

Proposal for New Presbytery Staff Position

Title: Peacemaking and Justice Minister

Status: Ordainable, Designated Pastor – three year contract, subject to renewal

Reporting to: Executive Presbyter

Classification: Exempt, half-time, 25hours/week

Terms of Call: \$40,000 effective salary¹, benefits fully funded by BOP², \$1500 professional expenses (\$1000 funded by Westview Presbyterian Church), \$1000 continuing education, \$600 cell phone reimbursement; 2026 budget impact (annualized): \$0

Effective: October 1, 2026

This proposed Presbytery staff position promotes our current Peacemaking and Justice Advocate, Ms. Veronica Ota, to this ordainable position. Veronica is presently certified ready to receive a call by the Presbytery of San Gabriel. She is completing contract work with the First Presbyterian Church in Altadena as their worship director (remote work) in July 2026.

This position will be done in conjunction with Westview Presbyterian Church in Watsonville, where Veronica has already started to lead the development of Good Growth Garden, an emerging worshipping community garden with HOPE Village and Westview church volunteers. This position would have Veronica serve 10 hours per week as the organizing pastor/evangelist for the Good Growth Garden, and 15 hours per week resourcing the Presbytery with peacemaking and justice initiatives, preaching in churches, meeting with community groups and leaders. She would join Presbytery staff in supporting our churches, affiliated nonprofit entities, and teaching/ruling elders in our collective call to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8).

¹ This represents a little more than half of the minimum effective salary for Monterey County, where Veronica Ota resides.

² <https://www.pensions.org/what-we-offer/benefits-packages/Benefits-grants-for-organizing-pastors-and-evangelists>

Actions Required:

Personnel Committee	1. Authorize creation of Staff Position	Approved	June 11, 2026
Committee on Ministry	2. Authorize staff position as ordainable position 3. Validate the position and the Good Growth Garden new worshipping community as validated ministries 4. Examine Veronica Ota and recommend to Presbytery for ordination to and installation 5. Recommend to Coordinating Council to call a special meeting of the Presbytery in August to approve Veronica Ota for ordination and installation. 6. Approve the Terms of Call for Veronica Ota to serve as Peacemaking and Justice Minister for the Presbytery 7. If the way be clear with Presbytery's action, appoint an administration commission to install Veronica Ota	Approved	July 13, 2026
Financial Affairs Committee	8. Authorize \$20,000 (annualized) in the 2026 budget for the position to begin September 1, 2026 and for the next three years, and recommend to Presbytery. The position will be identified in the budget as 40% towards Good Growth Garden and 60% towards Peacemaking and Justice Minister, with the salary costs of \$40,000 divided accordingly.	Approved	June 17, 2026
Coordinating Council	9. Receive recommendations from Committee on Ministry (items 2-6 above) and Financial Affairs Committee (item 8 above) 10. Call special meeting of Presbytery to enact the above	Approved	July 20, 2026
Presbytery	11. Approve Veronica Ota for ordination* to the MWS and her installation as Peacemaking and Justice Minister for the Presbytery of San Jose (in conjunction with Good Growth Garden new worshipping community) and approve Terms of Call		August 7, 2026 7:00pm - Zoom

*Because Veronica Ota has indicated that she desires to be ordained by her presbytery of care, Presbytery of San Gabriel, at her home congregation (First Presbyterian Church, Altadena), Presbytery staff will propose an amendment at the August 7, 2026 special Presbytery meeting that transfers her membership to the Presbytery of San José following her ordination by the

*Submitted to Presbytery Personnel Committee, Committee on Ministry, Financial Affairs Committee, Coordinating Council
by EP Neal D. Presa*

Presbytery of San Gabriel. Through discussions of our Presbytery staff with the executive presbyter and stated clerk of the Presbytery of San Gabriel, there will be mutual representation of each presbytery on one another's administration commissions to ordain and install Veronica Ota, and therefore, participating representatives of both presbyteries at the ordination service and installation service.