

Process and Principles for Tropical Florida Presbytery in the Transference of a  
member congregation to another Reformed Body

*Excerpts Specifically for Committee on Ministry*

*TERMS OF DISMISSAL*

*A. Status of Minister Members of Presbytery*

*If a congregation is to be dismissed by Presbytery, one of the paramount concerns of this process is to assure that the rights and status of minister members are considered and handled properly. Ministers may request transfer to the Reformed body to which the congregation is requesting dismissal, or they may remain as members of Presbytery. Transfers may be requested concurrently with the congregation's request or they may occur separately. If transfer is not requested concurrently, the minister will be placed on inactive status by Presbytery, which will allow the minister to continue to seek calls within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or to become a member-at-large if their call at the church ends; or be granted permission to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery as pastor of the church which has been dismissed. This service to a dismissed congregation will automatically be designated by the Presbytery as a validated ministry of the Presbytery, for a period of up to 12 months following the dismissal of the congregation, (G-2.0503). Ministers will automatically be granted permission to serve as pastor of the dismissed congregation, (G-3.0307). The status of this ministry as a validated ministry and said permission will be reviewed annually by the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery.*

*Transfers to another Reformed body will normally be approved unless the minister is the subject of a pending judicial or investigative action (per D-10.0105). The reasons for not granting transfer may be communicated by Presbytery's Stated Clerk to appropriate persons. Ministers who transfer to another Reformed body will, of course, always be welcome as visitors at meetings of Presbytery.*

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*B. Status of Members Under Care of Presbytery*

*Special attention should be given to members of the congregation who are preparing for ministry and are under the care of Presbytery. Each member under care, together with his/her liaison from the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), should be advised immediately of the congregation's desire to seek dismissal. The member under care will be given the option of being dismissed with the congregation or transferring their membership to another congregation within Presbytery and/or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). If transfer to another congregation within Presbytery/the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is requested, PRT and the CPM liaison will assist the member in seeking a waiver of the usual six-month requirement for church membership in order to maintain care status.*

MINISTERIAL CONDUCT

*Recognizing that chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the FOG provide that a presbytery may dismiss congregations from the PCUSA and allow a congregation to retain ownership and possession of their property, we affirm that it is our policy not to take action to remove a pastor or session solely as a result of a decision to discuss, withdraw or seek dismissal to another Reformed denomination. As this process moves forward, it will be expected that elders and pastors engaged in these difficult*

*decisions will conduct themselves in a way that will promote the Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church, including both in the local church and throughout the Presbytery, and exhibit the love of Jesus Christ.*

*Imputation of bad or immoral motives should not be a part of our conduct toward one another or toward local congregations or toward the Presbytery.*

*How we treat one another will reflect and impact directly our witness to Christ in South Florida. Faithfulness to that witness compels us to conduct ourselves in a way that honors God and one another if we are to expect God's blessing to reside upon our ministries going forward. We cannot conduct ourselves in such a*

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*way as to disqualify ourselves or bring dishonor upon ourselves or  
the Gospel in the eyes of neighbors and potential members from  
our communities.*