

DESIGNATED TERM POSITION

In recent years, due to the startling decline in participation in churches some new approaches and protocols have been developed to help churches in unique circumstances. The following is a description of the circumstances, restrictions and protocols that guide this option. These are drawn from the best practices (and worst mistakes) of our over 5000 churches.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MIGHT REQUIRE A DESIGNATED TERM POSITION:

Churches that might consider a Designated Term Position usually fall into one of these categories:

1. A New Ministry Initiative: a pastor or an existing church decide they want to begin a new form of ministry and need a pastor with the specific skill set to launch this program
2. An Uncertain Sustainability: a church where their current expense trajectory indicates that they have 3-5 years of funds left (typically drawn from endowments) before they run out of funds to sustain their current budget. In collaboration with the local Association, it has been determined that these churches urgently need a pastor who can assess the current situation, determine if revitalization is possible and implement a healthy, faithful and effective vision and strategy. It is presumed that the pastor will be Called for 3-5 years. At the end of that time, the pastor may continue as the Called or Settled pastor if mutually discerned by the Church, the Pastor and the Association.
3. A Search Challenge: a church where the regular Settled Pastor Search Process may have proved difficult due to size, geographical location, or other issues.
4. A Legacy Church: a church that has determined that it's most faithful future is to disband and allocate its existing resources to support the Conferences efforts to make God's realm of Love and Justice real.

RESTRICTIONS:

1. The fundamental principal of our polity and theology is that the Congregation has the greatest chance to discern the Will of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit when they humbly and openly gather together to pray and listen.
2. The fundamental principal and ethic of our search process is that discernment happens when the church has the opportunity to consider every available pastor and when every pastor has an equal and level playing field opportunity to be considered by every church.
3. Designated Term Positions should be determined before the church considers any specific individual, so that the level and open playing field is maintained without bias.
4. Designated Term Positions should not be considered a convenience to avoid the more thorough Settled Pastor Search Process. Our best practice experience indicates quick decisions for convenience or ease usually lead to a short term and conflicted ministry.
5. The church may not convert an Interim Pastor into a Designated Term Position Pastor.
6. The Designated Term Position should have the approval of the Congregation by official Congregational Vote.
7. The Designated Term Position should be reviewed and affirmed by an outside objective source: most likely the local Association to which the church belongs.

SEARCH AND CALL CONSIDERATIONS

Role of the Conference: The conference works with congregational leadership to clarify the purpose of the next juncture (i.e. utilizing New Beginnings assessment service). The conference supplies small batch of profiles to church leadership or specifically to a search committee if one exists. The conference also holds accountability at certain measuring points in time, assessing how the work is progressing. The church at pre-identified points in time is free to change to a new strategy or a new minister; the conference may require reports or commitments of the congregation and/or minister in preparation.

Use of the Ministerial Profile: Congregational leadership uses ministerial profiles to discern a match for ministry during a marked period of time. The profile also meets the employer's obligation for background screening on UCC authorized ministers.

UCC Ministry Opportunities: Reporting of the vacancy in an "open search" system happens through national website. Candidates for a designated-term pastorate are drawn through minister-request, Snapshot pool and other networking.

Ethics for the Minister: Designated-term ministers will not discard the terms of initial call agreement to stay on indefinitely. Upon conclusion of a ministry, pastor will not return to serve congregation nor serve members of the congregation in a pastoral capacity.

PROTOCOL:

1. The church consults with its Associate Conference Minister around its fiscal situation and ministry circumstances.
2. Should a determination be made that Designated Term Position is the most faithful decision, the church leadership will develop the specific, concrete and measurable goals it needs for the Designated Term. (typically between 3 – 5 goals)
3. At the same time Association Leadership (Usually Committee on Ministry) reviews the circumstances and affirms the need for a Designated Term Position
4. With these goals in mind, the church leadership develops a pastoral job description that outlines the goals, and determines the skills and competencies needed in a pastor.
5. The Congregation Votes at an officially called Congregational Meeting to approve the goals and the job description.
6. A Search Team is appointed to develop a Designated Term Position Local Church Profile.
7. The Designated Term Position is listed in the National UCC Employment Opportunities listing for 30 – 45 days with a specific deadline listed for applications.
8. The ACM may review profiles and select appropriate candidates for the church's situation.
9. The Search committee interviews and selects a Candidate for the Designated Term Position.
10. A Designated Term Pastor covenant is developed that is agreed to by both the Church leadership and the candidate.
11. The Congregation votes at an officially called Congregational Meeting to Call the Candidate as their Designated Term Position Pastor.

12. The church, pastor, Association and Associate Conference Minister continue to work in collaboration to achieve the Designated Term goals.
13. At the end of the Designated Term a discernment is made by the church and pastor in consultation with the Associate Conference Minister and the Association to determine if:
 - a. The current pastor will continue as the Settled Pastor
 - b. An interim will be selected to guide the church through a Settled Pastor Search process.
 - c. The current pastor will guide the church through a Settled Pastor Search process
 - d. The church will move towards Legacy.

**FOR LOCAL CHURCHES SEEKING LEADERSHIP
FOR A DESIGNATED TERM POSITION**

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this document that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates. As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable leader for the interim time for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates.

