Time and Part-Time Pastors: Guidelines for Negotiating Agreements by the Committee on Ministry**

Rather than defining a position by the number of hours worked, it is more helpful to think in terms of expected outcomes. Consideration also needs to be given to the needs of the pastor's family, other employment responsibilities, and travel time.

A **full-time pastor** would be able to provide:

- Preaching and leading worship as well as serving the sacraments
- Pastoral care (both hospital visitation and home visitation in addition to weddings and funerals)
- Christian Education (leading a Bible Study, teaching Sunday School, training newly elected officers or working with children and youth)
- Administration (moderating session meetings, working with other church committees, general paperwork/correspondence, attending Presbytery meetings, serving on Presbytery committees, attending local ministerial association functions)

On top of that would be time for personal growth, study, and prayer. There is also time spent writing a sermon and preparing for worship, as well as preparing to teach Sunday School or lead a Bible study, working with children and youth, or leading a Session meeting or a committee meeting.

Even in a full-time position, some choices would need to be made, as no one person would have time to do all of this. There would always be more to do. But, it is reasonable to expect all of these areas to be covered by a full-time pastor.

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**For part-time positions, the responsibilities of the pastor, as well as their work schedule, will need to be negotiated between the pastor and the session, recognizing the need for flexibility.**

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Since a person working three-quarter time would not be able to accomplish as much – and should not be expected to accomplish as much – as someone working and being paid to work full time, some things would need to be dropped or done by some of the church members. Hopefully, session members would be able to pick up some of this work since they have been elected to leadership positions.

A **three-quarter time pastor** would be able to provide:

- Preaching and leading worship
- Pastoral Care (weddings and funerals, hospital visitation, limited home visitation)
- Christian Education (training newly elected officers and either leading a Bible Study or teaching Sunday School, or working with youth. If two of these three optional expectations are chosen, there will be more limitations placed on the time available for pastoral care and administration)
- Administration (moderating session meetings, working with church committees, paperwork/correspondence, attending Presbytery meetings, and either attending local ministerial association functions or serving on a Presbytery committee)

The exact balance of the duties would need to be negotiated according to the needs of the congregation. There also needs to be some recognition that there will be preparation time beyond time in the pulpit or time before a class or a committee meeting.

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A half-time position would not be able – and should not be expected – to accomplish as much as someone who is working full time or three quarters time. Again, there will need to be some limitations – not only in terms of time worked, but also in terms of expectations. In a church being served by a half-time position, there will be an even greater need for other church members, particularly session members, to take on additional responsibilities.

A **half-time pastor** would be able to provide:

- Preaching and leading worship
- Limited pastoral care (weddings and funerals, some hospital visitation, and little, if any, home visitation)
- Limited Christian Education (training newly elected officers and probably either leading a Bible Study or teaching Sunday School, but not both)
- Limited administration (moderating session meetings and paperwork/correspondence, along with attendance at Presbytery meetings, occasional work with other church committees, occasional attendance at local church ministerial association functions)

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There are severe limitations to what someone would be able to do in a quarter-time position because this involves working perhaps 10-14 hours a week. A majority of that time would be spent in writing a sermon and preparing for worship. Therefore, the session and the members of the church will need to take responsibility for the majority of the pastoral care needs of the congregation.

A **quarter-time pastor** would be able to provide:

- Preaching and leading worship
- Some pastoral care (weddings and funerals)
- Some administration (moderating session meetings and paperwork/correspondence)

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If a church is unable to afford a quarter-time pastor, the reality is that they are only contracting with someone for pulpit supply. That can be done on a piece work basis. The Presbytery's Minimum Salary Requirement for Pulpit Supply is \$125 per Sunday plus mileage at the current IRS Allowance Rate. Those moderating session or congregational meetings are to be compensated at least \$50 per meeting plus mileage at the current IRS mileage rate.

Other options for a congregation to consider if they are unable to afford a quarter-time pastor would be to share a pastor with a nearby Presbyterian church or to share a pastor with a church belonging to another denomination. It will be wise to challenge church members to greater giving before considering these options.

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All pastoral salaries need to meet the minimum salary set annually by the Presbytery of West Virginia. Salaries for part-time positions would be prorated based on that standard.

The Session of \_\_\_\_\_ has prayerfully reviewed these recommendations and has sought to provide fair compensation for the amount of work expected.