

Presbytery of Arkansas

Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual

**Approved By
General Council
October 6, 2007**

(Revised 6.1.04 to change Coordinating Council to General Council and to change Committee on Personnel to Personnel Sub-Committee throughout document)

(Revised 11.04 to add Sabbatical Leave and Maternity-Paternity Leave) (Revised 10.28.05 to change the Grievance Policy)
(Revised 8.17.07 to change Part-time employees working fewer than 40 hours to 20 hours; Vacation eligibility; Gift Policy; Delete Temporary housing; Meals-per diem; Grievance Policy review as previously revised) (Revised 12.18.07 Holidays: add 2- ½ days Wednesday before Thanksgiving and Maundy Thursday and closed all day on December 24th)

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Presbytery of Arkansas PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the staff of the Presbytery of Arkansas. You are important to the overall mission of the presbytery and in ministering to others on the staff. All Church employees - both programmatic and clerical staff - should be cognizant of the unique circumstances associated with employment in a religious setting. Part of the essence of and a rationale underlying the Church as an institution is its concern and care for individuals. As such, every employee bears some responsibility for "Ministry" in the broad sense of communicating that concern. In a world of impersonal institutions, the Church must be a place where people are recognized as human and valuable. No employee should ever be too rushed to offer a greeting or kind word or too harried to be polite. Of such minor interactions are major differences made. An atmosphere of caring, concern, and warmth must permeate the contacts between the Church's employees and all who come seeking its comfort.

The purpose of the Personnel Manual is to let you know what is expected of you as an employee of the Presbytery of Arkansas and what you can expect from the presbytery as your employer. Throughout this document, references to the term *Presbytery* are capitalized when it refers to Presbytery of Arkansas.

THE MISSION OF PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

MISSION STATEMENT

STATEMENT OF MISSION

The Presbytery of Arkansas adopted as its mission statement and priorities, effective October 19, 1998, the following:

Preamble and Mission Statement

The Presbytery of Arkansas is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is a part of the Reformed family of Churches within the universal Church of Jesus Christ.

As such our mission is to:

Inspire, challenge and help

Our congregations, agencies, ministers and leaders

To fulfill the call to service

As faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Priorities of the Presbytery

- To help congregations learn faithful and effective ways of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with younger generations and people of all racial and socio-economic groups.
- To help existing congregations be vital and develop new congregations.
- To provide Christian education resources, opportunities for spiritual growth, and leadership development.
- To help in the process of calling pastoral leadership.
- To provide oversight and pastoral care for church professionals.
- To help develop ministries of justice and compassion in our communities and to coordinate regional and ecumenical efforts.
- To expand our global vision.
- To deepen and develop our connectional relationships as Presbyterians.

PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THIS MANUAL

This Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual applies to employees and volunteers of the Presbytery of Arkansas. It is intended to provide guidelines and summary information about the presbytery's personnel policies, procedures, benefits, and rules of conduct. This Manual does not create contractual rights to any of these policies or procedures nor does it alter an individual's status as an at-will employee. The Presbytery of Arkansas reserves the right to amend or change these policies and procedures from time to time at its sole discretion.

It is important that you read, understand, and become familiar with this Manual and comply with the standards that have been established. It is obviously not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. Questions regarding the implementation of these policies should be referred to the General Presbyter. Final policy interpretations are the responsibility of the General Presbyter in consultation with the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration.

If there is a conflict between the provisions, benefits, and policies in this Manual and those set forth in other official documents such as the terms of an ordained staff member's call, the terms of an approved pension plan, or an insurance policy, the terms of those documents shall prevail.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Arkansas to provide equal opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, marital status, creed, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. This policy applies to every aspect of employment including, but not limited to, recruitment, selection, assignment, transfer, promotion, compensation, administration of fringe benefits, participation in training and/or development activities, disciplinary action, demotion, reduction in the work force, and termination. All management and supervisory personnel are responsible for the implementation of and the adherence to the Equal Opportunity Policy.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

SELECTION AND HIRING

You were selected to work as a member of the staff because you indicated an interest in employment here, you appear to have the necessary skills for your particular job, and both you and those responsible for hiring you sought God's leadership in your selection. The presbytery seeks to employ the best qualified candidates for existing vacancies. Ordinarily, the Presbytery of Arkansas does not hire relatives of employees. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Personnel Sub-Committee.

An effort is made to seek those who have performed well in previous jobs, are conscientious and apply themselves to their work. Your attitude and spirit at work are vitally important.

The following procedures apply to the retention of presbytery staff:

Elected Staff. The General Presbyter and Associate Presbyter(s) shall be nominated by a special committee in accordance with *The Book of Order* and the Presbytery Standing Rules and called by the presbytery. Elected staff will be provided with a written call as determined by the Committee on Ministry and the Personnel Sub-Committee in compliance with provisions in *The Book of Order* and the Presbytery Standing Rules.

Appointed Staff. Other staff shall be nominated by the General Presbyter and appointed by the Personnel Sub-Committee. Appointed staff members will be provided with a written statement of terms of employment, including salary and other benefits.

ORIENTATION

It is the responsibility of the General Presbyter to explain the employee benefits package to newly elected or appointed employees and to familiarize them with the provisions of this Manual.

AUTHORIZED STAFF POSITIONS

In keeping with *The Book of Order*, the Presbytery of Arkansas has established the positions of General Presbyter and Associate Presbyter(s) which are elected by presbytery in accordance with the provisions of *The Book of Order* (Elected Staff). Other staff are retained to assist the Presbyters and to perform the work of presbytery and are appointed by the General Presbyter subject to confirmation by the Personnel Sub-Committee or presbytery. All Elected and some Appointed (depending on the functions performed) Staff are classified as *exempt* from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Some Appointed Staff may be classified as *non-exempt* and thus will receive overtime pay in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. All overtime work must be approved by a supervisor in advance. If the normal work week for a non-exempt position is less than 40 hours per week, all hours worked up to 40 hours a week will be paid at the regular hourly rate. Those persons employed in exempt positions are not paid wages for hours worked either in excess of the normal work schedules or 40 hours a week.

PART TIME AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

From time to time the presbytery may employ individuals to meet specific needs on a part-time temporary or full-time temporary basis. A part-time employee is one who works less than eight hours a day or less than forty hours per week. Such personnel may be hired for a fixed amount of time, such as one-half time or twenty hours per week, or the number of hours per week may be left flexible depending upon immediate need and availability.

Temporary or part-time personnel may be either exempt or non-exempt depending upon the nature of the work they perform. Non-exempt hourly personnel will receive pay at the rate of their regular hourly pay for hours up to forty per week and at the rate of one and one-half times their regular hourly pay for hours over forty per week. Non-exempt part-time employees will be paid by the hour and daily time sheets must be prepared and submitted semi-monthly to the General Presbyter or his/her designee. Part-time employees performing duties defined as exempt by the FLSA will be paid a monthly salary for the work performed.

Temporary employees may be hired to work full-time, that is, forty hours per week, for a limited time period. Temporary employees performing work not exempt from the FLSA will be paid on an hourly basis, and daily time sheets must be submitted on a semi-monthly basis to the General Presbyter or his/her designee. Temporary employees performing duties exempt from the provisions of the FLSA will be paid on the basis of a monthly salary.

All hourly part-time or temporary personnel will be paid only for hours worked and not for sick time, vacation time, leaves of absence, or holidays. Temporary employees and part-time employees working fewer than 20 hours per week are not eligible for pension/medical insurance. This does not apply to salaried part time employees.

SPECIAL POSITIONS

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. In accordance with federal and state statutes and Church polity, all Ministers of the Word and Sacrament employed by the presbytery are considered self-employed persons engaged in the exercise of their ministry and are not subject to withholding of certain taxes. They are, however, included in all other policies which apply to "employees," except where excluded by federal or state law or provisions of Presbyterian polity as reflected in *The Book of Order*.

Consultants. A consultant contracts to perform a specific project or function on behalf of presbytery or a member church or unit of presbytery. A contract is drafted by the employer of the consultant, with final approval on behalf of presbytery by the Personnel Sub-Committee. The contract for the consultant will specify a fee for completion of the project, payable from the budget of the employer. The contract will specify the method for review of the work performed, with the employer ultimately responsible. The General Presbyter will fulfill this role for the presbytery. A consultant contract must specify the term during which the contracted work is to be performed as well as provisions for renewal.

Position Descriptions. The presbytery maintains descriptions for each position. These descriptions are intended to aid the presbytery in developing a clear structure of job responsibility, work activity, pay scale and performance standards. Job descriptions are not fixed; they represent general guidelines and may be modified from time to time at the sole discretion of the presbytery through the Committee on Administration and its Personnel Sub-Committee. Occasionally, employees may be expected to perform duties and handle responsibilities that are not part of their normal jobs. If, over time, the new duties or responsibilities remain a significant part of the assignment, the job description may be changed at the sole discretion of the presbytery through the Personnel Sub-Committee.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Performance monitoring and improvement is an ongoing process and the responsibility of both the employee and his/her supervisor. To this end, employees are encouraged to:

- Inquire about their performance from time to time;
- Accept additional responsibilities and show initiative;
- Ask for assistance in developing a goal-oriented path for development;
- Learn about training available to assist in skills improvement and professional development.

