

Process for Calling a Pastor

Once a Pastor Announces Intention to Leave

- *Moderator of session and liaison from Ministry Committee appointed
- *Presbytery representatives meet with session to consider pastoral options: interim, designated, or to proceed directly to calling a pastor. An interim PNC may be selected before a pastor's departure.
- *Congregational meeting to dissolve pastoral relationship

After the Pastor Leaves or in case of retirement, 1-2 months prior to the Pastor's Departure.

- Months 1-2* *In consultation with Ministry Committee Session creates a process for the congregation to answer the following questions in order to prepare a Ministry Information Form: [Note: Outgoing pastor is not involved in this process.]
- What is the congregation's vision for ministry? Additionally describe how this vision is lived out.*
- How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community?*
- How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?*
- Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation.*
- For what specific tasks, assignments, and programs areas will this person have responsibility?*

Another helpful set of questions: *Who are we? Who are our neighbors? What is God calling us to do?*

Another helpful question to consider: *As we look around us, what breaks God heart?*

*Following review of a written report on the results of the congregational discernment/self-study, Ministry Committee gives permission to elect a PNC.

*Congregational Meeting held to elect PNC of 5, possibly 7 members if necessary to represent various groups in the congregation.

Months 3-4: PNC meets with presbytery representatives before writing MIF which must be approved by Session and by Ministry Committee to go on Church Leadership Connection.

Months 5+: PNC meets with presbytery representatives before consideration of PIF's

- *After reviewing PIFs, potential candidates selected and contacted for availability
- *Sermons watched/listened to
- *References of candidates checked by PNC
- *Executive Reference check by General Presbyter (PNC may not conduct interviews until clearance is given by General Presbyter)
- *Conference call/Skype interview of candidates
- *Face to Face interviews with Candidates (if desired a "neutral pulpit" can be arranged in order to hear the candidate preach in person. Contact General Presbyter or Associate for Congregational Support to make such arrangements.)
- *Decision made on candidate
- *Agreement reached on terms of call, contract form filled out and submitted to Ministry Committee, criminal & financial background checks completed
- *Candidate meets with Ministry Committee to approve match and membership in presbytery (*If candidate is not yet ordained, they will also need to meet with Vocations Committee and be examined by presbytery)
- *Congregational meeting held to elect pastor (Pastor may preach before the meeting but this is not required.)
- *Installation held ordinarily within one month after pastor starts work.