

PNC/Session Handbook

**A handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees
and Sessions of Churches Seeking Pastors**

**To be used in conjunction with
On Calling a Pastor,
a publication of the Presbyterian Church (USA).**

October 2017

National Capital Presbytery
Committee on Ministry
Congregational Transitions Commission

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800-773-7752

2. Acronyms

- CAT Scan** **Congregational Assessment Tool.** An online inventory that measures congregational health and vitality. Results are compiled into a Vital Signs Report and interpreted for the Session and PNC.
- COM** **Committee on Ministry.** A committee of ruling and teaching elders elected by Presbytery that is responsible for the concerns of teaching elders and congregations of the Presbytery.
- CLC** **Church Leadership Connection.** The Internet-based matching and referral system of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for pastors seeking positions and congregations seeking pastors. A system of login IDs and passwords helps guarantee security and confidentiality within CLC.
- CPM** **Committee on Preparation for Ministry.** The Presbytery committee with oversight for candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- CTC** **Congregational Transitions Commission.** Part of the COM, the Congregational Transitions Commission oversees matters related to changes in pastoral leadership in congregations and advises congregations seeking pastors.
- DPNC** **Designated Pastor Nominating Committee.** A committee elected by a congregation to carry out the search for a Designated Pastor. Applicants for the position are pre-screened by a CTC-selected committee. Designated Pastors serve for 2-4 years, at which time they may be considered to be installed as Pastor for an indefinite period.
- EEO/AA** **Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy.** A plan designed by Presbytery to assist PNCs in giving serious consideration to racial/ethnic persons, persons with disabilities, and women.
- MIF** **Ministry Information Form.** The form that contains information about the mission and ministry of a particular congregation, together with descriptions of leadership competencies, experience, and gifts needed to meet the expectations held for the pastor-elect.
- NCP** **National Capital Presbytery.** The mid-council of the PC(USA) that serves the PC(USA) churches of the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Also refers to the meetings of teaching and ruling elders who conduct the business and shape the mission of NCP, and to the staff and offices that support the ministries of NPC.
- PIF** **Personal Information Form.** The form containing data on a particular pastor (or candidate for ministry) who is seeking a new call.

PNC/APNC **Pastor Nominating Committee or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee.** A committee of church members elected by the congregation to search for a pastor to fill a vacant position.

PC(USA) **Presbyterian Church (USA).** The Protestant denomination of which National Capital Presbytery is a part. Publishes *On Calling a Pastor*, a manual to be used in conjunction with this handbook and supports Church Leadership Connection (CLC).

3. Litany for a Pastoral Search

Most gracious and loving God,

Having accepted the invitation to work together to seek out and prayerfully discern the person who, even now, is being called to serve, lead, and journey with this congregation, we ask you to come to our assistance.

Hear our prayer, O Holy One.

As the psalmist has written, "... you have searched us out and known us; you discern our thoughts from afar; you follow our journeys and are acquainted with all our ways ..."

Be with us now, O Holy One.

As we continue in this search process, be present among us, and guide each step.

Guide us in all our doings, O Holy One.

Build unity among us, guard us from distractions, and help us to welcome different viewpoints and perspectives as opportunities to hear, understand, and grow.

Teach us to listen, O Holy One.

Inspire not only our minds but also our hearts, allowing one to form the other, within each individual, and among all participants in this work.

Open our hearts and minds to your presence, O Holy One.

Quicken the heart of the person begin called to serve as our next pastor. Remove any obstacles that might stand in the way of this call.

Reveal the path and lead the way, O Holy One.

We offer ourselves as fertile ground through which your work may be done. And when our tasks are complete and the search is done, grant us a quiet mind and confident heart that, guided by your wisdom, we have accomplished what you have asked us to do. And then let us rest, be still, and know that you are God.

Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Adapted from a prayer found on the website of St. John's Church, Boulder, CO.

4. Who Does What: Responsibilities During a Pastoral Vacancy

1. The Session

- may conduct a mission study and/or the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) Scan (See [Best Practices for Using the CAT Scan during Congregational Transition](#))
- consults with Presbytery in beginning the pastoral search
- makes written request to the CTC to elect a PNC
- affirms its support of the EEO/AA policies of the PC(USA) and Presbytery
- provides a process for the congregation to elect a representative Pastor Nominating Committee (See [Appendix B, Constituting a Pastor Nominating Committee](#))
- assists the PNC in drafting a position description and approves the compensation package within which the PNC can negotiate, guided by [Presbytery compensation guidelines](#)
- provides a budget for PNC expenses (See [Appendix C, Budget Items for a PNC Search](#))
- reviews and approves the completed [Ministry Information Form](#)
- supports the PNC with prayer and respects the confidentiality of the search process
- calls the congregational meeting to hear the PNC's report and elect the new pastor

2. The Interim Pastor (if one is employed)

- carries on the ministry of the church and prepares it to receive a new called pastor
- leads or assists with a mission study or congregational self-study
- encourages the Session to administer the CAT Scan
- supports and prays for the PNC
- may work with the Liaison in the orientation and team building of the PNC, by invitation
- cannot ordinarily be called as the installed pastor (See [Policy on Changes in Pastoral Role Within a Congregation](#))

3. The Senior Pastor (in the case of an Associate Pastor search)

- participates in the search process to the extent that he/she determines is appropriate
- honors the independence of the PNC
- is kept abreast of the progress of the PNC by PNC Chair
- interviews the final candidates

4. The Pastor Nominating Committee

- prepares the Ministry Information Form
- reads and evaluates Personal Information Forms from potential candidates
- interviews and conducts reference checks on candidates of interest

- listens to the candidates preach
- keeps the congregation and staff informed on the status of the search
- selects a candidate to place in nomination before the congregation
- provides support to new pastor during the transition period

5. **The Congregation**

- elects the PNC
- prays for the PNC and respects the confidentiality of its work
- votes on the call of the pastor and the terms of call (in a single vote)

6. **Presbytery staff**

- in the case of a Pastor vacancy, appoints a moderator of Session
- provides names of potential pulpit supplies and/or Interim Pastors
- conducts Presbytery-to-Presbytery reference checks on candidates before they are invited to face-to-face interviews
- orders and reviews criminal background checks on final candidates
- approves installation plans
- provides staff support for the CTC and COM
- maintains the [NCP website](#) where [COM documents](#) and pastoral vacancy [announcements](#) are posted
- serves as liaison to the [PC\(USA\) Church Leadership Connection](#) and generates CLC login credentials for PNCs and Clerks of Session
- schedules and coordinates the [Examination Process](#) of the final candidate
- reviews terms of call to assess compliance with Presbytery compensation policy
- serves as liaison to [PC\(USA\) Board of Pensions](#) on matters of compensation and benefits

7. **Congregational Transitions Commission/Committee on Ministry**

- grants permission for a congregation to elect a PNC
- appoints a Liaison to work closely with church through the transition period
- meets with Session when a vacancy is announced
- advises on processes and policies
- develops guidance documents and policies related to the search process
- along with the Session, approves the Ministry Information Form and vacancy notices that are posted on the Presbytery website
- conducts theological examinations of finalists (COM's Examination Team)
- grants permission for Session to call a congregational meeting to elect a new pastor
- approves the call on behalf of the Presbytery

8. Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA)

- maintains Church Leadership Connection, a computer system through which PNCs submit [Ministry Information Forms \(MIF\)](#) and candidates submit [Professional Information Forms \(PIF\)](#) for the purposes of advertising vacancies and matching churches to potential candidates
- publishes [On Calling a Pastor](#), MIF and PIF forms and instructions, and other guidance

5. How to Call a Pastor

When a Pastor or Associate Pastor leaves a church, COM advises the Session on securing leadership for the interim period. Refer to the [Intentional Interim Ministry Manual](#) and the procedure [Selecting an Interim Pastor/Interim Associate Pastor](#) for guidance on that process.

The following pages list major steps to be taken when the Session has determined that it is time to begin the search for a called/installed pastor to fill the vacancy created when the previous pastor left, or when COM approves a new called/installed position.

A more detailed process is found in the procedure for [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#). Refer to that document for specific actions and processes that are to be taken in the call process by all parties involved.

How to Call a Pastor/Associate Pastor: An Outline

ADMIN Administrator for COM

CLC Church Leadership Connection

COM Committee on Ministry

CTC Congregational Transitions Commission

EEO/AA Equal Employment Opportunity –
Affirmative Action

MIF Ministry Information Form

NCP National Capital Presbytery

PIF Personal Information Form

PNC Pastor Nominating Committee

1. Pastor or Associate Pastor leaves, or CTC approves a new position, creating a vacancy.
 - a. CTC appoints a Liaison to serve the congregation throughout the transition period.
 - b. CTC representative and/or Liaison meet with Session to explain the goals of the interim period, arranging for interim leadership, and the former pastor policy.
 - c. The Session selects interim leadership. The Session and Interim Pastor together determine when it is appropriate to elect a PNC.

2. The PNC is elected.
 - a. Session makes a written request to CTC to call a congregational meeting to elect a PNC.
 - b. CTC grants permission to elect PNC.
 - c. A slate of PNC candidates, broadly representative of congregation, is developed, usually by the church's Officer Nominating Committee. Session develops a budget for the search process and a compensation package for the new pastor.
 - d. Liaison attends the Congregational Meeting to explain search process and the EEO/AA policy to the congregation. *(The Moderator signs EEO/AA Form 1 to verify the presentation of the policy.)*

3. The PNC begins its work.
 - a. Liaison convenes the first several meetings of the PNC, orienting members to the search process, resources, and expectations, and providing team building opportunities, often in conjunction with the Interim Pastor.
 - b. Liaison presents the EEO/AA policy and secures the PNC's endorsement of the policy. (*The PNC Chair attests to the vote on EEO/AA Form 1.*)
 - c. Liaison works with CTC Coordinator to schedule the Theology of Call presentation. Session members and Board of Deacons may be invited to attend.
 - d. PNC elects leadership and organizes itself for the tasks at hand.
 - e. PNC drafts the MIF, incorporating Session input on the church's mission, the position description, and the parameters for compensation negotiations.
4. The PNC completes the MIF.
 - a. Session and COM Liaison approve the MIF.
 - b. Session's approval of the MIF will signify its support of the EEO/AA policies of the PC(USA) and NCP. (*The Clerk signs EEO/AA Form 1 to attest to Session support.*)
 - c. PNC sends the approved MIF signed by the Clerk, Liaison, and PNC Chair (via mail or email), to the ADMIN, along with completed EEO/AA Form 1.
 - d. ADMIN generates log-in credentials for Church Leadership Connection for the PNC Chair and the Clerk of Session.
 - e. PNC submits MIF electronically on Church Leadership Connection; Clerk and CTC representative attest to MIF approval electronically on CLC.
 - f. Church Leadership Connection adds MIF to database and performs initial match with PIFs.
 - g. Presbytery staff adds position notice (with link to MIF) to its website.
5. The PNC identifies and interviews promising candidates.
 - a. PNC receives and evaluates PIFs received through CLC computer matching, self-referral, advertisements in church publications and at seminaries, networking with other presbytery executives, and word-of mouth.
 - b. PNC reviews recorded sermons; conducts preliminary telephone interviews or arranges anonymous visits to hear candidates; and conducts reference checks.
 - c. PNC requests General Presbyter reference checks on top finalists using EEO/AA Form 2 and sends the request to the ADMIN, along a copy of the candidate's PIF.
 - d. PNC receives confirmation that the General Presbyter's reference checks are satisfactory; only then does the PNC proceed to face-to-face interviews and narrows to final candidates.

- e. PNC interviews final candidates in person, hears them preach at neutral pulpits. Pastor, as Head of Staff, participates in interview if position to be filled is for Associate Pastor. Candidates for Pastor, Head of Staff, may also meet with the Associate Pastor.
 - f. **NOTE:** It is very important that the PNC resolves all “fit” issues with the candidate(s), including compatibility with respect to leadership competencies, theological perspective, communication style, terms of call, and requirements of the job description.
6. The PNC selects a final candidate.
- a. PNC negotiates terms of call with the finalist, submits them on Terms of Call Form A to the ADMIN, and requests that the ADMIN schedule the COM Examination Interview. (The exam requirement applies only to candidates who are not currently members of NPC, or who are members of NPC whose last exam was conducted 10 or more years ago.)
 - b. The ADMIN schedules the interview and provides all forms and instructions to the candidate and examination team.
 - c. The General Presbyter or Stated Clerk orders and reviews a criminal background check on the candidate.
7. If required, an Examination is held.
- a. An Examination Team of COM conducts the interview with the candidate.
 - b. If the examination is successful, the CTC votes to affirm the results, approve the terms of call, grant permission for the Session to call a congregational meeting, and to recommend that the pastor be admitted to membership in NCP, pending the outcome of the congregational meeting.
8. The call is approved by the congregation.
- a. The Session calls the congregational meeting to elect the pastor, giving advance notice as required by its by-laws.
 - b. The candidate may meet with church officers/members prior to congregational meeting.
 - c. The candidate usually preaches during the worship prior to the congregational meeting.
 - d. The PNC presents candidate to congregation, who vote by secret ballot on the candidate and terms of call in a single vote.

