

The Pastor Search Process

*Everything you wanted to know
about calling a new pastor. . .
. . .but were afraid to ask.*

The Pastor Search Process

*“Isn’t this just
church language
for a personnel search?”*

The Pastor Search Process

No.

*Calling a Pastor involves a
spiritual discernment process.*

The Pastor Search Process

*There is no need for the
congregation to panic.*

*This can be the most exciting
spiritual journey a church can
embark upon.*

The Pastor Search Process

Acronyms

- *PNC ~ Pastor Nominating Comm.*
- *PRM ~ Pastoral Relationships Ministry*
- *MIF ~ Ministry Information Form*
- *PIF ~ Personal Information Form*

How it Begins

- FIRST,
When the session of a congregation learns of an upcoming vacancy in a pastoral position, that news must be communicated to the Executive Presbyter or the moderator of the PRM.

How it Begins

- NEXT

The Presbytery, through the PRM, will appoint a moderator of session and will guide the congregation in filling the vacancy.

How it Begins

- THEN

Member(s) of the PRM are appointed to serve as Liaison(s) to work with the Session,
and the congregation,
but especially the PNC.

How it Begins

- The Liaisons will conduct an exit interview with the departing pastor

How it Begins

- A PRM Liaison,
or a representative of the PRM,
should attend the last worship
service of the outgoing pastor
and declare the pastoral
relationship dissolved.

The liturgy can be found in the Book of Occasional Services

How it Begins

- The PRM liaison, working with session will
 - Identify the presbytery appointed moderator
 - Explain the process and the role of the session, PNC, and PRM
 - Explain nomination and election of PNC

How it Begins

- Discuss the hiring of an interim minister for the transitional period
- The need to pay vacancy dues
- The potential need to do a mission study
- Discuss setting a budget for PNC
- Discuss compensation and range of terms of call for new pastoral leadership

How it Begins

Other things for the session
to consider

- Repair/Remodel the Manse
- Repair/Remodel the Office
- Changes in Church Staff

How it Begins

When the PRM grants
permission

- A congregational meeting is called
 - A PNC is elected
 - AND THE FUN BEGINS

Pastor Nominating Committee

- Elects a Chairperson and a Clerk
- Determines how often they will meet
- Decides how their decisions will be made
 - By a simple Majority
 - Or a Unanimous vote

Pastor Nominating Committee

- Begins work on the

***MINISTRY
INFORMATION FORM***

MIF

Writing the MIF

- Be frank and open
- Consider how your MIF will be read by potential candidates
- This is an opportunity to brag on the church
- MIF must be approved by the PRM
- MIF must be approved by the session

Posting the MIF Online

- Once approved, the PRM will provide a login and password for online access for the:
 - PNC Chairperson
 - Clerk of Session
- Once the MIF is on-line, the Executive Presbyter will schedule an initial match.

Receiving Personal Information Forms

Personal Information Forms
may be received

- Through the computerized matching process from Church Leadership Connection (CLC)
- Potential candidates may self-refer

Receiving Personal Information Forms

And Remember,
CONFIDENTIALITY!!

Receiving Personal Information Forms

- After the MIF is online and the initial match is made PIFs will start coming in
- Every member of the PNC should read each PIF carefully
- A process of prioritization or a ranking system needs to be determined in order to narrow the list
- Decide how you will respond to applicants

Contacting the Candidate

- The PNC may call the prospective candidate and ask
 - ASK if they are still seeking a call
 - Would they be interested in receiving further information and a copy of your MIF
 - Would they send you a tape or video of a sermon
- The members of the PNC should then begin calling ALL references listed on the PIF under review

Contacting References

- Call at a convenient time
- Have your questions prepared
- Introduce yourself and explain what the call is about
- Ask if this is a good time to talk. If not then when would be a good time?
- Take notes
- Thank them for taking the time to talk

Contacting References

You may not ask the reference to suggest names of any Secondary References without the candidate's permission!

Under no circumstances are you to contact members of a pastor's present congregation without her/his permission to do so!

Contacting the Candidate

After **CHECKING REFERENCES** the PNC may continue to communicate with the candidate in a variety of ways:

- Telephone conversations
- Conference Calls/Skype/FaceTime
- Letters or Email

Contacting the Candidate

Conversations will continue with potential candidates, as the list of those you are interested in is narrowed down.

It is advised to narrow your list down to
3 or 4 people at the

TOP OF THE LIST

and seek to discern how God is moving
you toward a particular candidate.

Contacting the Candidate

*Then contact the Presbytery office with
thecandidates name's and home
presbytery and...*

if you decide to invite the candidate(s) to your
community for a face-to-face visit

***contact the Executive Presbyter or
the PRM liaison with date and
time of visit.***

Remember . . .

***“ . . . All things should
be done decently
and in order.”***

1 Corinthians 14:40

Reference Checks at the Presbytery Level

Once the field of names has been narrowed the Executive Presbyter will:

- Contact the COM moderator of the candidate's presbytery for reference

AND:

- Contact the General Presbyter or Presbytery Exec of the candidate's presbytery for a reference

Reference Checks at the Presbytery Level

If the person being considered
is a candidate for ordination
under the care of a

Preparation for Ministry Committee

of another presbytery,
the Executive Presbyter will consult
with that committee

Face-to-Face Visit

When a candidate comes to visit with the church's PNC, **two things** will be scheduled:

Face-to-Face Visit

First, the PNC will meet with the candidate and

- Show them the church
- Show them around town/community schools, homes, places of interest
- Have an in-depth conversation about the church and the terms of call (spouse may be invited)

Face-to-Face Visit

SECOND, while the candidate is in town a small group of PRM members will meet with and examine the candidate in the areas of:

- Their “Fit” with the congregation
- Their sense of Call
- Their style of worship and leadership

Face-to-Face Visit

At this meeting the candidate may also be examined for membership in the presbytery and may be asked questions in the area of their faith journey, and also in the areas of:

- Theology
- Worship & Sacraments
- Presbyterian Polity

Face-to-Face Visit

If the PNC would like to hear the pastoral candidate preach, they may ask for assistance from the PRM...

... and the PRM liaison can arrange for the candidate to preach at a neutral pulpit.

Decision Time

IF the PRM small group sustains the examinations for “Fit” and membership and

IF the PNC wishes to extend a call to the candidate, and

IF the candidate agrees to accept the call . . .

Decision Time

- The PNC will request the Session to call a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of electing a Minister of Word and Sacrament
- Session will need to follow the church's requirements for calling this special meeting
- Confidentiality is still necessary at this stage. Most pastors do not announce their resignation until they have an affirmative vote from the new congregation.

Decision Time

Once the Congregation has voted and the call has been accepted...

...plans for an Installation Service are made

Installation Service

- The PNC needs to communicate with the PRM through the liaison the date and time of the installation service

AND

- A list of names of participants for the commission to install the new pastor.

Guidelines are available from the PRM

**And now enjoy the
ministry together.**







