

**Presbytery of Baltimore Commission on Ministry (COM)**  
**Pastoral Leadership Models**  
March 2023

*Note: With thanks to Rev. Ryan Landino and the Committee on Ministry of Great Rivers Presbytery, 2019 for "A Church Guide for Choosing Your Next Adventure," adapted to Presbytery of Baltimore needs. The numbers do not reflect ranking or preference.*

- 1. Interim Pastor to Installed Pastor** (*aka "All the Bells and Whistles"*)
  - Ideal for congregations that can sustain a full-time pastor with salary and benefits
  - Interim Pastor serves under a temporary contract with session
  - Installed Pastor selected by the congregation following a Pastoral Nominating Committee search; serves under Terms of Call for an indefinite time
  
- 2. Part-Time Installed Pastor** (*aka "Sure, I'll Help Out"*)
  - Ideal for congregations that do not require a pastor available onsite or by phone 24/7 but prefers an installed pastor
  
- 3. Transitional Pastor** (*aka "Seeking the Future"*)
  - Ideal for congregations in need of deep discernment for future direction and pastoral leadership model
  - Serves for a designated period of no more than 2-3 years, as determined in consultation with session and COM, under renewable contracts no longer than 12 months in length
  - Not an installed position, but the Transitional Pastor could be considered for the installed position with permission of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of COM and Presbytery
  - Ideally, the congregation enters this relationship with no preconceived notions of the outcome, open to the Holy Spirit's movement and creative possibilities
  
- 4. Bridge Pastor** (*aka "Gap Filler"*)
  - Ideal for congregations needing essential pastoral services (such as preaching, moderating, and emergency pastoral care) while a search for an interim or transitional pastor is underway.
  - Usually part-time and paid on an hourly basis under contract with the session
  
- 5. Commissioned Ruling Elder** (*aka "Yup, ruling elders can do that"*)
  - Ideal for congregations willing to accept specially trained elders from another PCUSA congregation, with experience outside of classical seminary, who are called and trained to serve as pastor for a particular time and place.
  - Following training and clearance, the ruling elder is commissioned to specific pastoral responsibilities by the Presbytery.

**6. Field Ed Model** (*aka "Mutual Learning"*)

- Ideal for a congregation willing to take on a seminary student in limited preaching and pastoral engagement. And for those willing to mentor and be mentored in ministry.

**7. Celebration of the Completion of Your Ministry** (*aka "Well done, good and faithful servants..."*)

- Ideal for congregations ready to celebrate their legacy and write the final chapter of their church story.

**8. Shared Ministry Models**

a. Merge with Another Church (*aka "Two Shall Become One..."*)

- o Ideal for congregations that have a good partnership with another, and for congregations willing to let go of their building and grounds to create a new community

b. Federate with Another Denomination (*aka "With our Ecumenical Powers Combined"*)

- o Ideal for congregations with a good partnership with another ecumenical community that is willing to live by and perhaps alternate denominational standing rules and pastors.

c. Yoke with Another Church (*aka "Circuit Rider"*)

- o Ideal for congregation willing to share a pastor and support salary and benefits together, and are flexible on their worship times to accommodate a traveling pastor

d. Parish Model (*aka "What's Old is New Again"*)

- o Ideal for congregations physically near to each other who are willing to partner with multiple congregations and work out an agreement that would include full salary and benefits.

e. Nesting (*aka "Pfft, who needs a building?" aka "The way Paul Did It"*)

- o Ideal for congregations willing to let go of their building and grounds to meet in a more cost-effective location. If nesting in another church, perhaps agreeing to a nontraditional worship time.