

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
CONGREGATIONAL ADVOCATE
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

In response to the Book of Order's mandate that each presbytery "coordinate, guide, encourage, support, and resource the work of its congregations for the most effective witness to the broader community," (Book of Order G-3.0303), Peace River Presbytery's Committee on Ministry assigns its members to serve each congregation as a "Congregational Advocate" - an ongoing liaison between 1-2 congregations and COM.

Before contacting church representatives, Advocates should familiarize themselves with the PCUSA's Five-Year Trends for the congregation, which provide vital information on membership, attendance, church school education, finances, and other matters: pcusa.org (*then Find a Congregation*). Also, the denominational minister directory tells how long the pastor has been there, as well as the pastor's prior service (*Minister Directory on same website*). Each church's website, contact information, and worship times are on our presbytery website. Advocates should seek to be on the newsletter mailing lists, email lists, social media sites, and websites of their churches.

The COM Co-Moderators inform each Pastor and Clerk of Session which member of COM has agreed to serve as their Advocate and provides them the COM member's contact information. The Session of each church is asked to select one active Ruling Elder as the primary contact person for COM.

Each Advocate should seek to build a relationship with that church in a way that is mutually thought to be most effective. To help achieve that goal, each advocate should meet with the pastor and with the session in the first few months. To continue to build a relationship, consider the following questions for discussion:

1. What excites you most about the church right now?
2. What challenges you most about the church right now?
3. How is your church providing ministry to your community?
4. How does your church nurture the spiritual growth of your congregation?
5. How can COM best help your congregation?

It is helpful for Advocates to attend worship at their churches occasionally, but given conflicting demands for pastors and many elders, this must be just a suggestion. As an alternative, attendance at other church events may be more feasible and should be considered.

Advocates support their congregation in prayer. They make themselves available to meet on request with the pastor and/or Session. Should congregation member(s) wish to discuss problems or issues, they should be encouraged to discuss with session members.

Advocates also are expected to encourage church member participation in Presbytery activities and opportunities and may make churches aware of needs.

Advocates seek advice from and keep the COM Cluster Leader informed of significant change in the life of the congregation. They also work with the COM Cluster Leader to smoothly manage transitions when the Advocate leaves COM. They notify the COM Co-Moderators and General Presbyter as soon as they learn of an impending pastoral vacancy. A brief annual report to COM on the church's ministry direction and significant challenges is expected.