

POLICY ON SELECTING MENTORING CHURCHES

Subcommittee on Ministerial Training of the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

I. PURPOSE OF THE PASTORAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Lord commands pastors to make helping to train others to become pastors an essential component of their ministry: "...what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:1-2). In pastoral internships, local church pastors and local churches have the privilege of participating in a pastor-molding program which yields fruit for Christ's Kingdom for years to come. Men who aspire to the ministry are given the opportunity to be tested and trained for the pastorate by being exposed to the multifaceted work of the church under the personal guidance of experienced pastors. Under experienced pastors and sessions, they are guided toward the maturity and skills which are essential for the ministerial calling. The church becomes their classroom and the officers and members their teachers as they test and develop their gifts for ministry. Where else but in the setting of a church can men receive such theological and practical direction?

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR MENTORING CHURCHES

In order to be considered for partial subsidization of its intern program by the committee, a church must satisfy the following:

A. Submit a valid application (which includes in writing):

1. The Church's goals for the intern program (overview of program)
2. The intern's job description (the means by which the goals will be implemented)
3. The Church's plan for communicating the program goals to the intern
4. The Church's plan for the intern's involvement with Church leadership, members, and ministry
5. The Church's view of what it hopes to result from the internship
6. The mentor's view of his responsibility toward the intern

B. Indicate a willingness to perform the following tasks during the internship

1. Carefully assess the intern's preaching, using the form provided
2. Schedule a regular time for the mentor and the intern to meet for prayer, discussion, evaluation, and planning
3. Provide opportunities for supervised involvement in the various areas of pastoral ministry and guidance toward growth in maturity and pastoral skills
4. Provide ongoing guidance in, and evaluation of, the intern's:
 - a. growth in knowing and using Scripture
 - b. growth in knowing and using the Westminster Standards, and
 - c. growth in knowing and using the OPC *Book of Church Order*
5. Oversee the intern's intake of materials that can equip him to serve faithfully as a true pastor, and not a hireling. For example:
 - a. *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande
 - b. *The Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter
 - c. *Spirit-Empowered Preaching* by Arturo Azurdia
6. In the case of a year-long intern, take the necessary steps to enable the intern to get licensed by presbytery at least midway through his intern year
7. Provide evaluations to the committee, using the form provided—a full mid-year evaluation [for year-long interns] and a final evaluation [for both year-long and summer interns] Evaluations should be signed by the mentor. Please note: *Failure to return evaluations will be considered as a negative factor on a church's next application for an internship.*
8. The committee strongly encourages churches to incorporate enrollment in a course in the Ministerial Training Institute of the OPC in the plan for a year-long internship; and the mentoring pastor is urged to consider the advisability of enrolling in an MTI course along with his intern.

C. Meet the following requirements

(where subjective, in the general secretary's judgment):

1. The pastor:

- a. Has had at least five years experience as a pastor in the OPC and gives good promise of providing fruitful mentoring
- b. Is the full-time pastor of the church
- c. Has interviewed the prospective intern, and is satisfied that no theological or practical conflicts are expected between them

2. The Session:

- a. Consists ordinarily of more than one resident ruling elder
- b. Is willing and able and resolved to provide mentoring assistance
- c. Enjoys a high degree of unity

3. The Church:

- a. Favors having the intern and will be supportive of the internship
- b. Enjoys a reasonably high degree of congregational stability and unity of purpose

III. SELECTION OF AN INTERN

The Committee on Christian Education, primarily through its general secretary, assists congregations in obtaining an intern. The general secretary interviews seminary students and submits their applications for approval to the CCE Subcommittee on Ministerial Training. He solicits applications from qualifying churches, submitting them likewise for approval. He forwards all appropriate intern applications to applicant churches. He may make suggestions to them regarding particular candidates. However, *the church alone is responsible for the final selection of a particular man for its pastoral internship.*

IV. FINANCES

A. Support

The Subcommittee will provide financial assistance (currently of up to \$800 per month) to churches, as funds are available. The more a local church can pay towards the support of an intern, the wider will be the opportunity for implementing intern programs across the denomination. Financial assistance will not be provided unless it is specifically requested on the form, "Church Application For An Intern." The form asks you to "indicate the total remuneration the church expects to give the intern per month: \$_____." Please be sure to *include* in this amount any financial assistance you request from the Committee.

B. Recommended Remuneration

1. Summer Internship:

Single students should be paid at least \$250 per week plus housing.

Married students should be paid at least \$325 plus housing.

In either case, travel expenses between the seminary and the church location should be reimbursed, as well as automobile expenses incurred during the internship.

2. Year-long Internship:

Single students should be paid at least \$275 per week plus housing and automobile expenses.

Married students should be paid at least \$350 plus housing and automobile expenses.

Reimbursement for travel to and from the church location may also be made, at the church's discretion.

If your congregation wishes to apply for either a summer or a year-long pastoral intern, please complete the enclosed form and return to:

*Intern Program, The Committee on Christian Education,
607 N. Easton Rd., Bldg. E, Box P,
Willow Grove, PA 19090-0920
E-mail: olinger.1@opc.org (cc: CCEsec@opc.org)*