Each employee will receive a performance review from her/his supervisor at least once a year. More frequent reviews may take place if warranted by the job situation or the employee's performance. For example, in the case of new employees, a performance review will take place at the end of three months. Each employee will have an opportunity to meet with the Personnel Sub-Committee at least annually and more often if necessary or requested.

The purpose of the performance evaluation is to let employees know how well they are performing their jobs. Written performance evaluations may include commendation for good work, as well as specific recommendations for improvement.

Each employee will have the opportunity to discuss his/her performance evaluation with her/his supervisor. Performance evaluations help the presbytery make important decisions about job placement, training, development, and pay increases. A satisfactory performance evaluation does *not* guarantee a salary increase nor does it alter, modify, or amend the at-will employment relationship between employees and the presbytery.

Job Performance. Employees may be disciplined, which may include termination, for poor job performance. Some examples (not inclusive) of poor job performance include:

- Below average work quality or quantity;
- Poor attitude, including rudeness, or lack of cooperation;
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of break and meal privileges;
- Failure to follow instructions or presbytery policies and procedures.

Misconduct. Employees may also be disciplined, which may include termination, for misconduct. Some examples (not inclusive) of misconduct are as follows:

- Insubordination;
- Abuse, misuse, theft, or the unauthorized possession or removal of presbytery property or the personal property of others.
- Falsifying or making a material omission on presbytery records, reports, or other documents, including payroll, personnel, and employment records;
- Divulging confidential information to unauthorized persons;
- Disorderly conduct on presbytery property, including fighting or attempted bodily injury, or the use of profane, abusive, or threatening language toward others, or possession of a weapon;
- Violation of any law adversely affecting the presbytery or conviction in court of any crime which may cause the employee to be regarded as unsuitable for continued employment;
- Violation of the presbytery's alcohol, drugs, and controlled substances policy;
- Violation of the presbytery's sexual harassment and sexual misconduct policies.

SEPARATION POLICIES

Employment is with the mutual consent of the employee and the presbytery. Consequently, both the employee and the presbytery have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. This employment at-will relationship will remain in effect throughout any employment with the presbytery. This employment at-will relationship may not be modified by any oral or implied agreement. Employees whose overall conduct, abilities, or quality of work are unsatisfactory may be terminated at any time. The only allowable modification to the employment at-will status is by written contractual arrangement executed by both the employee and the presbytery with explicit approval of the General Council or the Committee on Administration, as part of terms of call authorized by vote of presbytery.

The presbytery defines a terminated employee as one whose employment has ended for any reason. It is important that the termination date be accurately noted in the personnel records file and that the termination date reflects the time at which the decision to terminate an employee was made or when notification of the employee's intent to terminate was received. Terminating employees will receive a final check reflecting all wages and salaries due up to the time of termination, as well as payment of any reimbursable expenses incurred during the period of time prior to termination. Payment reflecting accrued benefits will be made following established policies and the decisions of the Committee on Administration. Termination of a Minister of the Word and Sacrament requires that all conditions for separation be compatible with the provisions of the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

RESIGNATION

Employees are requested to provide at least one (1) month's notice of intent to resign. There shall be no severance pay or reimbursement for unused sick leave.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

Elected Staff. Reductions in force are at the discretion of the presbytery. The Committee on Administration will give written notice of any such terminations. In addition to the period of notice, severance pay will be provided according to Committee on Ministry guidelines.

Appointed Staff. Reductions in force are at the discretion of the presbytery. The Personnel Sub-Committee will give written notice of any such terminations. Pay *in lieu* of notice may be provided. In addition to the period of notice, severance pay may be provided based on length of continuous service as follows:

A) For less than two (2) years of continuous service, two (2) weeks severance pay.

B) For more than two (2) years of continuous service, four (4) weeks severance pay.

DISMISSAL

Elected Staff. Dismissal is the responsibility of the Committee on Administration, subject to the constitutional action of presbytery. Dismissal for cause will occur only after written notice and in accordance with Committee on Ministry guidelines.

Appointed Staff. Dismissal is the responsibility of the Personnel Sub-Committee. Dismissal for cause will occur only after written notice. The cash equivalent of any unused earned vacation may be paid subject to the sole discretion of the Personnel Sub-Committee.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

Whenever feasible, an exit interview will be conducted with departing employees by the General Presbyter and/or the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee. The focus of the exit interview will be 1) to ensure that all work activities of the former employee have been completed or passed on to other staff for completion and that all financial and other arrangements with the former employee have been brought to appropriate closure; 2) to allow the former employee to express freely opinions or suggestions that may reflect means by which the presbytery can improve its processes, procedures, or employee relations; and 3) to express to the employee continued Christian concern for his/her well-being and to bring the employment period to an amicable close if at all possible. The results of the exit interview will be reported to the Personnel Sub-Committee at its next stated meeting.

REFERENCE INQUIRIES REGARDING EXISTING OR FORMER PRESBYTERY EMPLOYEES

All requests for verification of employment on present or former employees must be referred to the General Presbyter, regardless of whether the requests are written or oral. This procedure is designed to ensure uniformity in replies to all employment inquiries and to safeguard the confidential relationship between the presbytery and its employees.

The General Presbyter may furnish the dates of employment and job classification at the time of termination. Under no circumstances should any employee provide reference information regarding work performance, attendance, etc., about any present or former employee without the explicit approval of the General Presbyter. All references given should be documented in writing.

HOURS OF WORK

OFFICE HOURS

Regular office hours for the Presbyterian Center will be maintained and generally announced and posted. The hours that the Center is open for regular day-to-day operations will be reviewed on an on-going basis by the General Presbyter in consultation with the Personnel Sub-Committee and reported to the General Council if changed. The schedule is determined by the needs of the constituents of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance, being punctual, and remaining on the job throughout the working hours are expected of every employee. From time to time exceptions to the regular working hours may be arranged on an individual basis by employees with the approval of the General Presbyter. Temporary and part-time personnel will not receive compensation for time not actually worked.

VACATIONS, HOLIDAYS AND ABSENCES

VACATIONS

Only salaried employees will be eligible for paid vacations. -Temporary employees may arrange for time off or for leave without pay. These arrangements must be approved by the General Presbyter.

Elected Staff. Vacations are established in terms of call.

Appointed Staff. Vacation with pay is provided for ~~regular, full-time~~ salary employees based on the follow schedule:

SERVICE	DAYS OF VACATION
After 6 months	5
After 12 months	10
Add one day for each year of service. As of January 1 of the second year	11
To a maximum of	22

Vacations are not cumulative and must be used within the calendar year, except as approved by the Personnel Sub-Committee. All vacation must be scheduled with prior approval of the General Presbyter. Specific dates as to when vacation days may be taken must be approved. If a request might impair the presbytery's effectiveness, employees may be asked to re-schedule. Conflicting requests for dates will be resolved by the General Presbyter. Ordinarily, vacation assignments will be made on the basis of "first come-first served," and employees are, therefore, encouraged to schedule vacation times as far in advance as possible to avoid conflict with other employees' requests. The General Presbyter has final approval of all vacation schedules. In any case, vacation time should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance of the desired time off. Vacation time may not be scheduled in units of less than one half day (4 hours) without the express approval of the General Presbyter or his/her designee.

Employees leaving the presbytery's service may be paid at their prevailing rate for earned, but unused vacation time (prorated to the time of year at which they leave), provided they provide at least two weeks prior written notice and are not being terminated for cause. Employees who leave the employment of the presbytery without having completed twelve months of continuous service, regardless of the circumstances, may forfeit vacation pay. Employees who are terminated for cause by the presbytery, regardless of length of service, may not be entitled to vacation pay. There will be no compensation for unused study leave.

HOLIDAYS

Full-time, regular employees will receive fourteen (14) paid days off for the following holidays:

- A) Christmas Eve through New Year's Day (7 working days);**
- B) Maundy Thursday 1/2 day and Good Friday (1 ½ days);**
- C) Memorial Day, to be taken on the day of the national observance of Memorial Day (1 day);**
- D) Fourth of July, to be taken on July 4 or on the Friday or Monday closest to that date; (1 day)**
- E) Labor Day, to be taken on the Monday of the traditional Labor Day (1 day);**
- F) Wednesday before Thanksgiving ½ day; Thanksgiving Day to be taken on Thursday of Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following Thanksgiving (2 1/2 working days).**

All other days will be considered regular working days and regular office hours will be observed. Employees will not receive holiday pay while on a leave of absence for any reason. Holiday pay will not count as hours worked for the calculation of overtime.