NOTE: Per Presbytery policy: “Whenever a congregational vote to call a pastor results in a substantial minority in opposition (15%), the moderator shall forward the vote to the COM to review the results of the election with the candidate and the PNC and the congregation, and offer guidance to the candidate as he/she discerns the will of God. If this occurs, the moderator should announce to the congregation that the large minority vote (over 15%) requires the vote to be forwarded to COM for further review and to give the candidate guidance and time to discern the will of God. COM will approve or not approve the call. This action was taken by COM on June 5, 2003 on behalf of Presbytery and reported to Presbytery on June 24, 2003.”

- e. The candidate signs the formal call forms. The Moderator and Clerk attest to the congregation's actions. The Clerk sends the completed call forms to the ADMIN.
 - f. Presbytery informs Call Referral Services by requesting that MIF be removed from Church Leadership Connection database, and removes notice from NCP website.
 - g. PNC submits final data on its search process to the ADMIN, using EEO/AA Form 3. The PNC then seals all materials related to the chosen candidate, including references, and stores them in a secure place. PNC destroys all other PIFs, references, interview notes, and reference check notes.
9. The new pastor begins work with the congregation, with PNC providing support for the transition.
10. The new pastor is installed.
- a. The new pastor presents plans for installation to Stated Clerk.
 - b. Stated Clerk, on behalf of COM, approves installation plans and reports to CTC. Clerk can elect to send exceptional plans to Transitions Team for approval.
 - c. The new pastor is installed by Presbytery in cooperation with the congregation, at a time when other members of Presbytery are able to attend; COM's general policy is not to approve installation services scheduled for Sunday morning.
 - d. PNC seals all materials related to the chosen candidate, including references, and stores them in a secure place. PNC destroys all other PIFs, references, interview notes, and reference check notes.

A more detailed process is found in the procedure for [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#). Refer to that document for specific actions and processes that are to be taken in the call process by all parties involved.

6. Calling an Associate Pastor or Co-Pastor

The same basic steps are followed in calling an Associate Pastor or Co-Pastor as in calling a Pastor. The primary difference is the role of the Pastor, who is Head of Staff, in the process.

Because there should be consultation with the Pastor for sharing in the ministry of the church, he/she participates as fully in the search process for an Associate or Co-Pastor as he/she wishes. It is equally important that the Pastor honor the autonomy of the PNC and its role as a committee of the congregation. CTC recommends that the Pastor and the PNC discuss the nature and extent of the Pastor's role in the search at the beginning of the process to clarify expectations and establish good communications.

At the very least, the Pastor:

- must be kept abreast of progress in the search, screening, and selection process; and
- must interview the PNC's final candidates, usually separately from the PNC.

Participants in the search process should also bear in mind that:

- the official relationship of an Associate or Co-Pastor with the congregation is not dependent on the Pastor; and
- an Associate Pastor is ordinarily ineligible to succeed the Pastor or be considered for Co-Pastor.

The detailed process is outlined in the procedure for [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#), available on the Presbytery website. Refer to that document for specific actions and processes that are to be taken in the call process.

If the congregation, instead of filling an existing Associate Pastor position, is creating a new Associate Pastor position, see the procedure for [Establishing a New Associate Pastor Position](#).

If the congregation is seeking to establish a Co-Pastor position, refer to the policy on the NCP website, [Changes in Pastoral Roles Within a Congregation](#) for guidance on eligibility for the co-pastor position.

7. Calling a Designated Pastor: An Outline

The process for calling a Designated Pastor (DP) is very similar to that of calling a permanent installed pastor. When a determination is made that a congregation should search for a DP instead of a permanent installed pastor, refer to the procedure on [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#). Listed below are the differences in the procedure for calling a DP.

1. The Pastor or Associate Pastor leaves the congregation, and the COM's Congregational Transitions Commission and the church's Session see the wisdom of a Designated Pastor being called to the position.
 - CTC approves a new position of Designated Pastor, creating a vacancy.
 - CTC representative meets with Session to explain the search process and EEO/AA policy.
 - CTC appoints a team of ruling and teaching elders who will evaluate PIFs before sending the PIFs of suitable candidates to the Designated Pastor Nominating Committee (DPNC). Only those candidates screened and approved by the appointed CTC team will be considered by the DPNC.
 - The Session begins the steps in [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#).
2. The DPNC, rather than a PNC, is elected. (see Step 2.0 of the Calling procedure).
3. The COM Team assists the DPNC and Session with the MIF sections regarding the church's mission, position description, and parameters for salary negotiation (see Step 4.1).
4. The MIF directs all PIF submissions to come to the General Presbyter or his/her designee.
5. When the DPNC completes the MIF, both the Session and the COM Team approve the MIF (see Step 4.3).
6. The COM Team (instead of the DPNC) identifies promising candidates through reading PIFs.
 - The COM Team may, but not necessarily, review sermons; conduct preliminary telephone interviews or arrange anonymous visits to hear candidates; conduct reference checks (see Step 5.1). If the COM Team does not undertake these tasks, then the DPNC shall perform them, when the approved PIFs are transmitted to them.
 - The COM Team requests the General Presbyter reference checks for candidates who are suitable (see Step 5.3).
 - The COM Team forwards the names of suitable candidates to the DPNC for their consideration (rather than the PIFs coming to the DPNC directly from CLC).
7. In the terms of call that are negotiated with the final candidate the length of the designated period shall be stated (unlike in calling a permanent called pastor when the length of the call is "indefinite") (see Step 6.1).
8. Shortly before the designated period is over, the Session evaluates the Designated Pastor and decides if it wishes to recommend that the congregation call him/her as the regularly installed Pastor. (See the procedure on [Calling a Designated Pastor as Pastor](#).)

8. Dual Search for Associate Pastor/Stated Supply Associate Pastor (Ordained) and Educator/Youth Director (Non-Ordained)

The “dual search” process enables a church to broaden the search for positions such as an educator or youth director. In these cases, churches search among both educators/youth directors and associate pastors with interest in these fields. The same steps are followed in a dual search as in calling pastors, with the differences described below.

Explanation to Congregation: Before the search begins, the Session should communicate clearly to the congregation the decisions made to search for (a) a called and installed Associate Pastor vs. a Stated Supply Associate Pastor, and (b) a non-ordained educator. These distinctions are often confusing to even the most informed church member, yet if they are not clarified and explained, misunderstandings may occur throughout the process and when the final candidate is selected.

Position Descriptions. The Associate Pastor or Stated Supply Associate Pastor Search Committee must complete two Position Descriptions, one for the non-ordained position (educator or youth director) and the other for the Associate Pastor position.

1. Title of Position

- a. Ordained: Indicate Associate Pastor or Stated Supply Associate Pastor for either CE or Youth.
- b. Non-ordained: Indicate Christian Educator (non-ordained) or Youth Director (non-ordained).

2. Major Responsibilities. In general, these would be the same. However, in the pastor’s position description, indicate what pastoral duties the person would be responsible for, including how often he/she would preach. In addition, in the pastor’s position description there should be either a reduction of educator responsibilities if pastoral functions are added or a difference in the number of hours the pastor and the educator would be expected to work.

3. Description of Characteristics. This would probably be the same or very similar for both positions.

4. Description of Qualifications.

- a. Ordained: Indicate what experience or interest you want the person to have.
- b. Non-ordained: Specify the **educational requirements** and **experience** you are seeking. You should list degree requirements, i.e., bachelor’s or master’s and/or other specific requirements and/or experience.
 - For **educator positions**, indicate whether you want a Certified Christian Educator or other specific criteria, such as Certified Associate Christian Educator or Masters Degree in Christian Education.

Compensation and Housing. This might be different if you are not requiring “certification” for the educator. Make sure salaries meet Presbytery minimums. Check both of the following documents. (1.) Compensation and Personnel Policies for Pastors and Certified Christian Educators and (2.) Compensation, Benefits and Expense Reimbursement Standards for Non-Certified Educators. (Both can be found on the Presbytery website, www.thepresbytery.org.)

Position Announcements. If the positions are going to be advertised nationally, beyond National Capital Presbytery, MIFs (Ministry Information Forms) need to be completed for both the pastoral and the non-ordained position. Part I of the MIF would be the same for both. Part II would be different, as described above under Position Description.

The two MIFs will be filed separately online. You will get two different login IDs and passwords from the COM Administrator. (Make sure to save these to get matches and, if necessary, revise the MIFs. Certain revisions require COM approval.)

- a. For the first (AP or SSAP) MIF - Logon with the first ID and password. Enter part 1; enter the data for Part 2 and then save this as the MIF for the Associate Pastor position. (Suggestion: click “save” at least every 15 minutes so that the system does not time out on you.)
- b. For the second (Non-Ordained) MIF - Logon using the second ID and password. After you finish part 1, enter the data on Part 2 and then save this as the MIF for the Non-Ordained position.
 - ▶ Each of these forms must be approved by the Clerk of Session, so the Clerk must contact the COM Administrator to get two IDs and passwords. (Make sure the clerk saves these in case the MIFs need to be revised.)
 - ▶ You will receive two sets of matches – one for each MIF. The Search Committee chair will be notified that there are matches and that person will need the appropriate ID and password to get each set of matches.

If the positions are only going to be advertised locally, follow the procedure for *Selecting a Stated Supply Associate Pastor* or the procedure for *Calling an Associate Pastor*. Two position announcements will need to be submitted.

Hiring Body. The hiring body differs, depending upon the individual that is selected as the final candidate:

- a. If the person is selected for the Associate Pastor position, the person will be called by the congregation. Follow the procedures for calling pastors as outlined in the Liaison Handbook and the Handbook for PNCs and Sessions.
- b. If the person is to be a Stated Supply Associate Pastor, a Christian Educator, or a Youth Director, he/she will be hired by Session; the contract is negotiated by Session. No congregational meeting is held.

Final Contract. The final negotiated contract for an Associate Pastor or Stated Supply Associate Pastor must be approved by COM's Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC). Contracts for an educator or youth director do not require CTC approval.

Approved by CTC, December 2016

9. Getting Started

The Liaison will plan and moderate the first few meetings of the PNC to build a solid foundation for the work ahead. It is best for the PNC to postpone leadership decisions for a few weeks, allowing time for the members' gifts and interests to become evident and for trust to develop between the members.

The primary activities of this time include the following.

- The Liaison will orient the PNC to the search process, resources, and important concepts, using this handbook, [On Calling a Pastor](#) (PCUSA), and *Calling a Pastor the Presbyterian Way* by Dean Foose.
- The Liaison will lead the PNC through a series of team and trust building activities. The Interim Pastor often assists in these activities.
- The Liaison will present the EEO/AA policy to the PNC and ask for the PNC's agreement to honor it. That action will be reported to the CTC on EEO/AA Form 1.
- The Liaison will arrange for the Theology of Call presentation by a trained COM presenter. Through reflection on the call of God in the lives of Biblical characters, participants are encouraged to recognize and trust the call of God in their own lives and in the work of the PNC. CTC urges the PNC to invite the Session members and Board of Deacons to attend this presentation. A 13-minute [video on the theology of call](#) is part of the curriculum for the presentation.
- If the congregation has participated in the [CAT Scan](#), the Liaison will arrange for a presentation of the resulting Vital Signs report by a trained interpreter.
- The Liaison will discuss the tasks that the PNC must perform, recommended leadership roles, and organizational. Typically, PNCs have a Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary and Correspondence Secretary.

10. The Nature of the PNC's Work

See also [*On Calling a Pastor*](#), pages 25-26.