We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson

Date

“picture of church here”

Church Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Website:

Date of vacancy:

Contact Person and information:

INTRODUCTION
Based on language from the UCC

Designated-Term Position

Designated-Term Position (Merger / Closure / Revitalization / Repositioning / Redevelopment / Relocation / Legacy / New Church) – a called position for a designated time period for a defined purpose, in which the pastor may move church membership and standing to the congregation served and related association

- ❖ *Revitalization or Turnaround Pastor* - A temporary pastor who is called for a specific time period for a specific purpose: the revitalization of the congregation. After the initial designated term, the pastor is potentially eligible for the settled pastor position.
- ❖ *Hospice or Legacy Pastor* - A temporary pastor who is called for a specific time period for a specific purpose: the closure tasks of a congregation
- ❖ *Redevelopment or Repositioning Pastor* - A temporary pastor who is called for a specific time period for a specific purpose: the creation of a specific new ministry within or alongside a current congregation. After the initial designated term, the pastor is potentially eligible for the settled pastor position.
- ❖ *New Church Start Pastor* - A temporary pastor who is called for a specific time period for a specific purpose: the gathering of a new church. After the initial designated term, the pastor is potentially eligible for the settled pastor position.
- ❖ *Other* - A temporary pastor who is called for a specific time period for a specific purpose: could include merger, relocation, reunification, cultural reassessment, staff transition, selling a building, etc. May be eligible for settled position, or for a renewed designated term, according to initial call agreement.

Search and Call Considerations:

Role of the Conference: The conference works with congregational leadership to clarify the purpose of the next juncture (i.e. utilizing New Beginnings assessment service). The conference supplies small batch of profiles to church leadership or specifically to a search committee if one exists. The conference also holds accountability at certain measuring points in time, assessing how the work is progressing. The church at pre-identified points in time is free to change to a new strategy or a new minister; the conference may require reports or commitments of the congregation and/or minister in preparation.

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Ministry flows from mission.

A time of transition in the life of a congregation is an opportunity to gain clarity on the church’s mission. The MA Conference is living into this mission “Rooted in the grace of God, the mission of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ is to nurture local church vitality and the covenant among our churches to make God’s love and justice real.”

What is your local church’s mission? (Please share your church’s mission statement here or name that one needs to be developed):

The most typical situations in which a church would seek a designated term pastor are:

1. A church in process of major restructure, assessment of viability, physical re-location, uniting or yoking with another congregation.
2. A church coping with the aftermath of major conflict or trauma.
3. A church whose continuing viability is doubtful.
4. A church where the regular search & call process may have proved difficult due to size, geographical location, or other issues.
5. A church in process of staff reconfiguration, where a particular ministry will be staffed to maintain needed programming while the reconfiguration of responsibilities is designed and accomplished.

Our church is choosing to engage a designated term pastor at this time because we understand the work before us to be in the category of number ____ (choose the situation from the five above that best describes the work that is before the church in the present moment and describe why.)

In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following:

Brief History:

Church Strengths:

Significant Events:

Our Challenges:

Is there unresolved Conflict in Church? _____ Yes ___ No

Level of Conflict in Your Church (Low 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 High): _____

(As identified by Speed Leas, in a Leadership Magazine article in 1989:

1. “We have problems to solve, but we can do it!”
2. “We’re not communicating. There seems to be a low level of trust...but we are talking!

3. The focus has changed to “winners/losers!” Emotions are escalating. Some folks are leaving. At this level it is wise to seek outside help!
4. The goal is “divorce,” and getting people to quit. There are active attempts to manipulate or sabotage processes. Open communication is not being practiced.
5. Not only wanting others to leave, but seeking to hurt others in revenge!

Was the previous leader a contributor to the conflict? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, please explain: _____

What has the congregation and leadership learned about its role in the creation and resolution of the conflict?

BASIC STATISTICS:

#Church Members	Average Worship Attendance	CE Participation	Adult Ed Participation

2016 Income	2016 Budget	2016 UCC Mission Giving	Reserves & Endowments	Compensation being offered

Generally, the starting place of negotiation for the Compensation Package offered to the Designated Term Pastor is the same as that of the most recent pastor.

Cash Salary offered \$ _____

Conference Compensation Guidelines (salary range): \$ _____

Housing

___ Housing allowance only \$ _____

___ Parsonage only

___ would offer either

_____ Pension Contribution (14% of Base Salary plus housing)

_____ Social Security Allowance

_____ Health Insurance ___ Individual ___ Family

_____ Dental Insurance ___ Individual ___ Family

_____ Vacation (1 week per quarter for full time)

_____ Meetings

_____ Business Mileage Reimbursed (IRS Rate)

One time Criminal Background Check fee of \$140 reimbursed to the Designated Term Pastor.

Covenant/Contract will be for: _____ 24 months _____ 36 months or other _____

Is this full time or part time?

The Designated Term Pastor will be selected by: _____

+ + +

Once a Designated Term Pastor has been chosen and a covenant has been signed, please forward the following documents to the Waltham Office –

- Copies of the Interim Covenant/Contract
- Documents outlining the conditions for terminating the covenant/contract.

It is customary that the church or Designated Term Ministry Pastor may terminate the contract only after 60 days notice of such intent.

Associate Conference Minister:	
Phone	
Email	
Cell Phone	

Once a Designated Term Ministry Pastor has been chosen and a covenant has been signed, please forward the following documents to the Framingham Office –

- Copies of the Designated Term Ministry Pastor Covenant/Contract
- Documents outlining the conditions for terminating the covenant/contract.

Suggested Supplemental Materials to send to a candidate:

1. Newsletter
2. Worship bulletin
3. Annual Report

Position Listing for the National UCC Employment Opportunities:

(In 2000 characters of less, please describe your church and your goals for the Designated Term Ministry. This will be posted on our National UCC website for up to one month.)

APPENDIX

Designated Term Ministry Pastor Goals: With specificity and clarity, please describe what you hope to accomplish during the Designated Term Ministry Time:

Please describe how you will know if these goals have been accomplished.