ABSENCES

EMPLOYEE ILLNESS OR OFF-THE-JOB INJURY

After six months of employment, full-time, regular employees are eligible for time off with pay for personal illness or off-the-job injury. Employees with less than one year of service are eligible for no more than 5 days pay for illness. After one year of employment, employees will accrue five (5) days per year, up to a maximum of 65 days. Sick leave is subject to the approval of the General Presbyter. The presbytery will not compensate any employee for time off from his/her regular job in the event she/he is injured while working for pay for another employer. Up to three days of earned sick leave may be designated and used as personal leave each calendar year. Personal leave may be used for any purpose with prior approval of the General Presbyter and must be used in not less than one-half day increments.

Illness within the immediate family (spouse, child, parent, or persons living in the same household) requiring the presence of the staff member shall be treated the same as illness of the staff member.

Staff members must report to the General Presbyter by telephone the cause of the absence due to illness or injury, and upon request, present a physician's certificate setting forth the illness that entitles sick pay. If absent for five or more continuous working days, a physician's release is required before returning to work and receiving sick pay. A staff member who becomes ill or injured while on vacation will be paid only for vacation. Should the incapacity continue after the vacation period, sick leave pay may commence at the end of the vacation period.

If all sick and short-term disability time are exhausted, employees who are unable to return to work may be given unpaid leave of absence or terminated, depending upon the particular circumstances. Assignment to an unpaid leave of absence or termination must be approved by the General Presbyter and/or the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration.

OTHER PERSONAL TIME OFF

BEREAVEMENT. After completion of ninety days of employment, regular full-time employees are entitled to three days off with pay in case of the death of an immediate family member if the funeral is local. If the employee has to travel out of town, four days will be granted. Immediate family is defined as spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, in-laws, and persons living in the household. The General Presbyter must be contacted promptly if a death in the immediate family occurs. The General Presbyter may extend the number of allowable days off, depending on circumstances; however, any extension will be without pay.

JURY DUTY. Employees called to serve on a jury or subpoenaed to testify in a civil or criminal proceeding, must notify the General Presbyter of the day they have been requested to appear. A copy of the jury summons or subpoena must be submitted. Such time will be considered an excused absence, and employees may serve without loss of pay. Employees who are excused from jury duty for the day, or are excused early, should report to work when it is practical to do so.

MILITARY. The presbytery will comply with applicable state and federal laws concerning leaves for military service.

CHILD CARE LEAVE. Employees may be provided leave time with approval of the General Presbyter and/or Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration for the birth of a child, and to care for a newborn or for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care. If circumstances require leave for the birth of a child or for placement for adoption or foster care may be taken prior to the actual birth or placement. For a child care leave of absence, employees must use accrued vacation, personal leave, and family leave time prior to the unpaid leave of absence. Child care leave must be taken in one consecutive period of days, weeks or months. An employee's opportunity for child care leave expires 12 months following the birth of the child. Elected employees are governed by Maternity-Paternity Section.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION. The presbytery will comply with applicable state and federal laws concerning leaves for work-related illness or injury. Employees on leave because of work-related illness or injury will be reviewed on an individual basis by both the General Presbyter and the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration.

EXCUSED UNPAID ABSENCES. Short-term, excused absences without pay *not to exceed two weeks* within a single calendar year may be granted by the General Presbyter, at his/her option, for personal business upon employee request. Any additional requests for unpaid absence within the same year must have approval of both the General Presbyter and the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE. Regular employees may request, at the sole discretion of the General Presbyter and the Personnel Sub-Committee, a leave of absence without pay or employment benefits for a period not to exceed six months. Requests for leaves of absence should be submitted in writing to the General Presbyter as far in advance of the anticipated leave date as possible. The leave request must be dated, signed by the employee, and state the reason, circumstances, duration and location of the employee during leave. The General Presbyter will submit his or her recommendation to the Personnel Sub-Committee for approval. Extension of an initial leave of absence must follow the same procedure.

During leaves of absence, employees will be responsible for maintaining or discontinuing employment related discretionary benefits.

Upon expiration of the leave of absence, the employee may be reinstated in the position held, or an equivalent one, at the time leave was granted if such a position is available. An employee who fails to report promptly for work on the first work day after expiration of a leave of absence will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. An employee who applies for and receives unemployment insurance while on leave will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

All other provisions of this policy notwithstanding, it is the policy of the Presbytery of Arkansas to comply in all cases with the requirements of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to the extent that it may apply to the presbytery.

GENERAL PROVISIONS. The following general provisions apply to all leaves of absence:

A request for an extension of a leave of absence must be made in writing prior to the expiration date of the original leave, and when appropriate, must be accompanied by a physician's written statement that certifies the need for the extension.

Coverage under the presbytery's group insurance plans will be continued on the following basis:

- For the first month of an approved leave of absence, the presbytery will continue to contribute to premiums as if the employee were actively at work;
- For coverage to continue, employees will be required to pay the entire premium during the portion of an approved leave of absence in excess of one month;
- Employees must make arrangements with the presbytery through the General Presbyter for payment of their share of group insurance premiums before going on leave of absence.

Employees will not accrue length of continuous service for the portion of a leave of absence in excess of 30 days. Vacation will not accrue.

Employees on leave of absence will be subject to lay off on the same basis as employees who are actively at work.

Employees on leave of absence must communicate with the presbytery through the General Presbyter on a regular basis, at least once each month, regarding their status and anticipated return to work date.

Employees on leave of absence who seek or accept other employment without the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration prior written approval will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

Employees who falsify the reason for their leave of absence will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

All leaves of absence must be approved in advance, in writing, by the General Presbyter.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Employees will not be paid for unexcused absences. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Absences which are not reported by the employee at the beginning of the scheduled workday (without legitimate reason);**
- Absence from the job during the work day without the approval of the General Presbyter;**
- Absence based upon evidence which has been falsified.**

All employees will be advised at the time of hire that they are subject to discipline, suspension, and possible termination for unexcused absences.

NON-PAYMENT OF SICK LEAVE BENEFITS

If an employee is disabled by reason of an injury incurred while performing compensated work for any person, firm, corporation, or organization other than the Presbytery of Arkansas, he/she is not entitled to receive sick leave benefits. Specifically, the presbytery will not compensate any employee for time off from her/his regular job in the event he/she is injured while working for pay for another employer.

COMPENSATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SALARY POLICIES

It is the presbytery's policy to provide fair pay for work performed. Compensation structures and pay rates will be reviewed annually by the Personnel Sub-Committee.

All full-time, regular employees, both exempt and non-exempt, will be paid on the basis of an annual salary, monthly or twice monthly within the limits imposed by state law. Non-exempt, part-time and temporary employees will be paid on the basis of an hourly wage for the hours that they have worked, to be reported bi-weekly using standard time sheets.

SALARY REVIEWS

Periodic salary increases are not guaranteed to any employee. Increases, if provided, will be awarded on an annual basis. In order to be considered for an increase, an employee must have completed at least six months of service. Salary is based on performance evaluations, modified job descriptions, length of service, and cost of living adjustments.

Salaries of all presbytery employees will be reviewed annually during the fall budgetary process. All salary changes will be effective on January 1 of the following year. Salary cycles will be coincident with the fiscal year of the presbytery, from January 1 to December 31.

Provided budgetary constraints permit, with explicit Committee on Administration approval, other salary changes may occur during the fiscal year if necessary to be concurrent with changes in job responsibilities.

The Personnel Sub-Committee reviews and proposes recommendations for all salary adjustments as follows.

Elected Staff. Changes in terms of call are proposed by the Committee on Administration and approved by presbytery.

Appointed Staff. Changes in compensation are proposed by the General Presbyter, approved by the Committee on Administration, and implemented upon approval by presbytery of its total budget.

OVERTIME STATUS

Employees filling positions subject to provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be paid overtime for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Employees whose positions are exempt from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act will not receive additional compensation for hours worked beyond the usual 40 hour week except that persons hired to perform exempt work and paid a monthly salary for a fixed number of contracted hours will be paid the hourly equivalent of their monthly salary for any hours beyond the contracted number.

The presbytery generally does not approve overtime pay due to strict budget guidelines. In rare circumstances, overtime pay will be paid to support staff who work in excess of forty hours per week, upon prior approval of the General Presbyter. Appropriate documentation of hours worked over 40 must be submitted in a timely fashion.

In a religious environment often the most active volunteers in ministry may also be employees of the presbytery. The distinction between work and ministry is often difficult to define. The presbytery takes the position that the job description includes those responsibilities that occur in the office setting during regular work hours. Additional hours spent in ministry activities by non-exempt personnel are on a volunteer basis.