1. **The Need for Spiritual Guidance.** The task of calling a pastor requires wisdom beyond ourselves. Your committee's prayers as it begins and ends each meeting and the prayers of the entire congregation can bring deeper purpose to your work, encourage unanimity rather than divisiveness, and create a spirit of concern for the Church of Jesus Christ, rather than for lesser interests.
2. **The Need for Trust.** Allow yourselves some time to get to know each other. Early on, establish some ground rules for working together – commitment to the process; honoring each other's differences; listening; ensuring all have an opportunity to speak; dealing with conflict directly and honestly *within the meetings*; placing the needs of the congregation above any personal agenda or issues; striving for consensus.
3. **The Need for Confidentiality.** To protect the integrity of the process and the privacy of the candidates, all matters discussed by your committee must be kept ***absolutely confidential***. This confidence must be kept even from members of families of the committee and other church officers. Many committees have discovered that their work has been seriously undermined by misunderstandings that arise out of incomplete or premature information. It is appropriate to speak generally of where the PNC is in the process, but it is not appropriate to share any information that could reveal the identity of a candidate.
 - To protect the confidential nature of the work, PNC members should use personal email addresses for PNC correspondence, not those that are shared by others, such as family members.
4. **The Need for Communication.** Nevertheless, the congregation and Interim Pastor have a right to know how your work is progressing. Although you cannot discuss names of individuals, you will keep the congregation informed through announcements in worship, congregational letters, newsletter articles, a bulletin board, the church web site, etc. In addition, your committee should identify those key points at which the Session must be involved in your work.
5. **The Need for Leadership.** Elect a chair and vice-chair (or two co-chairs), and at least one secretary. The role of the chair is to encourage discussion of various viewpoints; to delegate responsibility and see that tasks are carried out, rather than doing all the work alone; and to ensure that decisions reached are the consensus of the group rather than the will of the chair or of an outspoken minority. The chair, therefore, should be someone who is highly respected, and chosen because of proven ability in these areas. Secretaries keep notes of meetings and manage committee correspondence, including Pastor Information Forms. You may also want to appoint someone with computer skills to be responsible for submitting the Ministry Information Form to the denomination's database, retrieving Pastor Information Forms matched to it, and tracking forms as they are received, acknowledged, and reviewed.

6. **The Need for Scheduled Meetings.** Set a date and a time for weekly meetings, making certain that the time is clear for all committee members and convenient for the COM Liaison, and commit to honoring the allotted time for meetings. Members of the committee should be relieved of all other major responsibilities in the church. The task of seeking a pastor requires undivided commitment of time and energy.
7. **The Need for Concern for Persons.** From the outset, remember you will be dealing with ministers as persons in an important time of their lives. The minister who seriously considers your church, and whom your committee seriously considers, is entitled to honesty and openness and recognition by your committee of his/her lifetime commitment to the work of the Church of Jesus Christ. He/she should be kept informed of whether or not you are still interested in him/her. PIFs, interviews, position descriptions, salary negotiations should never overshadow our concern for our brothers and sisters in Christ as persons.
8. **The Need for Fairness and Justice.** The [Presbytery EEO/AA policies](#) are designed to assist as you give serious consideration to racial/ethnic persons, persons with disabilities and women. You, your Session and the Presbytery representative should go over the policy to be sure that you understand all parts of it. Decide what you can do to fulfill its requirements and note what records must be kept in order to fulfill this important responsibility. Throughout the discussion, determine several ways in which your committee can use the affirmative action plan as you choose candidates for interviews and as you make your final decision.
9. **The Need for Funds.** The Session provides funds for expenses such as travel, telephone, mail, secretarial services, entertainment of candidates, etc., separate from the money budgeted for pastoral salary. Consultation with them is required to make certain that the funds are adequate. (See [Appendix C, Budget Items for a PNC Search.](#))
10. **The Role of Alternate(s).** When a congregation elects one or more alternates to serve on the PNC, it should be understood that the alternate(s) are non-voting members. They should attend meetings regularly, but do not have a decision-making role but rather are there to keep informed about the process in case they need to serve.

11. The Ministry Information Form (MIF)

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), pages 16-17.

General Information about MIFs

- An MIF provides information about the position you are seeking to fill and your church and community. It is used to match your needs against those of candidates who are seeking churches, and to advertise your position on the [Church Leadership Connection](#) website.
- The PNCs MIF must be approved by your Session and COM Liaison (who approves it on behalf of CTC) before it is submitted. The PNC provides the Administrator for COM with a signed hard copy or scanned copy of the final MIF, and then submits the MIF to the denomination electronically, using Church Leadership Connection. The Administrator for COM generates login IDs and passwords for the PNC Chair (to submit the MIF) and to the Clerk of Session (who must attest to Session approval online.)
- Blank copies of the [MIF form and MIF instructions](#) and the [PIF form](#) are available on the Church Leadership Connection website where they may be printed or downloaded as word processing documents. Prepare the MIF as a Word document first. When it is ready to be submitted to CLC, key in some information directly into an online form and cut and paste longer narrative answers from the Word document into the online form.
- The PNC will determine the best way to tackle the job of completing the MIF. Most PNCs divide up the responsibility for composing the document and refine it as a whole for consistency in style and substance.

Sources of information for completing the MIF

- active MIFs from other churches, located by performing an [Opportunity Search](#) on Church Leadership Connection. The [NCP website](#) also lists all vacancies in this Presbytery, with links to the MIFs
- an old MIF for your church (previously known as a CIF, or Church Information Form), if one exists
- church mission studies or long-range plans and surveys of the congregation about needs and preferences for pastoral leadership and the direction of the church
- input from your Interim Pastor, church officers, and other knowledgeable people in the congregation
- a [CAT Scan Vital Signs Report](#), generated from data gathered by your congregation. Check with the Session to determine if the church has completed the CAT Scan process. If so, the Liaison can help arrange for a presentation of the report by a trained interpreter

Guidelines

- Give yourselves ample time to do a thorough job as this document is a potential candidate's first impression of your church.
- In response to the narrative questions, present a realistic picture of your church, including both its strengths and weaknesses. A competent candidate may be more drawn to a challenge than to an easy situation. Be honest in your assessment of the congregation and don't just mention positive things. Every church thinks it is "warm and friendly!"
- Emphasize what is unique about your congregation, community, and possibilities for ministry. Try to convey not only factual information, but something of the "feel" of your church, the level of energy for the church's ministry, and the community within which it exists.
- Paint a portrait that will attract the kind of leadership your church needs for its next chapter of ministry. The PNC should not be afraid to raise challenges, such as "We need a pastor who will help us better reflect our changing neighborhood" or "We need a pastor who will help us energize a congregation that feels too comfortable."
- You may wish to ask your Interim Pastor to read your MIF before submitting it to the Session.

A word of caution: The MIF imposes a 1500-character limit on the narrative questions and position descriptions which must be adhered to in order to avoid technical difficulties. Although the character limit is annoying, it does encourage clear thinking and succinct writing. Note: A "character" includes letters, numbers, punctuation and spaces. MS Word gives character counts that include spaces.

Notes on Part I

- Detailed [instructions for completing and submitting the MIF](#) form are available on the CLC website. You may also call Church Leadership Connection at 1-888-728-7228, x8550, or e-mail CLC at clcstaff@pcusa.org for assistance.
- This section asks for objective descriptive information about your congregation and community. Here are some notes on the trickier parts.
- The Clerk of Session of your church can provide the Ministry ID (also known as your church's "pin number") and can also help you gather the most recent statistical information that is requested, such as congregation size, average worship attendance, church school attendance and curriculum, and the racial ethnic composition of the congregation.
- Regarding the Seminary Debt Assistance Program. If your church has fewer than 150 members AND a budget less than \$250,000 check the box "Check if certified as eligible for participation in the Seminary Debt Assistance Program." For more information, see: <http://www.pensions.org/AvailableResources/BenefitsOverviews/Documents/pts-654.pdf#search=debt%20assistance>

- Your church is in National Capital Presbytery, in the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic.
- Select No to the question Statement of Faith Required. The Statement of Faith is an optional section of the PIF. Select Yes, and your MIF will be matched only with PIFs that contain a statement of faith. Select No, and your MIF will be matched with PIFs that have statements of faith and those that do not.

Notes on Part II

- Detailed [instructions for completing and submitting the MIF](#) form are available on the CLC website. You may also call Church Leadership Connection at 1-888-728-7228, x8550, or e-mail CLC at clcstaff@pcusa.org.
- Part II asks for the position type and years of experience desired; leadership competencies and experience required and desired; salary information; and narratives about the church's mission, programs and accomplishments, and the gifts and experience of your congregation.
- Your Session will give direction about the mission statement, the position description, and the compensation package you can offer a new pastor. The rest is up to you, drawing from resources within and without your congregation. (Ask your liaison about the Leadership Competencies Kit, an exercise in determining the top ten competencies the PNC desires.)
- For Compensation and Housing, enter both the maximum and minimum effective salary that your Session feels it can offer. The Session is responsible for providing this information, and it must be in compliance with Presbytery compensation guidelines, found on the NCP website. The church treasurer, personnel committee or COM Liaison can help you with this section. Only the minimum salary will be seen online. CLC uses the maximum salary for matching purposes.

Submitting the MIF

- Detailed [instructions for completing and submitting the MIF](#) form are available on the CLC website. You may also call Church Leadership Connection at 1-888-728-7228, x8550, or e-mail CLC at clcstaff@pcusa.org for assistance.
- The PNC completes the MIF and submits it to the Session and the COM Liaison for approval. The Liaison approves the MIF on behalf of CTC.
- The final, approved MIF is signed by the Clerk of Session, COM Liaison, and PNC chair, is sent to the Presbytery's Administrator for COM, along with a completed EEO/AA Form 1 (See [Appendix I, EEO/AA Form 1](#)). These documents may either be mailed or scanned and e-mailed. Note. These documents must be received before the MIF can be approved online by COM.

- The PNC Chair and the Clerk of Session email the Administrator for COM to request login IDs and passwords for accessing Church Leadership Connection.
- The PNC submits the MIF online, following the [detailed instructions for submitting the MIF](#).
- The Clerk of Session and the CTC contact will be alerted by email to log in to Church Leadership Connection to attest to Session and COM approval of the MIF electronically.
- When approvals are completed, the MIF is released to the Opportunity Search database, and will be publically accessible.
- Within 24-48 hours, CLC staff will perform a match of the MIF against PIFs in the database. The matching is done on objective information in the documents, such as position type, years of experience, leadership competencies, language, etc. The PNC is notified by email to log in to CLC and retrieve the referred PIFs, usually a batch of 25.
- Note that candidates can self-refer their PIF through the CLC system. The Referral List for your church's MIF will include:
 - PIFs that are referred (that is, matched) by the CLC system, distinguished by the notation "crs" in the Referred by column, and
 - PIFs that are self-referred, distinguished by a nine-digit number in the Referred by column.
- Additional matches can be requested online, following the [instructions for submitting the MIF](#).
- Ask your Liaison to arrange for posting your church's vacancy on the Presbytery's website, along with a link to the MIF on CLC.

Detailed [instructions for completing and submitting the MIF](#) form are available on the CLC website. You may also call Church Leadership Connection at 1-888-728-7228, x8550, or e-mail CLC at clcstaff@pcusa.org for assistance.

12. Suggestions for Advertising Your Position

The PNC will receive PIFs through the matching system on Church Leadership Connection and through self-referrals (candidates who have learned about your position and send a PIF directly to your PNC or through the CLC). Your church's vacancy will also be listed on the Presbytery's website, with a link to your MIF. To generate more interest in your position, you may wish to consider the following.

- **Place ads in Presbyterian publications** such as [Presbyterian Outlook](#) and [Presbyterians Today](#). Lead times for advertising in the print publications is usually 5-6 weeks. Some offer timelier online ads. Check the websites for these publications for information on classified ads.
- **Contact seminaries.** Most have placement offices that will post information about pastoral vacancies. An increasing number have web sites for posting vacancies and graduates' resumes. Click [here](#) for links to all Presbyterian seminaries on the PC(USA) website.
- **Enhance your church's web site.** Your MIF contains your website's address, as should any advertisements you publish. Work with church contacts to ensure your website is up-to-date and attractive not only to the public but to your potential candidates. Use this site to keep your congregation posted on the PNC's progress.
- **Network.** Talk to friends and relatives, pastors, other Presbytery executives about your vacancy and your church. Ask if they know of candidates who might be a good fit. Encourage your congregation to do the same. Never underestimate the power of word-of-mouth advertising!

13. Personal Information Forms (PIF)

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), pages 35-37.

Preparing to Receive PIFs

- After submitting the MIF, take time to consider how the committee will organize itself to receive, distribute, track and evaluate candidates.
- Establish a simple recording system to keep track of when PIFs are received, acknowledged, and acted upon.
- Identify a secure way to store and distribute PIFs. This is usually done online using a secure, password-protected account on document management applications such as Dropbox or Google Docs.
- Establish ranking, screening, and selection criteria based on the requirements set out in the MIF.
- Design forms for recording evaluation of the candidates, such as reactions to the PIF, sermons, interviews, and reference calls (See [Appendix F, Sample Evaluation Forms.](#))
- Acknowledge biases that may be influencing the evaluation of candidates to ensure fairness in the ranking, screening, and selecting process.
- Prepare a package of materials (in paper or electronic format) that you can send to interested candidates to tell them more about your church, such as sample bulletins, newsletters, brochures, and neighborhood information, etc.

Receiving and Acknowledging PIFs

- Distinguish referred or matched PIFs from self-referred PIFs.
 - PIFs that are referred (that is, matched) by the CLC system are distinguished by the notation “crs” in the Referred by column, and
 - PIFs that are self-referred are distinguished by a nine-digit number in the Referred by column.
- Acknowledge receipt of all self-referred PIFs (whether sent directly to the PNC or self-referred through CLC). A simple, friendly e-mail message or letter will suffice.
- You do not need to acknowledge receipt of PIFs received through CLC matching. Pastors are able find out the churches their PIFs have been matched with, but they are not expecting acknowledgement.

