

As the Presbytery of the James endeavors to live into the financial realities of this time and place, the Personnel Committee recommends the attached job description for the combined position of Transitional General Presbyter/Stated Clerk (TGP/SC).

Background:

- At the September 26, 2024 called meeting, the Presbytery of the James approved a motion of the Strategic Plan Review Task Force that the POJ replace the 3 presbyters and a part-time stated clerk staffing model with a 2-position model: one full-time General Presbyter and one full-time Stated Clerk.
- At their September 2025 meeting, Mission Council received the draft budget for 2026 from the Budget Sub-committee. In light of the recommendations outlined in the recommended 2026 budget, Mission Council directed the Personnel Committee to prepare a position description for a combined Transitional General Presbyter/Stated Clerk.

Members of the Personnel Committee met with POJ leadership and staff, as well as reaching out to GP/SCs from other presbyteries in our work to discern the priorities and responsibilities highlighted in the job description we developed.

The emphasis of the work of the Transitional GP/SC is to be the “face of the POJ” and the primary connectional leader for the congregations and ministries of the POJ. The proposed work week for this position is Sunday-Thursday, stressing the importance of this person’s presence throughout the POJ. The expectation is that the TGP/SC will be out and about in the POJ, but obviously will NOT be able to annually visit every congregation/ministry due to the size of the Presbytery of the James.

The proposed budget for 2026 does not include funding for professional staffing for POJ commissions, committees, and teams. The Transitional GP/SC will work in close partnership with the moderators and chairs of COM, CPM, CON, COR, Mission Council, and other groups as necessary, but it is imperative that the TGP/SC not be expected to staff all of these entities or be present at every meeting. Mission Council and Personnel will work closely with the TGP/SC to ensure they are keeping healthy work life/personal life boundaries as well as discerning together where the priorities of focus and energy need to be throughout the POJ.

The Transitional GP/SC is a 2-year position supporting the good work of this year’s Budget Sub-committee. The POJ is committing to a balanced budget which will mean many changes for our leadership and our ministries. In two years, we may be in a totally different place. The Personnel Committee acknowledges that hope of financial improvement by naming this a “transitional” position. We look forward to your questions, ideas, and concerns in the coming listening sessions on Oct. 29 and Nov. 3.

Personnel Committee members: TE Tom Coye, RE Wendel Gouldman, RE Lamar Lockhart, TE Noah Morgan, RE Jen Rowe

Position Description

Transitional General Presbyter/Stated Clerk (GP/SC)

Purpose

To provide visionary leadership and spiritual guidance for the Presbytery of the James (POJ) while also serving as ecclesiastical administrator, ensuring that all constitutional, procedural, and ministerial functions are conducted effectively and support the mission of the POJ and the PCUSA.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

As General Presbyter(GP): the GP is the primary connectional leader for the congregations and ministries of the POJ, as well as serving as the head of staff.

- Visit, resource, and provide guidance to congregations, ministries, and their leadership.
- Provide pastoral supervision, support, coaching, and care to congregations, teaching elders, and sessions, especially during times of transition, conflict, or strategic discernment.
- Vision-cast with POJ leadership to develop long-term strategies and goals aligning with the presbytery's mission and vision statements.
- Support the work of chairs and moderators of POJ commissions/committees/teams.
- Oversee the daily administration of the POJ: staff supervision, budgeting, technology, and logistics.
- Oversee communications: newsletters, website, social media, email, reports, etc., fostering transparency, connection, and coordination across congregations and ministries.
- Monitor and direct continuous improvement in presbytery systems (e.g. record systems, financial systems, technology platforms).

As Stated Clerk(SC): the SC is the chief ecclesiastical officer of the POJ, responsible for constitutional and procedural matters as described in the *Book of Order*.

- Ensure accurate recordkeeping of presbytery minutes, membership rolls, correspondence, and official documents.
- Collaborate with Mission Council to set the agenda for presbytery meetings.
- Serve in presbytery meetings, ensuring rules of order and POJ standing rules are followed.
- Receive overtures, deliver them to appropriate committees/teams, record actions and track their progress.
- Handle commissioning and dismissal of congregations, the receipt or dismissal of teaching elders, and other constitutional actions as required by the *Book of Order*.