OTHER COMPENSATION

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The presbytery urges all staff members to continue in their professional growth and to maintain their requisite skills. Funds to assist in this process will be made available from time to time. These funds will be administered by the General Presbyter who must approve any continuing education activities to be so funded. Only activities which comply with the existing IRS rules and regulations as qualified educational expense will be approved under the continuing education program. See Appendix E for a complete statement of the presbytery's policy regarding the payment of educational expenses.

MOVING EXPENSES

Payment of moving expenses for new employees will be determined by the selection committee assigned to search for and hire such persons. Whether and how much such expenses are paid will be negotiated by the committee as part of the overall compensation package offered to new hires, whether elected or appointed.

EXPENSE ACCOUNT REIMBURSEMENTS

It is the presbytery's policy to reimburse employees for expenses incurred on behalf of the presbytery. Any employees incurring reimbursable expenses must complete the appropriate standard forms and submit them along with all applicable receipts to the committee on whose behalf the expenses were incurred.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Where it can be demonstrated that the presbytery will benefit from an employee's participation in an educational program or professional organization, the related expenses may be paid by the presbytery. Requests for payment of expense related to educational programs and professional organizations must be approved in advance by the General Presbyter in consultation with the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration.

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PROGRAM

The presbytery reserves the right to add to, modify or eliminate any discretionary benefits described in or attached to this manual. Under most circumstances, there will be ample opportunity to provide employees with advance notice of such modifications, and to consider the effect of the decision.

SOCIAL SECURITY (FICA)

Employees and the presbytery are required to contribute toward Federal Social Security benefits from the first day of employment unless, as an ordained minister, they have applied for and received a government approved exemption. Both the employee's and the presbytery's contribution rates are established by law and represent a percentage of earnings. *Social Security provides four basic provisions consisting of retirement income, disability income, death benefit, and retirement health care.* Eligibility varies among the benefits, and the entitlements are subject to individual circumstances. More information explaining details of these benefits are available from the local Social Security office.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION/SUPPLEMENTAL PAY

The presbytery subscribes to the Arkansas Workers' Compensation Law. If an employee becomes entitled to benefits under the Workers' Compensation Law, the presbytery is insured to provide the benefits set forth in the law.

- Any on-the-job injury, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately to the General Presbyter, or a designated employee. Failure to report an on-the-job injury within 72 hours of its occurrence may result in disciplinary action which may include termination. Appropriate reporting forms are available in the presbytery office.
- Any observable injury (such as a cut or burn) should be given prompt medical attention. Other injuries (such as a strain or sprain) must be certified by an approved physician.
- Absence due to on-the-job injury should be reported in the same manner as any other absence.
- Only an approved physician can release an employee injured on the job to return to work.

The presbytery is not responsible for the payment of worker's compensation benefits for any injury or illness that results from the employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreation, social, or athletic activity that is not part of the employee's work related duties.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The presbytery is exempt from mandatory participation in the State and Federal Unemployment Insurance Program. There are no unemployment insurance funds available through either the State or Federal Program to former employees of the presbytery.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Major medical insurance is provided by the Board of Pensions.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All elected employees may be covered with twenty-four hour accident insurance, on a voluntary basis not to exceed \$100,000, subject to terms and conditions provided by an agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

DISABILITY BENEFITS INSURANCE

The Presbyterian Pension Plan provides members benefits for permanent disability.

MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

The Presbytery will maintain full and appropriate malpractice insurance coverage for all ordained staff employees providing counseling or ministerial services as part of their regular responsibilities.

PENSION

All full-time employees who have completed a probationary period are enrolled in one of the Presbyterian church (U.S.A.) Pension plans for which full dues are paid. Non-exempt employees have the option of enrolling.

DEATH IN SERVICE

In the event of the death of a staff member, salary will be continued to the spouse, or dependent(s), or estate for one (1) month after death. Death benefits are provided through the pension and benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

PROFESSIONAL, CIVIC, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

ETHICS

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Arkansas that all of its employees should maintain the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and ethical conduct. The employee is responsible for adherence to this policy, and any violation is subject to disciplinary action, including termination. While good judgment is a basic requirement of business conduct, the following guidelines are applicable.

- No employee shall engage in activities that could produce a real or apparent conflict between the personal interests of the employee and interests of the presbytery or that could affect the independence of the employee's judgment.**
- No employee shall use or disclose confidential information for private benefit of self, associate, or any other person, business, or organization.**
- No employee shall, while on the job or acting as representative of the presbytery, solicit customers or vendors to hire or contract with them for any outside work.**
- No employee shall use presbytery affiliation with the intention of securing special consideration. This policy does not apply to an employee identifying the presbytery in a credit reference situation.**
- No employee shall offer any direct or indirect payment or transfer of value to any person, business, political organization, or public official. However, the presbytery recognizes the rights of employees to make personal contributions to political candidates or charities.**
- No employee or family member shall accept entertainment, gifts, cash, or similar items from vendors, suppliers, or others with whom the presbytery deals.**
- Employees shall report to their supervisor any direct or indirect financial interest they have in any organization that deals with the presbytery.**
- Employees are expected to perform in a manner which will protect and preserve the presbytery's assets, including its reputation for honest dealings and respect for law and the rights of others.**
- No payment shall be made using presbytery funds for any purpose other than that supported by required documents justifying the payment. No undisclosed, unrecorded, or unapproved fund or asset of the presbytery will be established for any purpose. All books and records must fully and fairly reflect any transactions or disposition of presbytery assets.**

Any employee who is in doubt as to whether a specific activity is in violation of this policy should seek guidance from the General Presbyter.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

While the presbytery recognizes the right of employees to engage in political and other activities in their personal lives, employees are restricted from participation in any activities which would place them in a conflict (either financially or morally/ethically) with the legitimate interests of the presbytery. Any employee who has doubt as to conflict of interest of his/her outside interests or activities should request a review by the General Presbyter.

Employees are not allowed to solicit, obtain, accept, or retain any personal benefit from any supplier, vendor, member, individual, or organization doing or seeking business with the presbytery. As used here, personal benefit means a gift, gratuity, favor, service, compensation in any form, discount, special treatment, or any monetary value. The following serve as exceptions, but employees should consult with the General Presbyter when circumstances are difficult or doubtful:

- The purchase of business meals;**
- Consumable gifts offered to an entire work group during a holiday season where rejection would damage the spirit in which the gifts were offered.**

EMPLOYEE GIFTS

From time to time it may be appropriate for employees to exchange gifts as remembrances or signs of caring. At such times, the General Presbyter may approve the solicitation of small voluntary sums in order to purchase a gift. No employee should be pressured or coerced to participate in such collections. Gifts should be nominal and appropriate to the circumstance. Presbytery funds are not to be used for these purposes without General Council approval except that such constraint does not apply to the General Presbyter's discretionary funds.

The General Council will not accept designated monies for payment to any member of the staff or any other person within or beyond the presbytery, except when the General Council initiates a general request for donations for a gift to a person on a special occasion.

Gifts given directly to an employee are not a concern of the presbytery, with the following exception. No gifts are to be accepted by employees of the Presbytery of Arkansas from businesses or individuals with whom the presbytery does business or might potentially do business in the future. Examples include gifts from printing and office supplies, janitorial services, eating establishments, motels, etc.

When an employee leaves the employment of the Presbytery of Arkansas under favorable circumstances, the employee will receive \$100 for each year of service up to \$1,000, subject to the approval of the General Presbyter, or Moderator of the Committee on Administration if the General Presbyter is leaving.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Frequently, their normal duties and responsibilities will bring presbytery employees into contact with confidential information about members of the presbytery, its congregations, or others. All presbytery employees should be particularly sensitive to the need to maintain the integrity of this information. These concerns are particularly relevant with respect to information relating to counseling or pastoral care. Disclosure of confidential information compromises both the employee and the presbytery and seriously erodes the confidence of others in the ministry of the presbytery. Employees may not disclose, duplicate or use this information except as required in the performance of their duties with the presbytery. Breach of confidence is grounds for immediate dismissal.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being *“under the influence”* of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on presbytery property, or in presbytery vehicles is prohibited. In addition, off duty conduct which may adversely affect the reputation or interests of the presbytery is prohibited. *“Under the influence”* for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or presbytery property.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, and may include termination.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The presbytery will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment. Such conduct on the part of any employee will result in disciplinary action which may include reprimand, suspension and/or termination.

Such conduct, when experienced or observed, should be reported to the General Presbyter or the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration. The General Presbyter or, at his/her request or if the allegation involves the General Presbyter, the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration will conduct an investigation and report the results to the General Presbyter, the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration, or the General Council, as appropriate, protecting the privacy of both parties under investigation at all times. Further details regarding specific definitions and procedures are provided in Appendix D and are incorporated as part of this policy by reference.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the presbytery hold as a central value that all persons should be treated with dignity and respect. All employees are expected to behave responsibly in their personal conduct regarding issues of sexual behavior. Employees are expected to comply with the presbytery's policy regarding sexual misconduct as represented in Appendix D.