- Occasionally, a candidate will ask, via email or letter, that you retrieve his/her PIF from CLC. Inform the candidate that you do not have the ability or permissions to do that and that he/she must self-refer the PIF.

Suggestions for Reviewing PIFs

- Each PIF should be reviewed thoroughly, comparing the PIF with your MIF.
 - Does the candidate have the years of experience you are seeking?
 - Do they exhibit qualifications that you need?
 - Do the skills choices match yours?
 - Have they lived and worked in a setting like yours?
 - How their narrative statements satisfy your requirements?
 - What is the tone of the PIF?
 - What words or phrases catch your attention, both positive and negative?
 - What else would you like to know about the candidate?
- Determine a methodology for recording the results of PNC members' assessments. Keep thorough notes on candidates; it will be difficult to remember early candidates after you have reviewed many PIFs, and notes will jog your memories. (See [Appendix F, Sample Evaluation Forms.](#))
- [On Calling a Pastor](#), "Reading and Screening PIFs" on page 35, suggests a good process for reviewing PIFs. Consider adopting and adapting this process to suit the dynamics of your PNC.
- Having identified promising candidates:
 - First, contact the candidates to determine if they are indeed interested in being considered for your position.
 - If so, offer to provide information on your church and community.
 - Seek more information on the candidate.
 - A Google search will often reveal much, such as online sermons, in audio, video, and in print (e.g., the website of the pastor's current and previous congregations; personal blogs and other publications; and involvement in denominational and community activities).
 - Request copies of recent sermons from the candidate if you are not finding them online.
 - Develop several questions for the candidate to answer in writing.
 - If geographically possible, consider sending one PNC member to visit the candidate's current church as a guest.
- Schedule initial interviews by phone (or a video-calling application such as Skype or FaceTime) to narrow the field to those candidates you wish to perform reference checks on and interview in person.

- Keep the candidates the PNC is still actively considering apprised of the committee's progress, even if it is to say, "We continue to discern God's will in this process, and you are still under consideration."
- Those candidates whom you have ruled out should be notified promptly as a matter of courtesy.

14. Applicants Who Are Seeking Ordination as PC(USA) Pastors

(based on guidance provided by the Rev. Dick McFail, former Stated Clerk of National Capital Presbytery)

The PNC may receive PIFs from candidates who are not yet ordained in the PC(USA), but are seeking a call in order to complete the process towards ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such an applicant is “under care” of a presbytery and “certified ready” to receive a call.

Key Point: The PNC needs to determine that the candidate has either been “certified ready” for examination for ordination pending a call; or that the candidate’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry has given him/her permission to circulate the PIF early. A candidate circulating the PIF early is not finished with the candidating process.

What does “certified ready” mean?

- The person has been a candidate under care of a presbytery for at least one year.
- The candidate has graduated from an accredited college and accredited theological school and has passed all the PC(USA) ordination exams.
- The candidate has engaged in an approved and supervised work of ministry.
- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry judges that the candidate has theological views compatible with the Book of Confessions, and is spiritually and psychologically suited for pastoral ministry. (Usually, CPM is aided by the assessment of a certified counseling center in making these judgments.)
- The candidate has prepared a written sermon and exegesis and has preached before the committee.

If the candidate is under care of National Capital Presbytery:

- Contact the NCP Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) through the NCP Stated Clerk, our staff person, to make the determination as to the “certified ready” status of the particular candidate.

If the candidate is under care of another presbytery:

- Ask the candidate to provide written affirmation that he/she has been “certified ready” by that presbytery’s CPM.

Once you know that the candidate is “certified ready,” the Examination Interview and congregational meeting follow, and COM approves the Call.

Key Point: The presbytery placing the call to the candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine, ordain, and install the candidate. (*Book of Order*, G-2.0702)

Observation: Our CPM (and most others) will stubbornly resist being told that a candidate must be approved for ordination because one of our congregations is determined to call him or her.

15. Applicants from Other Denominations

See also [*On Calling a Pastor*](#), pages 16-17.

As a PNC proceeds through the usual process of calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor, the expectation is that the candidates will be members of the PC(USA) or ready to receive a call in the PC(USA). Occasionally, in unusual situations (particularly with respect to immigrant fellowships and non-English-speaking Presbyterian churches), a candidate will not be a pastor with membership in the PC(USA).

If the candidate does not wish to transfer membership into the PC(USA), he/she may be given approval to labor within the bounds and is hired by Session, **but is not called and installed**. See the May 2014 Advisory Opinion from the PC(USA) on *Receiving Ministers of Other Denominations* on this topic for details <http://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/advisory-opinion14.pdf>.

Applicants from other denominations will be received as minister members only in the following situations: (a) for calls to NCP installed positions, (b) as a Specialized Minister to an immigrant fellowship endorsed by the CDC of NCP, or (c) as an organizing pastor. Designated Pastors from other denominations are installed and are eligible to be received as minister members. Pastors from other denominations are not received as minister members to pursue specialized (non-parish) ministry, except for immigrant fellowships as noted above.

When a PNC desires to call a pastor who does not have membership in the PC(USA), the steps outlined below shall be taken once it becomes apparent to the PNC that the candidate is not a member of the PCUSA. The detailed process is outlined in the procedure for [Admitting Members of Other Denominations into NCP Membership](#).

1. Presbytery is notified of a PNC's interest in interviewing and considering a pastor who is a member of another denomination.
2. The COM Congregational Transitions Commission determines the status of the pastor. The pastor must meet the constitutional conditions as listed in G-2.0607. In the case of an immigrant minister, if our strategy for mission within that immigrant fellowship or congregation requires it, the minister may be received under G-2.0505a (1) before educational criteria are satisfied.
3. If permission is granted, the PNC continues the regular search process (see "Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor" procedure on the NCP website), and if the PNC selects the non-PCUSA Pastor/Associate Pastor as its final candidate, the candidate has a preliminary examination.
4. If the examination is sustained, the Commission on Preparation for Ministry guides the pastor through the process of becoming certified ready to receive a call.
5. The candidate is examined by Presbytery and approved for membership pending the action of the congregational meeting.
6. The usual process for "Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor" is now followed, starting with the post examination steps (step 8).
7. The candidate, upon enrollment, furnishes evidence of having surrendered membership in any and all other Christian churches with which he/she was previously associated.

16. Securing Pastoral Leadership for Immigrant Worshiping Communities:

An Outline

Worshiping communities comprised of immigrant populations in National Capital Presbytery (NCP) seek pastoral leadership that is sensitive to the culture and language of their home countries. In many cases, these pastors are not members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA).

This policy applies to immigrant worshiping communities (fellowships, new church developments, and chartered congregations) who wish to invite pastors that are not affiliated with the PC(USA) to serve their congregations. In most cases, NCP will expect these pastors to become permanent minister members of the Presbytery, following the COM-approved process.

The detailed procedure for finding a pastor is outlined in [Securing Pastoral Leadership for Immigrant Worshiping Communities](#). This procedure draws on existing polity and policy:

- to support these congregations in securing appropriate pastoral leadership;
- to protect the congregations served;
- to ensure the pastor's accountability to the Presbytery;
- to assist pastors in achieving full membership in the PC(USA) and National Capital Presbytery, as appropriate.

1. The congregation's leadership meets with representatives of CTC and DCD to discuss plans for securing pastoral leadership.
2. The congregation identifies a non-PCUSA pastor to serve them. In many cases, the pastor will be from another country and will require a religious worker visa to enter the U.S.
3. The leadership provides the General Presbyter with a resume of the preferred candidate. The resume should include the candidate's contact information, education, ordination, and work history, and up-to-date contact information for the ordaining body.
4. The General Presbyter reviews the resume to determine basic educational requirements; conducts a reference check with the ordaining body to ensure that the candidate is in good standing; and, to the extent possible, conducts a criminal background check.
5. Having obtained the needed clearance, the General Presbyter sends an introductory letter to the candidate. The letter requests written acknowledgement of the receipt of and willingness to comply with a series of NCP policies and procedures.
6. Upon receipt of the written acknowledgment, the General Presbyter informs the leadership of the congregation and the candidate that they may begin the process of applying for a religious worker visa, if applicable.
7. The congregation and Presbytery work to move forward in the process.

8. The pastor is granted the appropriate visa and travels to the United States. The pastor and key leadership from the congregation meet as soon as possible with CTC, CDC, CPM members and Presbytery staff.
9. The Stated Clerk grants the pastor permission to labor within the bounds, pending membership in the Presbytery. The pastor is permitted to administer the sacraments, perform weddings and funerals (as allowed by state laws), but not moderate the Session. Stated Clerk will appoint an interim moderator, as needed.
10. COM Examinations Team conducts a preliminary examination to consider basic theological fit. If the examination is sustained, CTC votes to receive the pastor as a temporary member of Presbytery. (*Book of Order*, G-2.0506). *
11. CTC and CPM coordinate and oversee their respective roles in the [policy for receiving ministers from other denominations](#).
12. The congregation and its leadership is expected to support the pastor in meeting the Presbytery's expectations; pay the pastor according to NCP compensation requirements; and submit a contract with the pastor for CTC approval on an annual basis.
13. The Presbytery is expected to provide oversight and collegial support to the pastor and pray for the pastor and the congregation.

* *A presbytery may enroll a minister of another Christian church who is serving temporarily in a validated ministry in this church, or in an installed relationship under the provisions of the Formula of Agreement (Book of Order, Appendix B; G-5.0202), when the minister has satisfied the requirements of preparation for such service established by the presbytery's own rule.*

17. Checking References

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), pages 38-39.

Primary References are those listed in the candidate's PIF.

- Following telephone interviews, check the primary references for all candidates you are seriously considering, using the guidelines found in *On Calling a Pastor*, pages 38-39. By providing these to you, candidates have provided you permission to inquire of these individuals. Talk to your Liaison or CTC co-chair if you have any questions about these guidelines.
- Call or establish contact with each of the primary references, asking both general questions and questions that your PNC has developed about this potential candidate as it relates to your position.

Secondary References are persons who are not listed by the prospective pastor but are suggested by others or contacted because they are thought to have knowledge of the individual.

- Secondary references may only be contacted when the prospective pastor has given permission. Under no circumstances should a PNC contact members of a prospective pastor's present congregation without her or his permission to do so.
- Under certain circumstances a PNC may seek contact with secondary references from one of the candidates after they have checked with the primary references. Most secondary references are generated from conversations with primary references.
- Some potential secondary references may include an individual who has benefitted from the candidate's ministry in the past, someone acquainted with a past position held by the candidate, or a colleague of the candidate from a former ministry location.
- Any request to contact a secondary reference must go directly to the candidate for their awareness, comment, and permission prior to any further action.

See the **Sample Form 3: Reference Checks** in [Appendix F Sample Forms](#) for a sample "script" and suggested questions to use when conducting a reference check.

General Presbyter Reference Checks are required before inviting candidates for face-to-face interviews.

- After conducting preliminary phone interviews and your own reference checks, request Presbytery reference checks from the General Presbyter. Use [EEO/AA Form 2 \(Appendix J\)](#) to request the checks.
- The General Presbyter will provide his/her own reference for candidates who are members of National Capital Presbytery. For other candidates, he will consult his/her counterpart at other presbyteries, seeking any negative information about the candidate that would preclude them from your further consideration. Within a few days of your request, you will be informed of the results of the reference checks and whether you are able to move forward with scheduling a face-to-face interview.
- Write a thoughtful letter to any candidate you've contacted in whom you are no longer interested, as soon as you determine you're not going any further with that person. Remember that an entire family may be waiting to hear from you, not just the candidate. The prospect of a potential move can affect family plans and routine. Put yourself in the place of the candidate's family and be prompt in concluding conversations.

18. Checking Your Process and Progress

Communication

- Communicate regularly with the congregation in a variety of ways, including announcements in worship, the church newsletter, website, and Facebook page – whatever is most effective in your congregation. Remember: there is no such thing as over-communicating in a church!
- Post charts and other visual reminders of PNC progress in common gathering places, such as the narthex and fellowship hall, near the coffee and refreshments, etc. Even though there may be little specific information that you can give, describe where you are in the process. Remind the congregation (including Session) how to access the MIF so they continue to be aware of what the PNC is searching for.
- Consider reaching out beyond PIFs received to contact pastors whom you have heard about or whom you know from elsewhere. Possibly they are not looking for a new call, but they may be willing to consider your invitation to apply. Many good matches have resulted from this type of contact.
- As the search process winds down, keep the Interim Pastor informed of the progress so that he/she will know when to begin searching for the next interim position.

Direction

- It is very important that the PNC and the Session continue moving in the same direction during the search process. Every four to six months after the MIF is posted online, the PNC Chair should ask the Interim Pastor and Session if the MIF continues to reflect the direction the church and its needs for future leadership. The Liaison may participate in this conversation. In particular, it is wise to have such a conversation before beginning face-to-face interviews.

