

NAPARC AGREEMENT ON TRANSFER OF MEMBERS AND CONGREGATIONS

(Adopted at the 13th [1987] Meeting of the Council)

Recognizing that the churches of NAPARC have on occasion unintentionally received members or ordained officers who were under various states of discipline in another NAPARC church, thus creating tension between the churches, and at the same time recognizing the need for mutual freedom and openness on the part of the churches, we agree to respect the procedures of discipline and pastoral concern of the other denominations as follows:

1. Regular Transfer of membership.

That in the regular transfer of membership between NAPARC churches, the session/consistory or presbytery/classis not receive a member until appropriate document of transfer is in the hands of the receiving church.

2. Transfer with Irregularities.

- a. That upon request for a transfer of membership by a person under discipline, the sending session/consistory or presbytery/classis inform the receiving body of the nature and extend of the disciplinary procedure before implementing the requested transfer, thus enabling informal consultation between the pastors and elders of both churches.
- b. That such a person not be received officially until the judicatory/assembly of the receiving church has taken into serious account the discipline of and the information supplied by the sending church.
- c. That such a person not be received officially until the judicatory/assembly of the receiving church is satisfied that proper restitution has been made and/or reconciliation has been seriously attempted.
- d. That a "fugitive from discipline" who is no longer a member of a church or who is no longer on the roll of a presbytery shall not be received until the former judiciary/assembly has been contacted to determine if proper restitution has been made and/or reconciliation has been attempted.

3. Recourse and Appeal.

Where communication or action regarding the sending/receiving of a member or ordained officer/office bearer does not satisfy either the dismissing or receiving judiciary/assembly, communication may be submitted to the interchurch relation committees of the denominations involved with a view to mediation of the problem. If this proves unsatisfactory, the session/consistory or presbytery/classis may register its concern to the appropriate judicatory/assembly of the other denomination.

4. Congregational Transfer.

That a congregation seeking to leave a NAPARC church to become affiliated with another NAPARC denomination be received only after it has complied with the requirements of the form of government of the church from which it is separating, and the receiving church shall be responsible to see that this is done.