CHILD ABUSE

Some of the programs of the presbytery may involve small children and other youths up to age 18. The presbytery has attempted to engage employees and volunteer workers suitable for the care and nurture of these children. It is the intent of the presbytery to take reasonable efforts to prevent physical and mental abuse of any children. Further details regarding specific definitions and procedures are in Appendix C and are incorporated as part of this policy by reference.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Employees' appearance reflects not only on them individually, but on the presbytery as well. Employees are expected to take pride in their appearance and to strive to achieve a positive and appropriate image when representing the presbytery.

PERSONAL CALLS

Presbytery telephones are provided for presbytery related purposes and are a vital part of our ministry. Employees must keep personal calls brief and to a minimum. Personal long distance calls may not be made without maintaining accurate records and reimbursing the presbytery for the cost of the call, and should be limited to emergencies and unusual circumstances.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL SYSTEMS

The presbytery's computer systems provide for the use of electronic mail ("E-mail") to facilitate communication among employees in the performance of their responsibilities. This communication system is explicitly the property of the presbytery. Employees must observe certain policy constraints in using this system: 1) the presbytery will not allow or tolerate the use of the e-mail system to transmit or store harassing or libelous messages. As would be the case with telephone communications, the presbytery will ordinarily protect the privacy of employees regarding e-mail messages; however, the presbytery reserves the right to monitor e-mail messages to enforce the provisions of this policy.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health/safety of employees and others on presbytery property is of utmost concern. It is the policy of the presbytery to strive constantly for the highest possible level of safety in all activities and operations, and to carry out our commitment in compliance with all appropriate health/safety standards applicable to our ministries and organization by enlisting the help of all employees to ensure public areas and work areas are free of hazardous conditions.

The presbytery will make every effort to provide working conditions that are healthy and safe, and employees are expected to be equally conscientious about work place safety, including proper work methods, reporting potential hazards, and lessening observed hazards. Unsafe conditions in any work area or public area that might result in an accident should be reported immediately to your supervisor. The presbytery's safety policy and practices will be strictly enforced, including possible termination of employees found to be willfully negligent in the safe performance of their jobs.

The presbytery expects its employees to conduct themselves in a safe manner. Use good judgment and common sense in matters of safety, observe any safety rules posted in various areas, and follow all OSHA and state safety regulations.

If an employee is injured in connection with employment, regardless of the severity of the injury, the employee must immediately notify his/her supervisor, unless emergency conditions exist or notification is not practical. In such cases, it will be the responsibility of the supervisor to seek necessary medical attention and complete required reports. In any case of serious injury, employees are to receive prompt and qualified medical attention followed by the filing of necessary reports. Should an injury prevent an employee from returning to work for more than two days, his or her supervisor will see that the Business Office and the Worker's Compensation carrier notify the employee of employment benefits under that condition. If hospitalization is required by the injury, it is the employee's responsibility to notify the Group Health Plan carrier prior to or upon entry into the hospital.

PERSONNEL RECORDS MAINTENANCE

Employment records will be maintained in a secure central location. Access to employee files is restricted to the General Presbyter, or those deemed by the General Presbyter or the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration as having "a need to know." Employees may request review of their own personnel files at any time during regular working hours.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Personnel data are classified as confidential and will not be made available to any outside person or organization unless authorized by the employee in writing.

PERSONNEL RECORDS UPDATES

Personnel records should be kept as current as possible. Each employee is responsible for promptly reporting changes in any of the following items:

- A) Change of name,**
- B) Change of home address,**
- C) Change of home telephone number,**
- D) Change of marital status,**
- E) Changes in the group benefit plan, and**
- F) Change of income tax withholding.**

ACCESS TO PRESBYTERY PROPERTY

It is important that the presbytery have access at all times to presbytery property, as well as other records, documents, and files. As a result, the presbytery reserves the right to access employee offices, work stations, filing cabinets, desks, and any other presbytery property at its discretion, with or without advance notice or consent.

EMPLOYEE PARKING

Employees will park at their own risk and the presbytery will not be responsible for theft or damage to any vehicles parked on or near presbytery property. Likewise, the presbytery will not be responsible for personal property left in vehicles that is either lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed.

OFFICE ASSIGNMENTS

Offices will be assigned by the General Presbyter.

APPLICATIONS OF THE PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Generally, the General Presbyter shall be responsible for the implementation and administration of the policies and procedures provided in this manual. In the event that difficulties in interpretation or application should arise, they shall be resolved by the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration. These policies will be reviewed and revised as needed, at a minimum of once every three years by the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration. Revisions are to be approved by the presbytery.

APPEALS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to obtain, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions to the grievances that may from time to time arise. Both parties agree that these procedures will be kept as informal and as confidential (on a need-to-know basis) as possible, at ALL levels of the procedure. This process applies to all employees, both elected and non-elected, as well as volunteers.

The complaining party must first discuss his/her problem with her/his supervisor, within 30 days of the alleged incident. If the employee's supervisor is the General Presbyter and the employee is unable to resolve the matter, the next step for a non-elected employee is to contact the moderator of the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration and submit the complaint. A formal grievance, in writing, should be submitted to the moderator of the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration, with a copy going to the supervisor and/or to the General Presbyter.

Formal grievances must be filed within 30 days of the first inability to resolve the matter at the lowest level. The moderator of the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration shall call a meeting of the committee. The committee will review the grievance with all parties concerned. The committee shall make the final determination of the grievance.

The levels of appeal are as follows (from the bottom up):

- Presbytery of Arkansas
- General Council
- Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration
- General Presbyter
- Supervisor

In the event an elected employee is still not satisfied, the complainant may appeal to the General Council and then to the Presbytery of Arkansas.

RIGHT OF ADVOCACY

It is understood that the complaining party may arrange to have an advocate with him/her at all stages of the formal process.

WRITTEN RECORDS

A written record of all proceedings of the complaint, including decisions arrived at, shall be kept in the office of the General Presbyter.

ISSUES NOT COVERED BY POLICY

From time to time, specific problems or issues may arise which are not directly addressed by the policies in this manual. When that occurs, the General Presbyter should use his/her considered judgment to respond consistent with the overall spirit and intent of these policies. Such issues should be brought to the immediate attention of the Personnel Sub-Committee for review and approval. If appropriate, additions or changes may be drafted for inclusion in this manual with the Committee on Administration's approval.

APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES PROCEDURE

EMPLOYEE STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By my signature below I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the presbytery's personnel policies and procedures manual. I understand that it provides guidelines and summary information about the presbytery's personnel policies, procedures, benefits, and rules of conduct. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with all standards that have been established. I further understand that the presbytery reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any provision, benefit, or policy from time to time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I also acknowledge that both the presbytery and I have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice, and that this employment at-will relationship will remain in effect throughout my employment with the presbytery unless it is specially modified by an express written agreement signed by the Chair of the Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on Administration and myself.

I further acknowledge that this employment at-will relationship may not be modified by any oral or implied agreement.

Employee's name *(Please print)*

Employee's Signature

Date

Witnessed by:

General Presbyter or Immediate Supervisor

Date

Place original in Personnel File and provide a copy to the employee.

VOLUNTEER STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT
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By my signature below I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the presbytery's personnel policies and procedures manual. I understand that it provides guidelines and summary information about the presbytery's personnel policies, procedures, benefits, and rules of conduct. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with all standards that have been established. I further understand that the presbytery reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any provision, benefit, or policy from time to time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I also acknowledge that both the presbytery and I have the right to terminate the volunteer relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice.

Volunteer's Name *(Please print)*

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Witnessed by:

General Presbyter or Immediate Supervisor

Date

Place original in Personnel File and provide a copy to the volunteer.

