

Laboring Inside/Outside the Bounds

[Another “learning moment” and the new Form of Government]

The old Form of Government, G-11.0401a, read: “...no presbytery shall permit a minister to engage in work which is within the geographic bounds of another presbytery and which is properly within the responsibility of another presbytery without the consent of the other presbytery.” By custom, this included any form of “temporary” pastoral service, including performing weddings in another presbytery.

The new Form of Government anticipated that “non geographic” presbyteries would make this wording unenforceable. It is thus eliminated in the new Form of Government.

On another level, “professional courtesy” would suggest that if you are going to perform a “ministerial function” in a church in another presbytery, you would still need to get permission to do so; and if you were to engage in some form of significant ministry within the bounds of another presbytery (e.g. serving a church for a month or more, engaging in ongoing consultations, ministry that involved regular administration of sacraments), it would be appropriate to notify the other presbytery of your presence and the work in which you are engaged.