Fairness

- Give thoughtful consideration of racial/ethnic, female, and disabled candidates, being mindful of the Presbytery's EEO/AA policy.
- With respect to the affirmative action policy, be mindful that the PNC is required to have at least one woman among its final candidates – that is, those you are prepared to interview in person.

19. Interviewing Candidates

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), pages 38.

All questions to candidates should relate to qualifications for the position as described in the position description. It is not appropriate, for example, to ask questions about applicants' marital status or spouse's name and occupation; national origin or ancestry; native language; whether they own or rent a home; whether they have children or plan to have children; physical or mental disabilities; or clubs and organizations to which they belong.

PNCs should let all candidates interviewed know that this Presbytery conducts criminal background checks on all prospective incoming candidates. The check is done on the final candidate as a part of the preparation for the COM Examination Interview. See the [Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) on this matter.

Sample interview questions are below. See also [Appendix G : Questions that Assess Emotional Intelligence](#) and [Appendix H: Theological Fit](#), for questions designed to assess theological compatibility with candidates.

1. THE IMAGE OF THE MINISTRY - What is the candidate's style of ministry? How will lay persons be involved in ministry?
2. THE NATURE OF WORSHIP - How does the candidate view corporate and private worship? What role would the candidate play in the worship of the congregation, in setting the style of worship? What does the candidate see as the nature of the congregation, in setting the style of worship? What does the candidate see as the nature of the sermon, the use of innovation in worship?
3. THE PASTORAL ROLE - What does the candidate see as the purpose of pastoral visiting? Of counseling? How much will the laity be used in these tasks?
4. EVANGELISM - What does it mean? How will it be furthered? What are the candidate's past experience and new ideas?
5. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - What training has there been? How would the candidate relate to volunteer teachers and leaders? How much flexibility would there be?
6. STEWARDSHIP - Is the candidate able and willing to talk effectively about money and budgets? What success has there been in previous stewardship efforts? Is the meaning of stewardship seen more broadly than raising money?
7. ADMINISTRATION - How will the candidate administrative responsibilities, and who else will assist? What is the candidate's leadership style? What are some examples of successful delegation of authority?
8. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENTS - To what extent would the candidate spend time in community affairs with community groups, in social action concerns? How much will church members be encouraged to be part of them?
9. DENOMINATIONAL INVOLVEMENTS - Is the candidate active in wider denominational circles? Supportive of denominational programs, staff and mission?

10. PERSONAL LIFE - How is the personal life separated from the professional life? What habits have been established to see that the candidate has time for family and personal friends?
11. CONDITIONS OF THE CALL - Be specific about the preliminary salary and benefits offered: base salary, housing, travel allowance, benefits, vacation, sabbatical, continuing education.
12. THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION - What are the most important things you want to know about the candidate's theology? What are his/her theological skills? [See [Appendix H, Theological Fit](#)]

20. Interview Questions to Avoid

A July 2013 [statement](#) from the PC(USA) Office of the General Assembly states that the U.S. Supreme Court has carved out a “ministerial exception” for religious institutions on matters of employment discrimination.

Typically, hiring and employment decisions made by church councils that relate to employees who perform ministerial or ecclesiastical functions are not subject to review or interference by the courts. This would include employees such as teaching elders, music directors, Christian educators and others who routinely perform worship, pastoral, and mission duties.

The statement further explains that while it may be legal for the church to ask interview questions that would be considered illegal in the secular world, the foundations of our Presbyterian tradition prohibit discrimination against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. [Book of Order, F- 1.0403].

Interview questions, then, should relate solely to the qualifications for the position, not personal characteristics. Essentially, you should not ask questions that could reveal information that can lead to bias in hiring. Questions about any of the following subjects—none of which have any bearing on an individual’s ability to do a job—are considered inappropriate.

Inappropriate subject	Sample questions
Age	<i>How old are you? Are you a Baby Boomer?</i>
Race or nationality	<i>You’re Hispanic (or other ethnic group), right?</i>
Pregnancy (existing or planned)	<i>Are you planning to have a family in the next five years?</i>
Disabilities	<i>Any disabilities we should know about?</i>
Family and marital status	<i>Do you have kids? How many?</i>
Household situation	<i>Do you have any grandparents living with you?</i>
Spouse’s occupation	<i>What does your husband/wife do for a living?</i>
Arrest record	<i>Have you ever committed a crime? What did it involve?</i>

Note: Questions about languages spoken are only appropriate if fluency in a specific language is a requirement for the position. While it is not appropriate to ask about disability status, it is acceptable to ask applicants if they are able to perform the *essential responsibilities* of the job with reasonable accommodation.

21. Taking Stock

You are probably more than half-way through the process of searching for a pastor. You are beginning to wonder if you will ever be able to make a decision. That is probably the sign that it is time to take stock.

1. **Are we too hard to please?** That is a legitimate question. Probably no one person can combine all the attributes we would like to see in our pastor. That means we have to pick and choose those attributes which are most important to our church.
2. **Have we just not found the right one yet?** That is the other side of question one. There is no need to panic just because we have not made a decision. It may be the ideal candidate is just finishing up a building program, or completing a crucial counseling session, or just realizing they have said all they have to say to their present congregation. Our potential pastor may just now be coming available. God may have been stalling us until now.
3. **Do we need to seek additional candidates?** Maybe the “right” person hasn’t come forward. Consider reaching out to beyond PIFs received to contact pastors whom you have heard about or whom you know from elsewhere. Possibly they are not looking for a new call, but they may be willing to consider your invitation to apply. Many good matches have resulted from this type of contact.
4. **Are we sure about what we want?** Is there clarity in the committee about what we want in a pastor? Are some set on a preacher and some on an administrator? Do some want a young person and others want maturity? Have we honestly faced up to those differences of opinion or are we just hoping to find someone who fits both? Talk it through openly so everyone understands what everyone else is looking for.
5. **Why have we turned down some of the candidates we have heard?** Were our reasons sound? Were our reasons really connected with the candidate? If we didn't like his/her preaching, was it because of the church rather than the candidate? Few candidates have perfect sermons every day. Did we not like their PIF? Perhaps they just don't express themselves well on paper. Look a little deeper at what they are trying to say about themselves. Were some references negative? That may be a positive sign. Few people who try to accomplish something are liked by everyone. Their judgment may be biased. Beware the candidate about whom everyone says good things.
6. **Why have some candidates turned us down?** Have we presented our church fairly and openly? Have we been too eager or too aloof? Is our salary scale adequate for the type of pastor we want? Ask your General Presbyterian or COM Liaison to evaluate you. They may have some feedback from candidates you have interviewed. If you felt particularly comfortable with some candidates who declined your call, telephone them and ask for help in evaluating yourself.
7. **Is there external pressure on us?** Is our church having trouble getting supply pastors? Is our Interim's time running out? Can we get another Interim? Do things at the church seem to be slowing down because we don't have a pastor? Can Presbytery aid our church in keeping up enthusiasm among teachers, leaders and officers? You cannot let this pressure force you to a premature decision, but you can do something to relieve it.

8. **Have you asked for help?** Have we asked the Liaison or the General Presbyter's opinion of who would be best for us? We don't have to take their advice, but it might be helpful to have.
9. **Have we prayed enough?** The obvious is sometimes ignored. Have we opened ourselves to God's leading? Ours is, after all, a spiritual task. We believe that God is, through us, placing a pastor here so that we can be God's witness in this place. If we ask and if we listen, we will be led to the right person. However, God's timetable may not be the same as ours.

22. Final Candidates

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), page 40.

Checking in with the Session. This is a good time to confirm that the Session and the PNC are moving in the same direction.

- Does the MIF still reflect the church’s current needs and direction?
- Does the previously-approved compensation package need to be adjusted to take into account a change in the congregation’s finances or annual adjustments in the Presbytery’s compensation guidelines?
- Are there any developments in the life of the congregation that the PNC needs to be aware of as it makes its selection?
- Is the Session clear about the process for finalizing the call? Review steps, from the time the PNC selects a finalist through the installation of the pastor, using the procedure on [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#).

Required information for final candidates. Per Presbytery policy:

- The PNC shall provide final candidates for pastor with:
 - the most recent three years of a church’s financial records
 - the church treasurer’s annual reports for the most recent three years
 - the current year’s budget
 - the most recent expense report
- Final candidates shall also be informed that they may make an appointment with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to review the Presbytery file on the congregation at Presbytery’s offices. The Interim Pastor’s reports will also be made available to the candidate.

Face-to-Face Interviews. The committee’s final interviews are usually held over a weekend that includes time for questions and answers, fellowship, an opportunity to hear the candidate preach in a neutral pulpit, a tour of church facilities, and meeting with select staff members.

- The PNC reviews the MIF, candidate’s materials, and notes from reference checks in preparation for the final interview.
- Create opportunities for the candidate to meet informally with 2-3 members of the PNC as well a more formal interview session with the entire PNC.
- Focus especially on issues related to style and theological fit. See [Appendix H, Theological Fit](#), for suggested questions. Be sure the candidate’s theology is “right” for your congregation.
- This is also a time for the candidate to “interview” the PNC, so be sure to allow time in the interview for the candidate to ask questions. Assign PNC members to be prepared to answer questions in different subject areas (worship, education, mission, administration, etc.).
- The interview weekend offers opportunities for the candidate to interview other church professional staff. All involved must be aware of the necessity to maintain confidentiality.
- In a search for an Associate, the Pastor/Head of Staff will interview all of the final candidates, with the PNC and separately from the PNC, as the Pastor chooses.
- In a search for Pastor/Head of Staff, the candidates also meet with the Associate Pastor.

Neutral Pulpits

- The Liaison arranges for the candidate to preach in a neutral pulpit – a church other than the calling church – but typically does not attend the neutral pulpit worship service.
- The Liaison will seek to identify a host church for the neutral pulpit where the chances for PNC members to be recognized are minimized (e.g., not in a church too nearby or where it is likely that congregants from the two churches might know one another). It is important to maintain confidentiality to retain freedom in decision-making and to protect the candidate, who may not have told his/her current congregation of his/her interest in pursuing another call.
- The Liaison will request that the host pastor and the candidate communicate directly about the details of the service and the extent of the candidate’s involvement in the worship service beyond preaching the sermon. In addition, the Liaison will provide written guidance to the host pastor.
- The PNC should not schedule activities on Saturday evening of the interview weekend, allowing the Pastor time to prepare and rest before the neutral pulpit experience.
- Usually a member (or members) of the PNC drives the candidate to the host church, and the PNC often schedules a time for lunch and conversation following the service, bringing the interview weekend to a close.

After the Interview/Neutral Pulpit Weekend

- Give yourselves some time to reflect on the events, conversations, and impressions from the weekend individually, and then gather as a committee to talk and pray about next steps.
- Experienced COM Liaison Alice McGinnis offers the following advice on discernment after a face-to-face interview. These are her observations of PNCs and APNCs when they have found the right candidate. Wise words!

There is always excitement after the phone interview, and the committee is eager to check references and arrange for a face-to-face interview. After the face-to-face, the committee is eager to share with me all the good things that happened during the weekend. Usually they describe easy social connections, thoughtful presentations of faith journeys, humor and laughter, creativity in answers, and a quiet confidence (or in some cases, bold confidence) on the part of the candidate in his/ her ability to fill the job and succeed. Often the candidate has asked thoughtful questions to further clarify the committee’s expectations. The PNC usually has a sense that the match will be good and the candidate will be successful.

In fact, the APNC or PNC can hardly wait for their families and close friends at church to meet the candidate. In the cases where there is a youth representative on the committee, the young person thinks the candidate will be well received by the youth at church. There does not have to be a “cool” factor, but there has to be warmth, connections and a steadiness that can be sensed by any young person. Finally, the committee needs to know that when they stand up to present the candidate to the congregation, they will be presenting someone of whom they are proud ... and eager to have in their own lives.

We are people who like facts and proof, and up to this point, you have used numbers and scores for some of your discussion. But after meeting candidates face-to-face, it is time for gut feelings and intuition and prayer. That is what you need for discerning if a candidate is right for your church. The question becomes, “Are you excited, enthusiastic and confident that this candidate will be successful at our church?”

23. Choosing Your Candidate

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), page 41.

After evaluating all sources of information about your final candidates – PIF, reference checks, the General Presbyter checks, interviews, and preaching – the time will come to make the selection of your final choice. Utmost discretion, respect for the confidentiality of this process, and careful attention to timing are critical at this stage.

Strive for a unanimous decision, reached through consensus. If you are having difficulty reaching consensus or resolving persistent conflicts within the committee, your Liaison will be able to provide help. Prayerfully make your decision.