APPENDIX A: RELOCATION ASSISTANCE POLICY

To protect against the full brunt of economic loss, the presbytery endeavors to assist exempt employees, whether new or required to move by transfer, with moving expenses. The presbytery will reimburse new or relocated employees for certain expenses. The reimbursement policies are based on IRS conditions for deductible expenses. The schedule of allowance and assistance is as follows:

- A. Moving costs of packing and crating household goods and personal effects.**
- B. In-transit insurance.**
- C. Temporary storage up to a limit of one year.**
- D. Moving costs for one personal car.**
- E. House-hunting travel expenses for the employee and spouse (one round trip covering a period not to exceed three days) including lodging and meals.**
- F. Transfer travel expense for the final trip of the family (based on air travel).**

APPENDIX B: THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993 (FMLA)

Major provisions:

- 1. Eligible employees: employees who have worked for twelve (12) months or 1,250 hours within a twelve month period.**
- 2. Definition of a son or daughter:**
 - (A) A biological, adopted, foster child, step-child, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis*; and**
 - (B) Under the age of eighteen (18) years or incapable of self care.**
- 3. An eligible employee shall be entitled to a total of twelve (12) work weeks of leave during any twelve (12) month period because of:**
 - (A) Birth of a child or in order to care for a child; or**
 - (B) Because of placement of child with the employee for adoption or foster care; or**
 - (C) In order to care for spouse, child or parent of employee if that person has a serious health condition; or**
 - (D) A serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the position of such employee.**
- 4. The entitlement period for leave for a birth or placement of a child expires at the end of the twelve (12) month period which begins on the date of the child's birth.**
- 5. Any leave granted pursuant to these sections may be unpaid leave. If any of the leave is paid and is less than twelve (12) work weeks, any additional weeks of leave needed to reach the necessary twelve (12) weeks may be without pay regardless of the prior weeks.**
- 6. Pursuant to paragraph 3, C the employee must make reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the employer, subject to approval of the health provider of the employer or the appropriate person and the employee must provide no less than thirty (30) days notice unless treatment requires leave to begin in less than a thirty (30) day period. If such is the case, the employee is to provide such notice which is reasonable and practical.**

7. If the husband and wife are both employed by the presbytery, employer may limit the spouses to twelve (12) work weeks in a twelve (12) month period if such leave is for (1) Paragraph 3, A or B; or (2) to care for a sick parent under Paragraph 3, C.
8. The employees may elect or an employer may require the employees to substitute any accrued paid vacation leave, personal leave, or family leave pursuant to Paragraph 3, A, B, or C, for any part of the twelve (12) week period of leave.
9. An employee may be required by the employer to substitute any accrued paid vacation leave, personal, medical or sick leave pursuant to Paragraph 3, C or D, for the twelve (12) week period, and the employer is not required to provide sick leave or medical leave in any situation which the employer would not normally provide such paid leave.
10. The employer may require that a request for leave pursuant to Paragraph 3, C or D be supported by certification issued by the health care provider of the eligible employee, or the son, daughter, spouse or parent of the employee as appropriate. If this is the case, then the employer shall state this in the manual. Further, the employee shall provide, in a timely manner, a copy of such certification to the employer. The certification shall be sufficient if it contains (1) the date on which the serious health condition commenced; (2) the probable duration of the condition; (3) the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition.
11. For purposes of leave pursuant to Paragraph 3, C, a statement is required that the employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse or parent and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is needed to care for that person. For the purpose of leave pursuant to Paragraph 3, D, a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of the position of said employee is required.
12. In any case where the employer has reason to doubt the validity of the certification provided pursuant to paragraph 3, C or D, the employer may require, at the employer's expense, that the eligible employee obtain the opinion of a second health care provider, designated by the employer, concerning any information pursuant to the certification and requirements listed above. If the opinions of the two health care providers are in contradiction, the employer may require the employee to seek a third opinion from a health care provider. The expense shall be placed on the employer and the health care provider shall be determined jointly by the employee and the employer. The third health care provider's opinion shall be considered final and shall be binding of the employer and the employee as to the information certified.
13. The employer may require the employee to obtain re-certification on a reasonable basis.

14. The employee who takes leave pursuant to paragraph 3 shall be entitled to be restored to the position of employment held by the employee when the leave commenced, or to be restored to an equivalent position with equivalent employment benefits, and its pay and other terms of employment.
15. However, the employee is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits during any period of leave or any right, benefit or position of employment other than any right, benefit or position to which the employee would have been entitled if the employee had not taken the leave.
16. The employer may require the employee to provide the certification from the health care provider that the employee is able to resume work. However, this must be on a uniformly applied basis if the employer wishes to make this certification applicable to any person. Further, an employee may be required by the employer to report periodically to the employer on the status and intention of the employee to return to work. If this is the case, it must be listed in the manual.
17. Exemption concerning certain highly compensated employees:
 - A. Denial or restoration. The employer may deny restoration under subsection (A) of this section to any eligible employee if:
 1. Such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the operation of the employer;
 2. The employer notifies the employee of the intent of the employer to deny restoration of such basis at the time the employer determines such injury would occur; and
 3. In any case which the leave has commenced, the employee elects not to return to employment after receiving such notice.
 - B. Affected employees. An eligible employee described in Paragraph 1 is a salaried eligible employee who is among the highest paid ten percent (10%) of the employees employed by the employer within seventy-five (75) miles of the facility.

- 18. An employer may require that a claim that an employee is unable to return to work because of continuation, recurrence or onset of serious health condition be supported by:**
- A. A certification issued by the health care provider of the son, daughter, spouse, or parent of the employee in the case of an employee unable to return to work because of conditions specified in Paragraph 3C; or**
 - B. A certification issued by the health care provider of the eligible employee, in the case of an employee unable to return to work because of a condition specified in Paragraph 3D. The certification shall be sufficient if it states that a serious health condition prevents the employee from being able to perform the functions of the position of the employee on the date the leave expired; or**
 - C. The certification described concerning the son, daughter, spouse or parent of the employee is sufficient if the certification states that the employee is needed to care for that son, daughter, spouse or parent for that serious health condition on the date the leave of the employee expired.**

APPENDIX C: CHILD ABUSE POLICY

The following policies apply to presbytery employees and volunteers in dealing with children:

- **Employees should at all times conduct themselves in a manner which avoids even the appearance of impropriety.**
- **Employees may not strike a child, employ corporal punishment, or intentionally cause physical injury to a child.**
- **Employees must not intentionally touch children in bodily areas that are not appropriate.**
- **Employees may not kiss children above the age of 8 years.**
- **Employees should not engage in prolonged touching of children except as necessary and appropriate to console a child.**
- **Employees may not use disciplinary procedures intended to inflict mental or emotional injury to a child.**
- **Employees must report immediately to their supervisor or the Personnel Sub-Committee of the Committee on Administration any accusations of physical, mental, or sexual abuse that come to their attention.**

APPENDIX D: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The people of God live out their faith in the midst of a particular historic reality. Inherent in every time are promise and possibility, opportunities for the ministry and mission of the Church of Jesus Christ to be carried forth. The last quarter of the twentieth century has demanded that the presbytery deal with issues related to human sexuality. While we affirm that God created humankind as male and female to live together in ways which proclaim the worth and dignity of each individual, human sexuality regrettably has often become a basis for oppression, degradation, violation, and injustice - a manifestation of sin. Those doing the work of the presbytery bear particular responsibility in these matters.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Employee** is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are hired or called to work for the presbytery for salary or wages.
- B. **Child Sexual Abuse** includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior between a child and adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. For purposes of this policy, the age of adulthood is 18 years as defined by the laws of the State of Arkansas.
- C. **Sexual Harassment** defined as follows: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
 - 1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution; or
 - 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used in the basis for decisions affecting such individual; or
 - 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment based on the judgment of the affected individual, previously declared to the offending party.

D. Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

- 1. Child sexual abuse as defined in B; and**
 - 2. Sexual harassment as defined in C; and**
 - 3. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat or intimidation; and**
 - 4. Sexual malfeasance as defined for this policy as follows: the breach of trust expressed in deliberate physical contact with the breast, buttock, or genital area within a ministerial employment, leadership, counseling, or professional relationship; and**
 - 5. Abuse of the pastoral care or counseling relationship: The pastoral care or counseling relationships require special treatment because they may address material of a sexual nature but only within clear boundaries which avoid personal involvement. It is abuse of the relationship for the pastor or counselor to permit sexual discussions to move from the clinical into the interpersonal realm. It is never acceptable for the pastoral care or counseling relationship to include sexual contact or relationship. This applies to all ministerial relationships in which pastoral care or counseling occurs. Any consensual sexual relationship between a minister or counselor and a parishioner, client, student, or employee is presumed to be abuse and the minister or counselor carries the burden of proof to the contrary. The control and dependency relationships of counseling and pastoral care are considered, for the purposes of this policy, to extend for two years beyond the termination of actual counseling or pastoral care and the requirements in this paragraph apply to that period as well.**
- E. Victim or Survivor is the term used to identify the person injured by sexual misconduct defined above.**
- F. Volunteer is the term used for those who provide services for the presbytery and receive no benefits or remuneration. Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.**

POLICY STATEMENT

Sexual misconduct is a violation of the principles set forth in scripture and of the ministerial, employment, leadership, counseling and professional relationship. Sexual misconduct is an abuse of the power of a presbytery position. It is never permissible. This policy applies to all minister members of the presbytery, presbytery officers, employees of the presbytery, and lay volunteers serving in any ministry or work authorized by the presbytery. Any person found in violation of this policy is subject to action under the Rules of Discipline, *Book of Order*. Through this policy, the Presbytery of Arkansas:

- A. Affirms a standard of ethical behavior consistent with scripture and secular law;**
- B. Seeks to serve the peace and purity of the church;**
- C. Offers a “model” policy for sessions to use; and**
- D. Affirms that all persons covered by this policy are expected to comply with the applicable laws of the State of Arkansas.**

APPENDIX E: EDUCATION EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

GENERAL POLICY

The presbytery will reimburse educational expenses incurred by an employee to attend classes or other educational opportunities determined by the presbytery to be reasonably required for the employee to carry out his/her assigned functions and conduct the business of the presbytery. Employees are not required to include in income amounts reimbursed or paid on the employee's behalf that relate to expenditures made under this policy in that it represents an accountable reimbursement plan.

