Presbytery of Philadelphia
Commission on Ministry (COM)
Validated Ministry Process & Application

As the changing face of the church includes fewer and fewer traditional, full-time pastor and associate pastor roles, we have a decision before us. We can dissuade talented men and women from following God's call into ordained ministry, or we can offer creative opportunities for them to serve the Church. While the traditional role of the church is shifting, more than ever the world needs men and women carrying God's message of love, justice and reconciliation. It is unknown to us what God has in store for the future of professional ministry, and yet we are called to creatively embrace possibilities that will further God's work. Validated Ministry offers us, the Presbytery of Philadelphia, the ability to engage a changing world with transforming mission and ministry (G-2.0503a, G-3.0306).

What is a Validated Ministry?

A Validated Ministry is normally a ministry outside of the ordinary congregational life that meets the criteria expressed in the Book of Order and by the guidelines of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. It shall be a ministry that serves others, aids others and enables the ministry of others. Also the ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the presbytery and to organizations, agencies and institutions.

A Validated Ministry within the Presbytery of Philadelphia will:

- Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through Word and deed and may celebrate the sacraments
- Stress deeds of love and mercy
- Help to share the ministry of the good news and seek to fulfill the ministry of Jesus Christ
- Exercise pastoral care of those for whom they are responsible
- Strengthen the church
- Equip the church for service to the human community *(G-2.0102, G-3.0306 and G-2.0503).*

What are some forms of Validated Ministry?
- educators
- chaplains
- pastoral counselors
- campus ministers
- missionaries
- partners in mission
- evangelists
- administrators
- social workers
- consultants
- faith based community organizers
- new church development pastors
- other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church including administrative (including presbytery, synod and GA staff), legislative, judicial or prophetic positions

(G-3.0306, G-2.0102).

What are the established Validated Ministries within the Presbytery of Philadelphia?

There are three ministries, which upon acceptance by the presbytery are Validated Ministries,

- Immigrant Faith Communities as outlined in Guidelines for *Welcoming Immigrant Faith Communities*

- Missional Faith Communities (i.e. Broad Street Ministry), as outlined in *Guidelines Missional Faith Community*

- New Church Development Projects.

    (see Guidelines for Welcoming Immigrant Faith Communities and Guidelines for Missional Faith Community)

The approval by the Commission on Ministry (COM) of a call to a Validated Ministry within a congregation (G-2.0503.a) shall be considered validation of that ministry.

What are the criteria for ministers serving in a Validated Ministry?

The minister must be a PC (USA) Teaching Elder, or be cleared by the Commission on Preparation for Ministry and Membership (CPMM) to be ordained or have the credentials to become a PC (USA) minister in accordance with the Book of Order.

Also, ministers serving in a Validated Ministry must participate in the life of a local congregation, which may include being designated as a parish associate; and participate in the life of the presbytery in fulfillment of their ordination vows. Ministers serving in a Validated Ministry are encouraged to participate in the denomination beyond the presbytery as well as in ecumenical ministries *(G-6.0306, G-2.0502 and G-2.0702)*.

If the Validated Ministry takes the minister away from this presbytery, it is expected that the minister will participate in the life of a local congregation and the local presbytery and report to the Presbytery of Philadelphia annually their involvement in the local presbytery and congregation. In the case of mission service, the minister will report annually on their work and status *(G-6.0306 and G-2.0502)*.

Ministers serving a Validated Ministries within an immigrant and/or non-English speaking congregation or ministry will be given consideration *(G-2.0505)*.

Can a person be ordained to a Validated Ministry?

The simple answer to the question is yes. A person may be ordained if:
- The presbytery approves the Validated Ministry and
- The person is otherwise qualified to be ordained.

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What are the requirements for a Validated Ministry?

- description of the goals and working relationships
- the signature of the minister (s), representative of the presbytery and where possible of the employing agency
- financial terms

Financial terms for a Validated Ministry may or may not meet the Presbytery of Philadelphia's minimum for a congregational call. Validated Ministry may be volunteer or part-time.

What about after the ministry has been approved?

A minister of a Validated Ministry is expected to participate in the life of a congregation which may include being designated as parish associate. Also a minister is expected to remain an active member of the Presbytery through participation in presbytery meetings, commissions or committees and/or events and gatherings of the presbytery community.

What is the process for approval and review?

A. Application for a Validated Ministry (Attachment A)

1) The minister or candidate seeking approval for a Validated Ministry shall consult with the moderator of the Commission on Ministry (COM), and complete the **Application for Validated Ministry**.

2) The COM moderator shall place the application on the agenda of COM and, if deemed appropriate, schedule an interview for the minister with all or part of the COM.

3) The COM shall consider the application and, if approved by COM, report to the presbytery that the ministry is approved as a Validated Ministry.

B. Review of Validated Ministry

Annual Review of Validated Ministry

The minister engaged in a Validated Ministry shall submit to the COM a brief reflection (no more than 2 pages) on the ministry in the last year and anticipated changes in the work of the ministry for the coming year. COM will document receipt of the Annual Review.

The COM may interview the minister concerning the Annual Review. If deemed necessary, the interview shall include, but may not be limited to:

- Activity of the ministry
- Goals for the ministry
- Plans of the minister for continuing education
- Ways in which the presbytery can be of greater support to the minister and ministry.

Application for Validated Ministry

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name of Ministry: _____

Contact information regarding Ministry: _____
> Please provide a published copy of information of employing organization (i.e. brochure) and brief job description.

Church where you are worshipping/serving? _____

In a brief essay (no more than two pages) describe how the proposed Validated Ministry will:

- Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through Word and deed and may celebrate the sacraments
- Stress deeds of love and mercy
- Help to share the ministry of the good news and seek to fulfill the ministry of Jesus Christ
- Exercise pastoral care of those for whom they are responsible
- Strengthen the church
- Equip the church for service to the human community.

Return a copy of this form and essay to the COM moderator **and** Presbytery Office.

Presbytery of Philadelphia
Attn: Commission on Ministry
915 E. Gowen Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19150