- The Holy Spirit has chosen you for this task, and has led you to select a particular person. Trust the Spirit's direction as well as your own judgment.
- Now is the time to be quite sure that there are no unresolved issues which could cause problems later. Share all reservations about each candidate and discuss them fully. Contact candidates or speak to references again, if needed, to ask additional questions and clarify concerns.
- The PNC is the only body in the search process that considers the theological fit of the congregation and the pastor. This dimension of your work deserves great care. Seek help from your Liaison, your Interim Pastor, and the General Presbyter if you are uncertain about the theological fit.
- The Chair of the PNC should contact the candidate by phone and extend an invitation. If the candidate asks for time to think and pray about the decision, request a time within which you can expect to hear from him/her, usually no longer than two weeks.
- When you receive a positive answer, finalize the terms of call with the candidate. This task is usually best done by one or two PNC members meeting privately with the candidate, in person or by phone. See the [Terms of Call Packet](#) on the NCP website for forms and instructions for finalizing and reporting the terms of call.
- Should the pastor's salary expectations exceed the previously approved compensation package, meet with the Session for further discussion, **without revealing the identity of the candidate**. If the Session is not willing to increase the compensation, you may need to renegotiate with the candidate. The agreed-upon terms of call are submitted to the Administrator for COM and the CTC Co-Chairs for review of consistency with [Presbytery compensation guidelines](#).
- If the candidate accepts, the PNC informs the Liaison, who will facilitate the scheduling of an examination interview with the Administrator for COM for the finalist, if he/she is not currently minister member of the Presbytery. Current members received within the past 10 years will not need to be examined.
- Explain to your final candidate that the examination is a rigorous theological examination which he/she should take seriously. Maintain contact with your prospective pastor to offer support during this time.
- Continue to honor your commitments to confidentiality. The PNC is not free to reveal the candidate's identity until the CTC has approved the call and the pastor grants permission for the PNC to "go public" – that is, when the Pastor has informed his/her current church of the new call.

24. Finalizing the Call

See also [On Calling a Pastor](#), pages 41-44; [Procedure for Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#); and NCP's [Examination Process](#).

The Examination Process

- After the PNC selects the final candidate and negotiates the terms of call, but before the congregational meeting is called and before the pastor is presented to the congregation, the Committee on Ministry will conduct an Examination Interview to approve the call and recommend the candidate for membership in NCP.
 - If the candidate is already a minister member of NCP and was examined and received into membership no more than 10 years ago, then no Examination Interview is necessary.
- The PNC will notify the Liaison of its selection, and the Liaison will request an Examination Interview from the Administrator for COM, as needed.
- Four examination teams, each consisting of two teaching elders and two ruling elders, are pre-scheduled to be available for COM exams throughout the year. Depending on the demand, scheduling an examination may take weeks, though priority in scheduling is given to calls for congregational positions. The interview is conducted with the candidate only. For out-of-town candidates, it is suggested that a PNC member drive the candidate to the interview.
- The Administrator for COM schedules the interview, coordinating among all parties involved, including the candidate, PNC Chair, and Liaison. The Administrator for COM sends detailed emails, with all necessary documents attached, confirming the details of the interview and describing how and when the candidate's documents should be returned.
- In preparation for the examination, the General Presbyter or Stated Clerk will order and review a criminal record background check on the candidate. The results will only be shared with the PNC if there are any problems. (For details, see the [Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).)
- The candidate will provide a statement of faith, biographical information, and responses to five questions regarding Presbyterian polity and Reformed theology. These will form the basis for the examination discussion. See [Examination Process](#), on the NCP website, for more details.
- At the conclusion of the interview, the examination team will communicate its recommendation as to whether the examination should be sustained, that is, approved, to the Administrator for COM. The Administrator then requests a confirming e-vote from the CTC, normally completed within 48 hours. With the CTC's positive vote, CTC approves the terms of call, recommends receiving the candidate as a minister member of National Capital Presbytery, and grants the Session permission to call a congregational meeting to vote on the pastor and the terms of call. The call is approved, therefore, pending the vote of the congregation.

Preparing for the Congregational Meeting

- On the basis of the successful examination and CTC's approval, the PNC is then able to ask the Session to call a congregational meeting where the candidate is presented to the congregation for a vote.
- Public notice of the meeting should be given in accordance with the congregation's own rule for minimum notification requirements (G-1.0502). Due to the importance of this meeting, additional advance notice is recommended to encourage attendance, if the calendar permits.
- Confidentiality continues to be critical in the call process. The PNC's excitement is building and the desire to share the good news is strong! However, **the announcement of the candidate's identity must be done in conjunction with the successful completion of the examination and the candidate's announcement to his/her own congregation.**
- With the candidate's permission and involvement, the PNC can send a letter to the congregation 5-7 days before the congregational meeting, introducing the candidate, with a short biographical sketch, photos and a message from the candidate.
- If the candidate agrees, it is also possible to plan some social events for the candidate to meet members of the congregation prior to the congregational meeting. A schedule of these should be included in the introductory letter. The events could include a meeting with church officers, and a reception for members at large. You should not plan anything for Saturday evening to give the candidate time to relax and get ready for the next day.
- In advance of the meeting, prepare ballots for the election of the pastor and line up ballot counters. See [Appendix M, Sample Ballot for the Congregational Meeting](#).

The Congregational Meeting

- Depending on the congregation's custom, the candidate preaches at the worship service prior to the congregational meeting. This is sometimes referred to as the "candidating sermon."
- The agenda for the congregational meeting is set out in the [Agenda for the Congregational Meeting for the Call for a Pastor or an Associate, found in Appendix L](#). It includes a time for the PNC to present a report to the congregation that summarizes its process and why they believe God has led them to select the candidate. The PNC should be prepared for questions from the congregation on wide-ranging questions related to the search and the candidate.
- The vote on the pastor and the terms of call is a single vote, accomplished by secret ballot. See [Appendix M, Sample Ballot for the Congregational Meeting](#).
 - The PNC ensures that the Moderator of the meeting announces the exact count of the vote.
 - After favorable votes by the congregation, the Moderator attests to those actions, and the Clerk completes the formal call forms and returns them to the Presbytery Office for the Stated Clerk and the COM. The PNC is then dismissed with the congregation's thanks.
 - Per Presbytery policy: "Whenever a congregational vote to call a pastor results in a substantial minority in opposition (15%), the moderator shall forward the vote to the COM to review the results of the election with the candidate and the PNC and the congregation, and offer

guidance to the candidate as he/she discerns the will of God. If this occurs, the moderator should announce to the congregation that the large minority vote (over 15%) requires the vote to be forwarded to COM for further review and to give the candidate guidance and time to discern the will of God. COM will approve or not approve the call. This action was taken by COM on June 5, 2003 on behalf of Presbytery and reported to Presbytery on June 24, 2003.”

Presbytery Approval and other Final Steps

- How are the terms of call formally approved? The terms of call are approved by the Congregation Transitions Commission of the Committee on Ministry, on behalf of Presbytery.
- The Stated Clerk of NCP writes to the candidate’s Presbytery for his/her credentials. The candidate’s Presbytery then dismisses the candidate to NCP.
- How is the candidate welcomed into Presbytery? New minister members are introduced by the General Presbyter at a subsequent Presbytery meeting and asked to offer a brief account of their faith journey.
- How is the MIF taken offline? After the congregational meeting, the Administrator for COM informs CLC staff that the call is “pending.” After the call is approved, the Administrator for COM asks CLC to remove the MIF from Church Leadership Connection. The CTC Co-Chair requests that the vacancy listing be removed from the Presbytery website.
- PNC Wrap-up. The PNC reviews its work and submits final data to the Administrator for COM on [EEO/AA Form 3](#). The PNC then seals all materials related to the chosen candidate, including references, and stores them in a secure place. The PNC destroys all other PIFs, references, interview notes, and reference check notes. They cannot be reused and should not be passed on to the other committees.
- The New Pastor’s Arrival. The congregation prepares for the arrival of the new Pastor and welcomes every member of the family. Team building with the new Pastor and Session begin, and the PNC provides support to the new pastor during the transition.
- Ordination/Installation. The Session and the new Pastor select a date for the installation service, in consultation with Presbytery staff and pursuant to Presbytery policy. The Stated Clerk approves the installation plans. The new Pastor is installed by Presbytery in cooperation with the congregation, at a time when other members of the Presbytery are able to attend. Please Note: Because the service of installation is a Presbytery service, it is the policy of COM not to approve services to be held on Sunday mornings, since that time would preclude many members of Presbytery from attending. Exceptions to this policy may be submitted to the Stated Clerk.

Thank you!

- The Congregational Transitions Commission appreciates the work you have done. You have participated in a unique experience, and we honor your dedication.
- We continue to need Liaisons to work with churches in transition in pastoral leadership. Elders who have served on PNCs have the experience and commitment needed to be Liaisons. Please consider serving in this capacity.

- The Congregation Transitions Commission of COM provides training for new Liaisons and holds semi-annual meetings for continuing education and sharing experiences.
- Please let your Liaison know if you are interested in more information on becoming a COM Liaison!

Appendix A: Resources

[National Capital Presbytery](https://www.thepresbytery.org/documents/committee-ministry-documents) <https://www.thepresbytery.org/documents/committee-ministry-documents>

- Presbytery policies, procedures, handbooks, and manuals are available on the NCP website. See especially the documents listed under [Committee on Ministry](#), Pastor Nominating Committees.
- *PNC/Session Handbook* [this handbook]
 - Sets out the policies and practices on calling Pastors, Associate Pastors, and Designated Pastors in National Capital Presbytery
 - Should be used in conjunction with [On Calling a Pastor](#), a PC(USA) resource
 - Where the two publications differ, the Presbytery's policy rules
- Procedures documents
 - [Calling a Pastor or Associate Pastor](#)
 - [Establishing a New Associate Pastor Position](#)
 - [Securing Pastoral Leadership for Immigrant Worshipping Communities](#)
 - [Admitting Ministers from Other Denominations](#)
 - [Conducting a Dual Search](#)
 - [Calling a Designated Pastor as Pastor](#)
- The [Calls and Jobs](#) tab on the NCP website current vacancies in our Presbytery, along with links to MIFs on Church Leadership Connection.

Searching for a Pastor the Presbyterian Way

- The Congregational Transitions Commission recommends that each PNC have access to *Searching for a Pastor the Presbyterian Way*, by Dean Foose.
- NCP will provide one copy to each church engaged in a search for an installed pastor. Additional copies can be ordered from Amazon and Cokesbury.

[Presbyterian Church \(USA\)](http://www.pcusa.org/) <http://www.pcusa.org/>

- [On Calling a Pastor](#) - a resource to use in conjunction with NCP resources
- [Church Leadership Connection](http://www.pcusa.org/clc) www.pcusa.org/clc
 - provides access to [Opportunity Search](#), the database of active MIFs (no password required)
 - [blank MIF and PIF forms and instructions](#); Church Leadership Connection staff and resources; log-in screens for submitting, editing, and approving MIFs (passwords required); and other materials on the search process.
- [PC\(USA\) Seminaries](#)
 - links to the web sites of all PC(USA) theological institutions
 - placement offices in seminaries that post resumes of current and former graduates who are seeking position

Appendix B: Constituting a Pastor Nominating Committee

Choosing the right combination of people to search for a new pastor is an important step in the process. If a committee is to be successful, there are certain things that should be considered.

- Each candidate must be made aware that the commitment can be anywhere from 12-24 months, perhaps longer. Also, meetings are often weekly, and even when committees don't meet, there is usually work that members are doing at home – reviewing candidates, checking references, listening to sermons. This is a big time commitment, and if members suddenly decide they can't handle the commitment, the entire process is slowed down.
- When considering PNC candidates, it is good to have a mix of new members and long-time members. Long-time members know the oral history and traditions of the church. Newer members bring a more objective eye and ear, and they often bring perspectives from other congregations. A mix of ages is an important aspect of making up the committee. The PNC should also represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the congregation.
- It is important that the members chosen have a variety of interests in terms of church programming – worship, education and ministry to children and youth, mission, pastoral care, outreach, and finance.
- In today's world, much of the search process is done online. Personal Information Forms (PIFs) are downloaded from the Church Leadership Connection website (CLC). In addition, members of the PNC often search for further information on a candidate through the internet. Many candidates send links to sermons posted on the web. Therefore, it is best if members of the search committee are comfortable enough with computers to do such tasks. If a nominating committee feels very strongly that there is someone in the congregation who must be on the PNC who does not have these skills, they should be aware that it will slow down the search process to have to print copies of PIFs and distribute them.
- Committee members should be people who can work well with others, listen carefully, are able to keep confidentiality, and are willing to dedicate the time required. They should be open to the working of the Holy Spirit, and not assume that they already know what the church needs for their next pastor.
- It is important not to have too large a committee. Ideally around 7 members, but no more than 9 makes a good committee. Committees with over 10 are unwieldy and have difficulty coming to consensus.

