

Resolution

Subject: The Spectra of Pastoral Ministries and Ministry Alignment
From: Vocation & Calling Committee

WHEREAS, communities of faith and pastoral ministry take many forms and have changed throughout the history of the church: some old, some new, some changing, some emerging, some steady, some growing, some declining; and

WHEREAS, the Book of Order states, “Each of these [ministries] has its own value for the stability and extension of our church” (Ch.1:A, pg.72); and

WHEREAS, ordained pastoral leadership takes many shapes in many contexts (including agencies, emerging ministries, chaplaincies, specialized ministries, and the various types of congregations); and

WHEREAS, clergy may serve in a single context or multiple contexts simultaneously (e.g., congregation and agency); and

WHEREAS, the Southern Province seeks to support creative and generative ministry in many contexts; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Province seeks to support leaders in various ministry contexts; and

WHEREAS, pastoral leaders and God’s work in the world benefit from financial support (e.g., salary, health insurance, and retirement); and

WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for pastoral leaders in all contexts to receive collegial and spiritual support (e.g., inclusion in clergy cohorts, pastoral care by bishops); and

WHEREAS, ministries are not stagnant and often evolve from one state to another without a formal way to redefine clerical leadership (e.g., beyond the emerging state as well as beyond the ability to support a full-time pastor); and

WHEREAS, currently, ordained clergy structures do not adequately cover the full range of pastoral needs and calls (e.g., emerging ministries settings do not participate in provincial call processes, some worshiping communities no longer meet traditional standards to participate in call processes); and

WHEREAS, our ecumenical partners and the Northern Province have experience and insight about ministry alignment as described here; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Provincial Elders' Conference appoint a task force, to define by the Synod of 2026, a structure that aligns the variety of pastoral needs, services, vocations, provincial leadership support, financial protocols, and call processes with the shape and form of today's ministry contexts, and report to the 2026 Synod any changes required in the Book of Order to implement this resolution.