In order to qualify as an accountable reimbursement plan, the following rules and procedures must be followed:

All such expenses must be approved in advance as noted below:

The expenses must be business-related

Employees must adequately account to the presbytery for the expenses incurred within a reasonable period of time (defined here as 30 days) and

Employees must return any excess reimbursement or allowance within a reasonable period of time (defined here as 30 days).

For educational expenses to qualify for reimbursement under this policy, the planned expense must be approved in advance by the General Presbyter. In case of a non-standard situation, the General Presbyter will seek the advice of the Personnel Sub-Committee before giving approval.

The General Presbyter, with assistance from the Personnel Sub-Committee, is responsible for interpreting current IRS regulations as they relate to the reimbursement of educational expenses.

QUALIFYING EDUCATION

The education undertaken will be approved if it is reasonably necessary to enable the employee to keep his/her present salary, status or job, or the presbytery deems it necessary in order for the employee to maintain or improve skills needed in the employee's present position to carry out the work of the presbytery in a competent and efficient manner. Education related to work that employees may enter in the future or that is needed to meet the minimum educational requirements of an employee's present position does not qualify under this policy.

Any expenses approved for reimbursement for education that does not qualify under this policy must be reported as income to the employee on his/her W-2 tax form.

REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

General expenditures which qualify for reimbursement include the following:

The cost of tuition, books, supplies, lab fees, and similar items related to a course or courses of study;

Some transportation and travel costs; and

Expenses such as the costs of research and typing when writing a paper as part of an education program.

Qualifying expenditures do *not* include personal or capital expenses.

Example: Fred, a chaplain for a hospice program, does not like to travel to seminars or to take extra classes. He stays abreast of the newest literature in his field, however, and whenever a new book is published, he buys it for his personal library and charges the cost to his continuing education allowance. Because the books represent additions to his personal library and because they may have long-term use (therefore being classified as capital expenses), the expenditures may not be considered qualifying. If Fred's employer required the purchase and reading of a specific book as a condition for Fred's continued employment, the expenditure would be qualifying; Fred could, in advance of purchasing a book, provide his employer with a brief description of the current use of the book in his work and a time commitment for reading it and receive his employer's instruction to acquire the book. If the book were added to the library of the hospice program rather than to Fred's bookshelves, it would definitely be a qualified expenditure.

Transportation Expenses. If an employee's education qualifies, the local transportation costs of going directly from work to school may also be qualifying expenses. Transportation expenses include the actual costs of public transportation or of the employee's using his/her own car.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

If an employee travels overnight to obtain qualified education and the main purpose of the trip is to attend a work-related course or seminar, the related expenses for travel, meals, and lodging are qualifying expenses. Expenses for personal activities, such as sightseeing, visiting, or entertaining are not qualifying. If travel away from home is mainly personal, only those expenses incurred for meals and lodging during the time used to attend qualified educational activities are qualifying expenditures. Whether a trip's purpose is mainly personal or educational depends upon the facts and circumstances, and final determination will be made by the General Presbyter based on the facts of a particular situation at the time that approval is sought. An important factor is the comparison of the amount of time spent on personal activities with the amount of time spent on educational activities. If more time is spent on personal activities, the trip is considered mainly educational only if the employee can show a *substantial* non-personal reason for traveling to a particular location. Activities which are mainly "tourist" activities are considered to be personal no matter how much is learned from them. Travel that is in itself a form of education *does not* qualify even though the travel may be directly related to an employee's business duties.

Special Note: Travel expenses of an employee's spouse are qualified *only* if the spouse is also a full time regular employee of the Presbytery of Arkansas and meets all the other qualifications outlined above.

Approved on _____ by the General Presbyter

Approved on _____ by the Committee on Administration.

ADDENDA

Committee on Ministry has been requested to interpret the Continuing Education term and interprets it as follows:

We interpret the Continuing Education term "cumulative for three years" to mean that one may accumulate a maximum of 3 years worth of dollars and/or time, after which it is lost; if any dollars and/or time are carried over from one year to the next, then those dollars and/or that time counts as one of the 3 years that can be accumulated.

Approved Policy for Vacation and Continuing Education (Approved_____)

Committee on Ministry:

Vacation time, continuing education time, and continuing education allowances are considered by the Committee on Ministry to be a part of the contract between the employing organization and the employee who shall use them only for the purposes specified. As such, upon resignation, an employee shall be entitled to receive prorated vacation and continuing education time with full salary, housing, and Board of Pension payments. The prorated continuing education allowance shall be sent to the employee's next employer. If an employee has utilized more than his/her prorated vacation time, continuing education time or continuing education allowance, which would ordinarily be due upon her/his resignation, the employee should refund the amount of the overpayment to the employer or the employer may withhold any overpayment.

APPENDIX F: BUSINESS EXPENSES GUIDELINES

These guidelines are presented in the spirit of concern for the current economic condition and to foster good stewardship.

Out of Town Travel Business Expense - includes transportation (personal auto mileage or airfare), lodging, meals, refreshments, personal auto mileage to and from airport, parking at airport and car rental or taxi fare at destination.

Local Business Expense - includes personal auto mileage, business meals, refreshments, and parking.

1. **Description** - give the date, place, amount and business purpose of each expense.
2. **Receipts** - receipts are required on all expenses at all times.
3. **Meals** - incur reasonable expense for breakfast, lunch, and dinner “based on the per diem allowances set by the Presbytery of Arkansas”. ~~Exercise sound business judgment in determining what is reasonable.~~
4. **Lodging** - normally, arrangements are made at all formal meetings for hotel (and meals) and care is taken to select location which will save travel time and keep cost to a minimum. In the event that a stay in a private home is provided, the expense voucher should so indicate as a matter of recording a saving of expense.
5. **Airfare** - obtain the best coach fare without restrictions on change or cancel.
6. **Mileage** - start and end of travel odometer reading is required.
7. **Tips** - not to exceed the customary 15% where applicable.
8. **Quiet Business Meeting** - when a meeting with a client or associate is best conducted away from the office during the breakfast/lunch/dinner hour, the reasonable expense for the client and/or associate may be included on the Corporate Card holder’s charge. Keep in mind cost efficiency in planning such meetings.
9. **Refreshments** - when a quiet business meeting is conducted over coffee, tea, and/or soft drink, the expense is voucherable.
10. **Long Distance** - care should be taken to keep long distance usage to a minimum.

- 11. Car Rental** - select the most economical car rental possible. If traveling with associates, include the names of those persons to justify the size of auto required.

The members of the professional staff of Presbytery of Arkansas have been issued VISA cards as a convenient and accountable method of charging business expenses incurred for self in connection with local and out-of-town travel and other related expense. The inclusion of expense in behalf of others, such as for quiet business meals, should be well planned and justified by properly describing the occasion.

The Corporate Card shall not be used for personal expense.

APPENDIX G: DISABILITY POLICY

IN SHARING MINISTRY TO INCLUDE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Presbytery of Arkansas has adopted the following statement and definition of the term “persons with disabilities” adopted by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

DEFINITION

“Every individual is unique. Each one of us has gifts adequate to the glorification of God. Every person is equally capable/equipped to render ministry to others.

“God does not define people by conditions outside their control. Words that are used to describe persons with disabilities can help either to break attitudinal barriers or to reinforce those barriers. As Christians, we are called upon to extend and receive love and care to and from all people. This means that changing our language as well as our architecture is necessary in order to be inclusive.

“Persons with disabilities are a diverse group of individuals who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as relating, caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Further, we endorse the World Health Organization definitions: an impairment is the cause (for example, diabetic blindness); a disability is what a person cannot do (read, print, drive a car); a handicap is something for which society is responsible (lack of Braille and taped material, failure to provide adequate accessible public transportation, architectural barriers.)”

(Date of Approval to be date presbytery approves policy manual!)

POLICY

It is the policy of Presbytery of Arkansas that persons with disabilities shall enjoy all the privileges, benefits, and responsibilities of full participation in the life of the church.

In order to implement this policy, the presbytery recognizes that Presbyterian church facilities need to be physically accessible and all Presbyterians need to be more understanding and welcoming of persons with disabilities.

The presbytery, therefore, affirms as its guide the resource entitled *That All May Enter - Responding to People with Disability Concerns*, adopted by the 189th General Assembly (1977) of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and re-published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1989 (DMS 293-98-152).