The work of the PNC can be exciting, at times frustrating and almost always rewarding. Most members gain an appreciation for the Presbyterian way of choosing pastors, and they grow to appreciate the assistance offered by the Presbytery.

The following should be understood by the Session prior to nomination of PNC members:

1. The Pastor Nominating Committee (or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee) normally is composed of 7 to 9 persons. The Session suggests the size of the PNC to the congregation, but the final decision rests with the congregation. *Note. There does not need to be an odd number, PNCs strive for consensus in their decision making.*
2. Although not recommended, some congregations elect one or more alternates (designated “first”, “second”, etc.). These non-voting members of the PNC attend meetings regularly to keep informed about the process, but do not have a role in decision-making unless they are called upon to fill a vacancy. Instead of alternates, a slightly larger PNC should be elected, but it is best not to exceed 12.
3. Nominations for the PNC are best made by the congregation-wide Nominating Committee, the group that nominates the church’s elders, deacons and trustees. The Nominating Committee should provide a mechanism for the congregation to suggest names.
4. PNC members should be broadly representative of the entire congregation (*Book of Order, G-2.0802*), with all major or important constituency groups represented. The PNC should reflect the diversity of the congregation in age, race, gender, marital and family status, theological position, worship preferences, church offices, and program areas of the church. Input from the congregation and Session regarding the qualities and attributes of the next pastor are important in developing the job description and MIF. However, PNC members will evaluate candidates as a close-knit group, praying and listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. PNC members should not seek opinions from non-PNC members once the MIF has been approved.
5. Representation. It is advisable to have a Session member on the PNC. This member is not chosen by the Session, but by the Nominating Committee, and does not “represent” the Session in any official way. This person can facilitate communication between the PNC and Session. In the case of an APNC to call a candidate for a specialized (versus general) AP, at least one APNC member should be able to expertly represent that focus area.
6. Officers. The PNC elects its own officers. They are not appointed or specified by the Nominating Committee.
7. The following qualities are needed to serve on a PNC.
 - a. Members should be both actively involved in the life of the church and also able to assume this additional responsibility.
 - b. The work of the committee must be kept absolutely confidential, even from family members.
 - c. Members must be willing to support the denomination’s and Presbytery’s EEO/AA policies.
 - d. Members must be willing to follow process and work with others.

- e. Members must be willing to work towards consensus, putting the best interests of the congregation over personal interests.
 - f. Members should understand that they will be involved in a calling process whereby the PNC seeks to discern God's call for new leadership in the church, rather than simply a hiring process.
8. Those asked to serve on the PNC should be made fully aware of the responsibility and commitment involved.
- a. The search process may take 12-24 months, with the PNC meeting weekly most of that time. It is expected that PNC duties will have priority over other church responsibilities (other than worship) throughout the search process.
 - b. The work involves preparing a Ministry Information Form (MIF), reviewing over 100 Personal Information Forms (PIFs), interviewing candidates, hearing them preach, and checking references.
 - c. There may be out-of-town travel on weekends to hear candidates preach and interview them.

At least a week prior to the congregational meeting the nominees and voting procedure should be publicized.

Appendix C: Budget Items for a PNC

It is not unreasonable for a church to have a budget of \$7,500 to \$10,000 for conducting a pastoral search. Churches that are limiting their search geographically may be able to have a smaller budget. The following expenses should be planned for in establishing the PNC budget:

- advertising in denominational publications
- face-to-face interviews, per candidate interviewed
 - travel (may include spouse)
 - hotel and meals for one or two nights
 - dinners with committee members
 - other incidental expenses
- return visit for the final candidate for examination
 - may include travel expenses, up to two nights lodging, meals, and incidental expenses
- return visit for the final candidate for the “Candidating Weekend” (including the congregational meeting and vote)
 - usually travel expenses, two nights lodging and meals, and incidental expenses (may include spouse)
 - may include cost of a reception for church with candidate and spouse, as well as a gathering/celebration with the candidate and the PNC and families. (It is a time to celebrate, and for the committee and their families to gather and have a chance to recognize the efforts of all committee members.)
 - printing of a brochure for the congregation to be introduced to the candidate
- return visit for the final candidate to look for real estate
 - up to three days’ travel, lodging, meals, incidental expenses (plus spouse)
- moving expenses, per Presbytery compensation guidelines

Appendix D: Agenda for the Congregational Meeting to Elect a PNC

1. Opening prayer
2. Organization of the meeting
 - Explanation by the Moderator of his/her role on behalf of Presbytery.
 - Announcement by the Moderator that the Clerk of Session is to serve as Secretary of the meeting. If the Clerk is not present, a Secretary Pro-tem must be elected or appointed with the approval of the congregation.
 - In consultation with the Clerk, the Moderator determines if a quorum is present.
 - Reading of the call for the meeting by the Clerk (or Secretary Pro-tem) and certification that public notice of the call has been given in accordance with the congregation's own rule for minimum notification requirements. (Book of Order G-1.0502)
 - Motion to establish a new position if the search will be for Associate Pastor and this has not been done at a previous congregational meeting.
 - Vote by congregation on the above motion when applicable.
3. Presentation by the COM Liaison (or other representative of the COM Congregation Transitions Commission)
 - Introduction. Connectional nature of PCUSA, policies of the Book of Order, National Capital Presbytery and Committee on Ministry
 - Outline of the basic steps of the Search Process for securing a new Pastor (or Associate Pastor), including necessary commitment and timeframe, MIF preparation, receiving PIFs, evaluating candidates, Presbytery reference checks, Examination Interview, one candidate is brought to the congregation, confidentiality of the process.
 - Presentation of Presbytery's EEO/AA policy (Note: The congregation hears a summary of the process but does not vote on it.)
 - Questions from the congregation and discussion
4. Presentation of the slate by the Session or the Nominating Committee of the church
 - Nominations from the floor. Before a person's name is placed in nomination, that person should be contacted about his/her willingness to serve. If additional candidates are proposed the congregation must vote to expand the size of the PNC.

- The vote may be a voice vote, or a written ballot. In the case of the latter, tellers count votes and report results to the Moderator who makes the announcement to the congregation.

5. Motion to adjourn and closing prayer

NOTE: PNC members will be asked to meet briefly with the Liaison immediately after the congregational meeting to agree on the time of the first PNC meeting. The Liaison shall convene the first meetings of the PNC to provide orientation, training, and team building for the PNC.

Appendix E: Commissioning Service for a PNC

With members of the PNC standing before the congregation, the presiding pastor shall say:

Presiding Pastor: These members have been elected to the Pastor Nominating Committee of _____ Church. They are: [pastor names the PNC members]. We ask them to present themselves for commissioning to the task.

In the Presbyterian Church (USA) our Constitution informs us that every church should have the pastoral services of a teaching elder. When a pastor resigns we are required to call a new pastor by electing a Pastor Nominating Committee. This committee is charged with searching out and screening potential candidates and presenting one to the congregation as a candidate for pastor.

In keeping with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the custom of _____ Church, you have been elected as a member of the Pastor Nominating Committee. You are asked to answer to the following questions.

Presiding Pastor: Do you accept the responsibility as a member of the Pastor Nominating Committee and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof?

Member: I will.

Presiding Pastor: Will you seek to discover the will of God for our congregation so that the person God wants as pastor here will be the one we call?

Member: I will.

Presiding Pastor: Will you have an openness to consider all candidates without regard to gender, age, marital status or disability?

Member: I will.

The presiding pastor will then address the congregation.

Presiding Pastor: Will we pray for them, be patient while they search, and support them in every way.

Congregation: We will.

Presiding Pastor: Will we acknowledge and respect the confidentiality of the task that is given to them?

Congregation: We will.

Presiding Pastor: I now declare that you have been set aside and commissioned to find a candidate for Pastor of _____ Church. Go with God. AMEN.

Appendix F: Sample Evaluation Forms

Sample Form 1: CANDIDATE EVALUATION FORM

Candidate's Name:

Evaluation based on:

Personal Information Form
 Contact with _____ by _____
 Interview with Candidate

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

List leadership competencies below and rank.

• Strong Weak -----

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Sample Form 2: PIF EVALUATION FORM #1

Candidate: _____

Ranking: *

Unacceptable (No)

Possible (Maybe)

Acceptable (Yes)

Objective Impressions of the Candidate	*Ranking	Remarks
--	----------	---------

N, M, Y

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Subjective Impressions of the Candidate

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Overall Impression of the Candidate

Specific Strengths or Weaknesses of Note:

Scoring of this PIF

Outstanding

Above Average

Average

Unlikely Candidate

Disposition:

Do you recommend that the PNC continue to consider this candidate?

Yes

No

PIF Evaluation Form #2

Candidate's Name _____

Date Received Date Reviewed _____

Reviewer _____

Specific Strengths:

Weaknesses Identified:

Other Comments:

General Impression of this Candidate (circle one):

Outstanding Above Average Average Poor

Disposition:

Do you recommend the PNC continue to consider this candidate?

_____ Yes ___ No ___ Maybe

Possible follow-up questions I would like to ask:

Q1.

Q2.

Q3.

Note: On the other side of this form, you might want to list your skill choices, key points to look for in PIFs, and any other important characteristics you are looking for.

Sample Form 3: REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Candidate _____

PNC Member _____ Date _____

Introduce Yourself

I am _____, representing the PNC of _____ Church in _____

We are searching for a _____ whose responsibilities would encompass

We are considering _____ for this position and s/he has given your name as a reference.

I'd like to spend a few moments talking to you about your perceptions of _____'s gifts, talents, and suitability for such a position.

Is this a convenient time for you to talk?

[When might I call back?]

Interview Questions

How long have you known _____?

In what capacity have you known _____?

If you were on a search committee at your church looking to call someone to a position such as ours, why would you want to call _____?

If you were on a search committee, are there any reasons that would make you hesitate to call _____ to such a position? If so, please describe.

Please give me some specific examples of actions that you think would uniquely qualify _____ for our position.

What is an area that may prove challenging for _____?

Is there an area that might prove challenging for us with _____?

How would you describe _____'s leadership style? _____

How does _____ relate to volunteers? Session? Professional staff?

Have you had occasion to see how _____ handles conflict?

Can you give us a one-word description of _____?

Recalling that _____ are the important components of our position, how would you rate _____ in relation to this position, on a scale of 1 to 5? (1=excellent match to 5=no match)

Rating = Why?

What other comments or information about _____ would be helpful for our committee to know?

Are there other persons that you could suggest we talk with concerning _____? Would you spell their names for me? Do you have phone numbers for them?

(Note: These are secondary references. Should you decide to pursue a secondary reference you must go directly to the candidate for the candidate's awareness, comment, and permission prior to any further action.)

Thank you very much for your time and input.

Appendix G: Interview Questions that Assess Emotional Intelligence

Competency Model

<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Markers</i>	<i>Behaviors</i>
Self-Awareness	Authenticity Self-Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words match actions. Accepts responsibility and acknowledges mistakes. Has an ethical code. • Has insight and acceptance of strengths and limitations. • Articulates and use emotions effectively.
Self-Management	Motivation/Initiative Organizational Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes initiative for leadership and completion of tasks. • Organizes tasks, projects, and teams effectively. • Perseveres in face of setbacks and disappointments.
Resiliency	Mental Health Emotional Stability Work/Life Balance Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts effectively to life's demands and stressors, and seeks assistance when needed. • Responds rather than reacts under stress. • Sets limits and takes time for self-care. • Has physical capacity to do tasks of ministry.

Relationship to Self

Behaviorally Based Sample Questions:

Self-Awareness

- Tell me about a situation where it was really important for you to share your thoughts and feelings and how you did that.
- Describe a time when you made a mistake or failed to meet a commitment and what you did.

Self-Management

- Tell me about a new idea or approach that you championed in your professional career. What steps did you take to implement your idea? How did you deal with resistance?
- Share a recent time when you received negative feedback and what you did with that feedback.

Resiliency

- Describe several non-work activities that you enjoy. How often do you participate in these?
- Have you ever been hospitalized for mental or emotional reasons?
- Tell me about a stressful situation you faced in your personal or professional life. What would you do differently if anything?

Relationship to Others

<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Markers</i>	<i>Behaviors</i>
Communication	Assertiveness Clear Presentation Active Listening Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocates for others, asks for own wants and needs. • Summarizes information, expresses thoughts clearly with congruent emotional tone. • Demonstrates listening skills that include reflecting back accurately the content and underlying emotions of another's communication.
Relationship Building	Quality of Personal Relationships Interpersonal Style Awareness of Impact Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains close relationships with friends and family, has good personal support system. • Presents in a warm, approachable manner, helps others feel welcomed, accepted, valued. • Sensitive to social cues, able to gauge how they're coming across by others' reactions. • Awareness of and appreciative of the feelings of others. Sensitive to others' feelings and can tune in to what, how, and why people feel the way they do.
Conflict Management	Sensitivity to Issues Collaborative Courageous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attuned to others' feelings, responds to another's mood with accuracy and sensitivity, maintains a pastoral presence during times of crisis and difficulty for individuals or the church. • Handles conflicts non-defensively, assertively, tailors response to fit situation, mediates differences between others. • Addresses difficult issues in a prompt and direct manner. • Focuses on shared goals and common interests to build win/win solutions as appropriate.

