

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Co-Pastor Model and FPCY

What is the difference between a Co-Pastor, an Associate Pastor and a Parish Associate?

Both the Associate Pastor and Co-Pastor positions are formally installed pastoral relationships voted on by the calling congregation in conjunction with the presbytery. As installed pastors, both are eligible to accrue pension benefits from the Board of Pensions. The Associate Pastor would be subordinate to the Pastor, while a Co-Pastor would be an equal.

A Parish Associate is an informal, temporary pastoral position which is hired by the Session. This position must be renewed annually and is contingent on the current pastor's call. A parish associate is not eligible to accrue pension benefits for this type of pastoral service.

How many more hours of pastoral leadership will we be getting with the co-pastor model?

Rev. Chip Low is currently working full-time (which the presbytery defines as 50 hours/week) as Pastor of FPCY. Rev. Tami Seidel is currently working part-time, 12-15 hours/week, as Parish Associate. This is a total of 62-65 hours of pastoral service/week.

Under the proposed co-pastor model, both co-pastors would be working 37.5 hours/week for a total of 75 hours/week, which is an increase of 10-13 hours/week.

It is important to note that currently Chip and Tami are both exceeding their allotted number of hours and have reached the limit of what can be accomplished under the current arrangement. Given its vibrant ministry and mission, FPCY is more than a one-pastor church. The proposed co-pastor model would allow FPCY to expand its pastoral leadership gradually so that it can continue to grow and thrive.

What are some of the core initiatives this co-pastoral model will focus on and/or address?

The co-pastor model is first and foremost about providing more pastoral leadership and presence to the work that the church is doing already in partnership with many involved church members and to strengthen the initiatives already begun (i.e., adult education, youth ministry, family ministry). It has become clear that pastoral presence is desired by the commissions and committees, but it is increasingly difficult to provide equal time and attention to all commissions as our ministry grows.

How does the proposed co-pastor model impact the plan to hire a youth coordinator?

The proposed co-pastor model would allow some increased investment by one of the co-pastors in the current redevelopment of FPCY's youth ministry. However, the youth ministry still needs a youth coordinator who can fully focus on the management of the program.

How will the proposed co-pastor model impact our current budget?

Based on projections, an 8% increase in pledged giving over the 2014 pledged amount would cover the terms of call for the co-pastor model. This is a portion of the overall projected giving increase needed to fund the 2015 budget.

What is the target start date for the co-pastor model and how would it be evaluated?

If approved by the congregation and the presbytery, the co-pastor model would begin on January 1, 2015. As the congregation lives into this new model of leadership, Session would review and evaluate it regularly, working closely with the co-pastors to delegate responsibilities and seeking feedback from the congregation.

What are we voting on at the October 19 Congregational Meeting?

We will be voting on whether or not to call Chip and Tami as Co-Pastors of FPCY with the proposed terms of call. As with any vote concerning a pastoral call, the vote will be by paper ballot. *Only church members are allowed to cast a ballot, and church members must be present to vote.*

The recommendation to vote on will read as follows: The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown recommends that, if the way be clear, the call between Rev. Charles Lynn Low, Jr. and the church be dissolved effective December 31, 2014; and that Rev. Tamara Jane Seidel be called as 3/4 time co-pastor effective January 1, 2015; and that the Rev. Charles Lynn Low, Jr. be called as 3/4 time co-pastor effective January 1, 2015; and that the attached terms of call be approved.*

*Terms of call will be made available at the congregational meeting and have been made available by email and at the congregational conversations.