- Serve as custodian for historical and archival materials, ensuring legal preservation and proper transfer of records.
- Work with Trustees/legal counsel concerning property, incorporation, and legal compliance as required.
- Recruit, train, and orient members of investigative committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, providing guidance on polity and procedure.
- Serve as a resource for POJ commissions and committees, providing guidance on polity and procedure.
- Interpret the Constitution (*Book of Order/Book of Confessions*) in consultation with commissions and committees, providing guidance where needed.

Administrative, Financial, and Operational duties:

- Oversee the annual budget, financial reporting, and audits under direction from the Budget Committee.
- Act as treasurer of the POJ, administering the budget and monitoring all receipts and disbursements, and communicating regularly with the accounting firm retained by the POJ.
- Ensure internal controls, compliance with fiduciary responsibilities, and oversight of staff/contractors.
- Negotiate and manage contracts (e.g. for services, insurance, office space, technology).
- Supervise professional and support staff, collaborating with the Personnel Committee of the Mission Council in hiring, evaluation, oversight, and development.
- Oversee logistics of presbytery meetings (in-person/hybrid/virtual) in coordination with Mission Council and support staff, including site arrangements, technology, registration.
- Align administrative systems (database, membership tracking, communication tools) for efficiency and integration.

Accountability, Terms, and Relationship

The Transitional GP/SC is elected by the Presbytery of the James for a term of two years, with the possibility of renewal or being elected into a “permanent” position. The GP/SC is accountable to the POJ through the Mission Council and the Personnel Committee. This is a full-time, salaried position.

The Transitional GP/SC is the “face of the POJ” and the primary connectional leader for the congregations and ministries of the POJ. Therefore, the expectation of this position is a Sunday-Thursday work week, with regular travel throughout the POJ, engaging congregations and ministries in their contexts by being present with them. Evening and weekend hours are required, with the full understanding that due to the size of the POJ, not every congregation or ministry will be visited during the Transitional GP/SC’s 2-year term. **In the past, the GP has been thought of as “the pastor to the pastors” – in this

transitional time, the hope for the GP/SC is to spend more time connecting and resourcing the congregations of the POJ.**

The Transitional GP/SC will work in close partnership with the chairs and moderators of constitutional commissions/committees/teams of the POJ (COM, CPM, CON, COR, Mission Council), in an ex officio capacity, to provide guidance and training. The Transitional GP/SC will focus on encouraging and empowering teaching and ruling elders in taking greater ownership in these roles. Under the proposed budget, there are no funds for professional staffing devoted to the commissions and committees. **It is imperative that the Transitional GP/SC not be expected to staff all of these entities and be present at every meeting.**

If and when judicial and disciplinary matters arise, funds will be made available for support staff to assist the Transitional GP/SC.

Hybrid or remote work may be possible; equipment and support will be provided.

Continuing education opportunities, as well as attendance at retreats and denominational gatherings will be supported and funded.

Annual performance reviews based on POJ mission and vision statements, Transitional GP/SC position description, and feedback from POJ teaching and ruling elder members will be conducted by the Personnel Committee. Written evaluations will be shared with the Transitional GP/SC and the Mission Council.

Qualifications

- Visionary leader, engaging and thoughtful in manner, clear and articulate in expression, faithful to the gospel witness of Jesus Christ, and filled with a great hope and love for the Church.
- Attributes: Christian discipleship, integrity, humility, pastoral sensitivity, emotional maturity, adaptability, commitment to diversity.
- Education: Master's degree at a minimum; strong knowledge of Presbyterian polity and Reformed tradition.
- Experience: Significant leadership/administrative background (minimum 5 years preferred); recordkeeping; governance; pastoral care/conflict mediation.
- Skills: Written/oral communication, organizational ability, interpersonal skills, strategic thinking, technological competence.