Behaviorally Based Sample Questions:

Communication

- Share examples of positive feedback you have received regarding your communication style.
- Describe a task or responsibility that you delegated to another person. How did you ensure they understood what was expected? How did you monitor progress?

Relationship Building

- Share an example of a time when you needed to confide in someone. In whom did you confide?
- Describe a time when someone shared intimate or personal feelings with you.

Conflict Management

- Tell me about a recent conflict in which you were involved. What role did you take?
- Describe a difficult or unpopular stance that you had to take on behalf of something you strongly believed in. How did you bring others along?

Relationship to World

<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Markers</i>	<i>Behaviors</i>
Work in Systems	Knowledge of Boundaries Family System Awareness Systems Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates understanding of own family of origin including own role in the family and some of the dynamics that might affect pastoral ministry. • Communicates awareness of appropriate limits regarding professional/personal boundaries.
Leadership Potential	Relationship to Authority Presence as a Leader Shared Leadership Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes leadership experiences and demonstrates poise and self-confidence. • Describes experiences of teamwork as well as working effectively within systems of authority. • Describes history of being able to adapt in effective, healthy ways to changing circumstances.
Problem Solving	Uses diverse information sources Brings problems to closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates effective decision-making processes. • Describes strategies for gathering multiple data points and making difficult decisions despite ambiguity.

Work in Systems

- Share an example of a time when your professional boundaries were challenged and how you managed the situation.
- Tell me about a recurring relationship pattern you have noticed in your life and the potential implications for ministry.

Leadership Potential

- Describe a situation where you needed to persuade a skeptical audience.
- Tell me about a time when you felt unprepared for a situation and what you did.

Problem Solving

- Share an example of a time you solved a challenging problem at work. How did you do this?
- Describe an ambiguous situation you were in or a time when multiple perspectives were involved and how you guided the problem to closure.

Relationship to God

<i>Competencies</i>	<i>Markers</i>	<i>Behaviors</i>
Faith & Lifestyle Integration	Ability to Articulate Faith Passion for Faith Active Spirituality Ethical Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congruence between call and sense of identity. Balance between internal and external affirmations of call. • Articulates strong awareness of others' needs and desire to serve. • Meshing between vocational interests and ministry roles. • Ability to inspire and motivate others. • Names specific forms of prayer or practice and their benefits. • Congruence between beliefs and lifestyle. • Congruence between public and private 'selves'.

Behaviorally Based Sample Questions:

Faith & Lifestyle Integration

- Tell me about a time when God 'spoke' to you.
- Tell me about a time when you argued with God.

Appendix H: Theological Fit

Are Our Theologies Compatible? Questions to Help a PNC Ascertain the Theological “Fit” Between Final Pastoral Candidates and the Congregation

Baptism

- What factors do you take into account in deciding whether to baptize an infant?

Being a Presbyterian

- Why are you a *Presbyterian*; in your daily ministry does it matter that you are a Presbyterian as opposed to some other denomination? If so, how?

Church Growth

- Do you favor a program that actively recruits new church members? Why or why not?

Church’s role

- Do you believe that the church has a prophetic role in our society?

Confessions

- Within our Book of Confessions, what is your favorite confession or creed, and why?

Continuing Education

- What theologians or other Christian writers do you read and use in your own spiritual and theological development and sermon preparation?
- What periodicals and books have you read over the last year? What one or two concepts did you find most intriguing in that reading?

Creation

- How would you explain to a class of young people the relationship between creation as described in Genesis and the theory of evolution?
- Do you believe that Adam and Eve were real people? If not, how do you interpret their role in the Biblical story?

Education

- What is your opinion about having church school held concurrently with the worship service?

Evangelism

- How do you see evangelism being implemented in the life of your congregation?

Heaven and Hell

- Do you believe in hell? If so, describe what it means to you. If not, why not?
- What is heaven? Describe what you believe it is.

Lord's Supper

- Whom do you invite to partake of communion? Who is included; who is excluded?

Mission

- What does the “mission” of the church mean to you?
- What does it mean to be “missional?”

Officers of the Church

- What qualifications do you believe are important for elders and deacons to have?

Prayer

- Why do we pray; what happens during prayer?

Preaching

- How do you go about preparing sermons? How much time do you spend in sermon preparation?
- What are you seeking to accomplish in your preaching?

Reformed Theology

- What doctrine within the Reformed Tradition do you have the most trouble with, and why?

Resurrection

- Do you believe in the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus?

Salvation

- What is salvation, and how is one saved?

Seminary

- Why did you attend the seminary you did? If you were to make the choice again now, would you choose the same place? Why or why not?

Universalism

- Is Christianity the only true religion?

Weddings

- What factors do you take into account in deciding whether you will perform a marriage service?

Prepared by Betty Douglass, April 2015

Appendix I: EEO/AA Form 1

PNC Process & EEO/AA: Form #1

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action in Ministry

TO: Committee on Ministry, National Capital Presbytery

FROM: _____(Name of Church)

1. On _____(date), the congregation heard the PC(USA) EEO/AA policy as described in the *Book of Order* F-1.0403 and the Presbytery's Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program for calling of a Pastor (Associate) to fulfill the requirements.

2. On _____(date), the Pastor Nominating Committee discussed and took action signifying its affirmation of the *Book of Order* F-1.0403 and its intent that the Pastor Nominating Committee will follow the Presbytery's Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program for calling of a Pastor (Associate) to fulfill the requirements.

3. On _____(date), the Session of the congregation heard the PC(USA) EEO/AA policy as described in the *Book of Order* F-1.0403 and the Presbytery's Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Program for calling of a Pastor (Associate) to fulfill the requirements. Its approval of the CIF signifies its support of this policy and program.

Signed:

_____(Clerk of Session)

_____(Chair, PNC)

_____(Moderator of Session)

_____(Date)

This form should be sent to the Administrator for COM and must be received before the MIF will be approved online by COM.

Approved by COM/MPR February 1986
Revised by COM/NCP May 2007
Revised by COM 7/29/09

Appendix J: EEO/AA Form 2 - Request for General Presbyter Check

This form is required each time a General Presbyter Check is requested.

Name of Church _____

PNC Chair _____ Liaison _____

Please conduct a General Presbyter Check on (PIFs attached): Date _____

<i>Candidate(s)</i>	<i>Presbytery</i>	<i>For NCP use</i>

Liaisons should review the EEO/AA policy with PNCs noting: *“that each PNC track its implementation of this policy, that the Liaison report to the COM the compliance of the PNC with this policy, and that each PNC include at least one woman among its final candidates.”* PNCs must, therefore, have at least one woman among the candidates for whom they are requesting General Presbyter Checks.

Indicate all of the steps you are using and plan to use in your search under “Your Steps” in the chart below. Then complete the rest of the chart through the General Presbyter’s Check step by indicating the appropriate numbers of candidates in each column.

Search Process		Total	Women	Persons with Disabilities (if known)	Racial/ Ethnic Persons (if known)
<i>Potential Steps</i>	Your Steps				
<i>PIFs Received & Reviewed</i>	PIFs Received & Reviewed				
<i>Sermon Review (CDs, Web)</i>					
<i>Phone Interviews</i>					
<i>Reference Checks</i>					
<i>Gen. Presbyter Check</i>	General Presbyter Check <i>(Required before face to face.)</i>				
<i>Face-to-Face Interviews</i>					
<i>Heard Preach</i>					
<i>Offered the Position</i>	Offered the Position				

Please send the completed form and the PIF(s) of the candidate(s) by email to the Administrator for COM

Appendix K: EEO/AA Form 3 – Final Report

Final Report of the PNC Process and EEO/Affirmative Action Compliance

This form is intended for use by COM Liaisons in cooperation with the PNC at the completion of the Pastor Nominating Committee search process and prior to the Examination. Liaisons and/or PNC Chairs are encouraged to answer the questions as frankly and openly as possible. Information from this questionnaire will be used by the Committee on Ministry in its continuing efforts to promote and establish equal employment opportunities and affirmative action as appropriate. **Please submit the completed form to the Administrator for COM.**

Name of Church: _____
 PNC Chair: _____ Liaison: _____
 PNC Elected (Date): _____ CIF Completed (Date): _____
 Examination (Scheduled Date): _____
 Title of Position Filled: _____
 Name of Person Called: _____
 Check all that apply:
 Woman: _____ Racial/Ethnic Person: _____ Person with Disability: _____
 Other: _____ Specify: _____

Search Process		Total Number	Women	Persons with Disabilities (if known)	Racial/Ethnic Persons (if known)
<i>Potential Steps</i>	Your Steps				
<i>PIFs Received & Reviewed</i>	PIFS Received & Reviewed				
<i>Sermon Review</i>					
<i>Phone/Video Interviews</i>					
<i>Reference Checks</i>					
<i>Gen. Presbyter Checks</i>	<i>Gen. Presbyter Check (Required before face-to-face)</i>				
<i>Face-to-Face Interviews</i>					
<i>Heard Preach</i>					
<i>Offered the Position</i>	Offered the Position				

Appendix L: Agenda for the Congregational Meeting for the Call of a Pastor or an Associate Pastor

Note: The candidate is not present at the congregational meeting until after the result of the vote is announced. The candidate is told the details of the vote before rejoining the meeting.

1. The Moderator opens the meeting with prayer.
2. Organization of the meeting
 - a. Moderator announces that the Clerk of Session shall serve as secretary of the meeting. If the Clerk is not present, a secretary pro tem is elected, or appointed with congregational approval.
 - b. The Moderator determines whether a quorum of the congregation is present.
 - c. The Clerk reads the call for the meeting and certifies that public notice of the call has been given in accordance with the congregation's own rule for minimum public notice for its meetings.
3. The Moderator introduces the Pastor Nominating Committee to present its report.
4. Report of the Pastoral Nominating Committee
 - a. The Chair of the PNC, or several members, presents information on the search process, the candidate, reasons for his/her selection, and the terms of call.
 - b. An opportunity is provided for questions and answers.
5. Election of the Pastor or Associate Pastor
 - a. The Moderator puts the question, "Are you ready to proceed to the election of a Pastor (or Associate Pastor)?"
 - b. The Moderator explains that Committee on Ministry policy directs that a positive vote of less than 85% of those present requires the vote to be forwarded to COM for further review and to give the candidate guidance and time to discern the will of God. COM will approve or not approve the call.
 - c. If they declare themselves ready, the Moderator shall declare the name submitted by the PNC to be in nomination.
 - d. The Moderator explains the voting process.
 - i. All communing members on the active roll of that particular church who are in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote.
 - ii. The vote is one vote on both the candidate and the terms of call.
 - iii. The vote is taken by secret ballot, with 3 choices: yes, no, or abstain.

- e. The Moderator appoints tellers and designates one as chairperson.
 - i. To expedite counting, suggest that ballots not be folded but simply turned over.
 - ii. The ballots are distributed, collected, and counted.
 - f. The chairperson of tellers reports to the Moderator and the congregation the number of ballots cast and the number of affirmative and negative votes and abstentions.
 - o If the vote was not unanimous, a motion to make it unanimous is not permitted. (See note below if there is a substantial minority.)
 - g. The candidate is told the exact tally of the votes, is invited to join the meeting, and is welcomed!
6. The Moderator calls for a motion to dismiss the PNC and commend the members for their good work and faithfulness.
 7. Announcements are made relative to the pastor-elect, such as expected date of arrival, etc.
 8. A motion for adjournment is made, and the meeting is closed with prayer.

Reminder: Four original copies of Terms of Call Form B must each be signed by the PNC Chair, pastor/candidate and the moderator of the meeting. The Stated Clerk will sign the forms later. The four signed forms are to be mailed to Sara Coe, Stated Clerk of National Capital Presbytery.

Relevant COM Policy:

Whenever a congregational vote to call a pastor results in a substantial minority in opposition (15%), the moderator shall forward the vote to the COM to review the results of the election with the candidate and the PNC and the congregation, and offer guidance to the candidate as he/she discerns the will of God. If this occurs, the moderator should announce to the congregation that the large minority vote (over 15%) requires the vote to be forwarded to COM for further review and to give the candidate guidance and time to discern the will of God. COM will approve or not approve the call. This action was taken by COM on June 5, 2003 on behalf of Presbytery and reported to Presbytery on June 24, 2003.

Relevant Book of Order provisions: G-2.0803 Call Process

According to the process of the Presbytery and prior to making its report to the congregation, the pastor nominating committee shall receive and consider the Presbytery's counsel on the merits, suitability, and availability of those considered for the call. When the way is clear for the committee to report to the congregation, the committee shall notify the Session, which shall call a congregational meeting

