

GUIDELINES FOR NEGOTIATING A PASTORAL AGREEMENT

You, as a congregation, now find yourself in need of new pastoral leadership. If you have a large congregation, financially able to support a minister full-time, you can negotiate a full slate of services. These services might include:

- Preaching and leading worship, including special services and celebrating the sacraments.
- Pastoral care, including hospital and home visitation, weddings and funerals.
- Christian Education which might include teaching Sunday School, leading a Bible Study, training newly elected officers, or working with the youth or children of your church.
- Administrative duties, including moderating session, working with other church committees as needed, and answering and generating correspondence as needed. Telephone calls, office time, and participation in local ministerial groups are all important to the nurture and maintain your congregation. As a connective denomination, it is also important that the pastor spend some time “connecting” with the Presbytery by meeting attendance and voluntary service when needed.

***NOTE:** It is easy to think that Sunday worship is just 1 or 2 hours of the pastor’s time. This is not the case. In addition to the delivery, most sermons require several hours to prepare. The pastor reads, researches, and organizes the message on Sunday and this may require 8 to 12 hours. The pastor has travel time, times of prayer and meditation, telephone communications with congregants, all as a part of the work of the church. There is always preparation or travel needed for meetings or study groups.

The full-time pastor may even have another job to be considered while negotiations are being made. And family must be considered when making these decisions at any level.

Even in congregations where a full-time pastor is feasible or necessary, the leadership and membership of the church may need to pick up some of the duties that are expected of the pastor. The minimum salary requirements stipulate that full-time is expected to be 48 hours per week. With prayer, preparation, delivery, travel, communication, and ministering to congregants, it does not take long to meet a 48 hour commitment on the part of the pastor.

If you are like many congregations, you find that you can no longer financially support a full-time pastor.

You will have more choices to make when you are looking for a pastor to fill your needs. Perhaps the easiest way to start those choices is to look at the hours/minimum salary requirement ratios in the chart below:

STATUS	*AVERAGE * WEEKLY HOURS	ANNUAL SALARY TEACHING ELDER	ANNUAL SALARY COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER
FT	48	\$47,500.00	\$38,000.00
3/4 TIME	36	\$35,625.00	\$28,500.00
1/2 TIME	24	\$23,750.00	\$19,000.00
1/4 TIME	12	\$11,875.00	\$9,500.00

(Table based on 2017 Scioto Valley Presbytery Minimum Guidelines)

As a simple rule of thumb, the fewer hours you negotiate with the pastor, the higher the need will be for other church leaders to deliver care and be involved in the ministry and the community. When making these decisions, remember the amount of time needed for Sunday worship mentioned above. If the pastor is to deliver a message each Sunday, a considerable number of the expected hours for a quarter time pastor will be used for that purpose. This leaves some time for moderating meetings and limited pastoral care, but little time for other duties. The expectation that the pastor provide the same level of care that a full time pastor does is unrealistic. It then becomes a wonderful opportunity for members of the congregations to reach out with their own spiritual gifts to nurture one another and the community around them.

Congregations who are unable to offer quarter time to a pastor may use a more ala carte method of providing leadership. Through contracted services and pulpit supply, your church can still be served as you continue to serve your community. Those recommended minimums are available on the Presbytery of Scioto Valley website, or a member of CCL can provide that list as you work through your transition of leadership.