In particular, the presbytery urges congregations within its bounds to “increase their efforts toward full participation of all people with disabilities in our church and in our society,” as called for in *That All May Enter*.

Step One: Eliminate Physical Barriers

Step Two: Eliminate Attitudinal Barriers

Step Three: Encourage Full Participation

Step Four: Be an Advocate

A valuable resource is *Accessibility Audit for Churches: Opening Doors for Persons with Handicapping Conditions*, published by Health and Welfare Ministries, General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church (Second Edition, 1983).

Both the *Book of Order* and Presbytery’s Standing Rules require that persons with disabilities shall be included in fair and effective representation in the decision-making of the church.

Both the *Book of Order* and Presbytery’s Standing Rules require that persons with disabilities shall be included in fair employment practices.

DESCRIPTION OF FUNCTIONAL DISABILITIES (INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING):

AMPUTATION

The surgical removal of a limb or a portion of limb. The functional level can often be restored by the substitution of a proper prosthesis.

ARTHRITIS

A disease which affects the joints and is often characterized by joint pain, swelling, weakness, stiffness, and fatigue.

CANCER

Malignant growth of cells affect part(s) of the body. Cancer is currently thought of not as one disease but rather a group of diseases having basic similarities in terms of development and effect upon the body. There are over a hundred identifiable types with each having its own life history.

CEREBRAL PALSY

Disturbance of motor control or loss of sensation in the body, usually occurring at birth, due to damage or injury of the motor control centers of the brain. The symptoms range from mild to severe, causing muscle coordination problems.

DIABETES

A persistent and inordinate increase of sugar in the blood. Mild diabetes may be controlled by diet alone. A more severe condition requires medication and a carefully regulated diet.

EPILEPSY

Neurological disorder that occurs when the brain cells discharge too much electrical energy. Most cases of epilepsy are controlled by drugs. There are three principle kinds: (1) "Petit Mal" describes a clouding of consciousness which lasts from 1 to 30 seconds, after which the person is usually alert and resumes activity; (2) "Grand Mal" is characterized by a loss of consciousness for one or several moments and muscle contractions; (3) "Psychomotor" describes an attack where the person acts automatically as though sleep walking.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Persons with a profound hearing loss of a neuro-sensory type are usually referred to as deaf if they are unable to hear or understand speech, even with a hearing aid. Individuals with a conductive hearing loss may benefit by surgery or the use of a hearing aid and are considered to be hearing-impaired. Speech impairment may be associated with a hearing loss.

PARALYSIS

Complete or partial loss of function, especially involving motion or sensation in a part of the body.

PARAPLEGIA

Paralysis of the legs and lower part of the body

POLIO (POLIOMYELITIS)

A disease of the spinal cord which may cause permanent paralysis of the muscles or part or all of a limb, several limbs, the back, or the breathing muscle called the diaphragm.

QUADRIPLEGIA

Paralysis of all four extremities.

TUBERCULOSIS

An infectious disease that affects the lungs.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

An individual may be considered blind if he/she has complete loss of sight or legally blind if the corrected vision is less than 20/200 (Sneller) in the better eye. In other words, a person is said to be blind if she/he can see no more at a distance of 20 feet than a person with normal sight can see at a distance of 200 feet.

MENTAL RETARDATION

Subnormal intellectual functioning manifested during the developmental period. It may affect motor skills, language development, ability to learn, self-management, and may range from mild to severe.

MENTALLY RESTORED

Person who has had a severe emotional condition for which special psychological and/or psychiatric care was secured and which resulted in an improved ability to function in task performance and/or interpersonal relationships.

MENTALLY ILL

Person who has a severe and persistent mental illness which results in a loss of ability to deal with major life function, or which interferes with the ability to deal rationally with daily life activities.

Sabbatical Leave Policy Presbytery of Arkansas

Sabbatical leaves are frequently granted to people working in various settings, including academia, business, and church-related institutions. Basing leaves on the Biblically-based Sabbath concept, institutions recognize that people who have worked in their positions for a prolonged length of time frequently could benefit from an extended time away from their work, time usually devoted to study, personal growth, renewal, and reflection. Most Christian denominations, and, as is certainly the trend currently, many local churches and presbyteries, are beginning to implement sabbatical leave policies for clergy, for educators, for denominational staff, and for other full-time church professionals. Accordingly, the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas, after much thought, proposes a Sabbatical Leave Policy for the Presbytery of Arkansas. This policy replaces any previous Sabbatical Policy.

The Presbytery of Arkansas recognizes that pastors, other church professionals, and congregations could greatly benefit if full-time church professionals could have the opportunity to negotiate and be granted a sabbatical leave. Some of the reasons for wishing to grant such leaves include: the challenges of longer pastorates, the intensity of church work, and the opportunity to take advantage of new knowledge and approaches to ministry that may have developed since a pastorate began. These opportunities may well require a longer period of study than the normal two weeks' study leave. Such opportunities will allow one to learn new ministry skills, to gain new information, to become familiar with new resources, and to have time for reflection, and spiritual renewal.

General Considerations

1. Sabbatical leave shall be considered in any new call.
2. The study undertaken during a sabbatical leave shall ordinarily be of a practical nature, designed to increase the skills of the church professional and to benefit his/her current call, although, theological study or spiritual renewal are to be considered legitimate goals for such a leave.
3. Written notice and a written plan shall be given to the church's Personnel Committee, to the church's Session, and to the presbytery's Committee on Ministry for approval. Ideally, this plan shall be submitted one year prior to the taking of the leave. This plan shall include the foreseen benefits to the Pastor or educator, the foreseen benefits to the church or agency, the goals and objectives of the study time, the location of the study, and the particulars about how the person's pastoral or educational duties will be covered during the time of the leave.
4. Before the church professional goes on leave, provision shall be made to cover the duties of the person on that leave.
5. Upon returning from sabbatical leave, the pastor or educator shall present to the personnel committee and to the Session, a written summary statement of the Sabbatical Leave experience, including what was learned and how what was learned will be applied.

Time considerations:

6. Sabbatical leaves shall be granted no sooner than after six years of service has been completed, or no sooner than six years after a previous sabbatical leave.

7. Sabbatical leaves shall normally be no longer than six months.
8. Ordinarily, the normal study leave time that is due in the sabbatical year, shall be a part of the sabbatical leave time, not in addition to it, although an exception may be negotiated.
9. The Pastor or educator shall normally pledge to stay in his/her parish for no less than one calendar year after a sabbatical leave. If the pastor chooses to leave the congregation within one year after the completion of a sabbatical leave, the pastor shall refund to the church the salary paid to him or her during the sabbatical leave.
10. We also recommend that any church or agency that has made a provision for a sabbatical leave, fully inform and educate their congregation or constituents about the leave, its rationale, and the foreseen benefits, beginning at least six months prior to the start of the leave time.

Financial Considerations:

11. During a sabbatical leave, all salary and benefits shall continue to be paid by the employing church or agency, except for the travel allowance.
12. While the church professional is on sabbatical leave, the employing church or agency shall provide for payment of the expenses of whomever covers the ministerial duties of the person on leave.
13. All costs to the Pastor or educator for the sabbatical leave time shall be borne by the Pastor or educator, but he/she may apply his/her study allowances to these costs. These costs shall not include the church agency's costs to cover the duties of the person on leave.
14. If a church or agency wishes to put a sabbatical leave provision in the terms of a call, the presbytery encourages them to begin a savings account that would accumulate over the six years' requirement to help defray the additional costs that having a church professional on sabbatical leave would incur.

MATERNITY-PATERNITY LEAVE **Presbytery of Arkansas**

Many churches would like to “do the Christian thing” when it comes to taking care of their pastors, but others are not sure what that is. Furthermore, if the decision is postponed until the time of pregnancy or when plans for adoption are being made, with the emotionally charged atmosphere that surrounds such a time, it is difficult to know what is best for the pastor, his or her family, and the church.

Therefore the Presbytery of Arkansas strongly recommends (but does not command) that churches of this presbytery adopt the following policy as **a minimum** for those persons that they may call:

That there be a six-week leave of absence with full pay for female pastors who give birth or adopt an infant child. An additional two weeks with half pay can be given if requested by the mother. Following that, if it be needed for the health of the mother or the child, additional time may be granted as vacation or as leave without pay. Full medical and pension payments by the church should be made during the first eight weeks of life of the child or the first six weeks after the adoption of a child.

It is also recommended that a two-week leave of absence with full pay be granted to the father of any newly born or adopted child. This leave shall be taken within the first three months of the child’s life or the time of adoption.

A written request for such a maternity or paternity leave should be made in writing to the session and the Committee on Ministry at least 30 days before the expected birth or adoption date.

In addition the Committee on Ministry recommends to the presbytery that this be the policy for those who are called or employed by the Presbytery of Arkansas.

