

SECURING A PASTOR or ASSOCIATE PASTOR
Summary of Procedure as outlined by
the Committee on Ministry, Presbytery of Los Ranchos
(Form of Government Chapters XI, XIV)

FOR: PASTOR or ASSOCIATE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE
(For use at the ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING being conducted by the Committee on Ministry)

Note: references to pastor in the following will refer to the Pastor or Associate Pastor, whichever is appropriate.

I. DEVOTIONS and PRAYER
DISTRIBUTION OF THIS AGENDA
INTRODUCTIONS

II. FUNCTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

A. The first meeting of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC or APNC) shall be conducted by the representative of Committee on Ministry (COM) as arranged by the convener of the PNC with the COM.

B. The COM has appointed a moderator for your session, if the pastor has left. The COM will work with the session in its ongoing work of guiding the church during the interim, including providing names of possible pulpit supply and interim supply ministers.

The one responsibility of your committee is to nominate a candidate to become pastor or associate pastor of your church. We do not propose to, nor can we, do your work for you. But we can offer service, counsel and experience which can make your work more efficient and rewarding.

C. The COM will appoint a liaison to your committee. Direct contact may be made with the COM at any time through him/her.

D. Statement of Responsibility (Form of Government XI, G-11.0502.d)

“It (COM) shall counsel with churches regarding calls for permanent pastoral relations, visiting and counseling with every committee elected to nominate a pastor or associate pastor. It shall advise with the committee regarding the merits, availability, and suitability of any candidate or minister whose name is contemplated for nomination to the congregation, and shall have the privilege of suggesting names to the committee. No call to a permanent pastoral relationship shall be in order for consideration by the presbytery unless the church has received and considered the committee’s counsel before action is taken to issue a call. A call to a permanent pastoral relationship shall not be issued until it has been approved by the presbytery.”

III. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Be a Praying Committee

Seeking a new pastor requires more than human wisdom. Your committee should spend some time in prayer at each meeting beyond just formal opening and closing prayers. Some committees select one person to prepare devotions for each meeting; others let each member take a time in rotation. Never assume it will just happen. Also, ask the members of the congregation to join with you in asking for God's wisdom and guidance.

B. Be a Confidential Committee

All matters discussed with this committee should **be absolutely confidential**. Do not reveal names of ministers under consideration or any of your comments or decision about them either within or outside your church. The congregation has chosen you to do a sacred work on its behalf, and the acceptance of your final report will largely be determined by the manner in which you maintain silence outside this committee. This should be made clear especially to the members of your family. Moreover, you will avoid hurting some minister and/or some other congregation by keeping your discussions strictly confidential.

C. Pulpit Guests

No one should preach in the pulpit of your church who is, or could be persuaded to become a candidate; this will apply until you ask the session to invite your nominee to preach in the pulpit of your church for the congregation's consideration. It is the policy of the Church: No one can be called as pastor who has preached in the pulpit of your church during the past six months, unless an exception has been sought and granted by the presbytery. The reason for this policy rests on the fact that you will make your decision in favor of a particular candidate on the basis of much more than one sermon. If the congregation was allowed to hear candidates, it would reach a decision on the basis of only one sermon (See also Procedure 3, Section IV).

D. Associate

"The official relationship of an associate to a church is not dependent upon that of a pastor, but an associate is not eligible to succeed immediately the pastor in a church which they have served together." (G-14.0501)

IV. CHURCH INFORMATION FORM

May be obtained online at <http://www.pcusa.org/clc/forms.htm> in Word or Acrobat PDF format or a hard copy may be secured from the Presbytery Office.

Download Parts I and II and also the "Skills List" which will be useful in filling out the CIF. Become familiar with the Church Leadership Connections (CLC) information on the website as many frequently asked questions are answered there.

- A. Your first task will be to complete the Church Information Form (CIF). This form should be completed using information in the congregational study of your church. Personal Information Forms (PIF) will not be sent to your committee until the CIF is approved by the Presbytery. In filling out the CIF, pay particular attention to the Skills choices as they are the primary 'matching' characteristics used in the choice of suitable candidates by the CLC system.

- B. Upon completion of the CIF, it should be approved by the Session and then forwarded to the Presbytery for approval. At this point, the salary figures will also be reviewed and approved by the COM Compensation Committee. With regard to the Compensation and Housing part of the CIF, note that the maximum salary, not including housing, needs to be worked out with the Session as to feasibility with regard to the church's budget. The total compensations figures that must be considered should include the housing, required pension/medical, and reimbursable professional expenses. The housing issue needs to be fully researched as to potential costs that may require arrangements such as shared equity or other capital contributions that must be planned for in the event the candidate does not have sufficient equity or resources to find adequate housing.
 - C. Executive Presbyter (EP) or COM assigns a login ID and password to PNC/Search Committee and Clerk of Session. This information is necessary to do the next step as well as later inquiries, see step G.
 - D. PNC/Search Committee enters the CIF on-line; the CLC system generates an email message to Clerk of Session and COM requesting approval of the CIF
 - E. Clerk of Session and COM login to CLC and approve the CIF
 - F. The CIF will appear on the Opportunities Search of the Presbyterian Church website <http://www.pcusa.org/clc/index.htm>
 - G. The initial match of CIF to PIFs is made by the EP and will appear on the church's login page as a Referral List.
- V. PASTORAL CANDIDATES
- A. Receiving Names
 - 1. The pastor nominating committee receives names of candidates from various sources, such as, members of the church, friends, nearby pastors, and the matching by the EP. Any candidate desiring to be considered may send their PIF to your committee. Such "self-referral" PIFs may constitute the largest number your committee will receive.
 - 2. Make clear to the congregation that your committee welcomes the submission of names of possible candidates. You will want to request that they be presented to you in writing, with some indication of the person's qualifications as pastor for your church. Be sure to acknowledge all suggestions indicating that the suggested name will be given consideration, however it is important for the members of your congregation to realize that you cannot give them information as to your actions with regard to the names suggested. The only decision reported to the congregation will be the final candidate of your church.
 - B. Personal Information Forms (PIFs)
 - 1. A PIF is prepared by a minister in standard format, giving basic biographical information together with statements of her/his theological views and particular strengths in various aspects of church leadership

and life.

2. PIFs are kept on file by:
Call Referral Services
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202-1396
502/569-5713

This office maintains PIFs for all ministers of the church who have completed one, and for some other ministers interested in serving within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

3. The Call Referral Service is a service organization. It does not endorse or recommend ministers to you. The responsibility for selection belongs to your committee and congregation in conjunction with the Committee on Ministry and the Presbytery, which must approve your selection.
4. In a few days after receiving your completed Church Information Form (CIF), matching will provide a number of Personal Information Forms (PIFs) which have matched your CIF.
If it is desired, at any time, additional matches can be made by changes in the skill mix by requesting the EP to do so.
5. Upon request, you may receive additional PIFs. Every effort should be made to identify a suitable candidate at an early date, but only after following the full process.
6. You may request the Executive Presbyter (EP) to send you the PIF of any minister you wish, including those of ministers suggested to your committee (See A.1 Receiving Names above).
7. If the EP is able to secure the requested PIF from Call Referral Services, it will be forwarded to the PNC/APNC.

Individual pastors may also send you their PIFs directly. No transmittal slip from the Call Referral Service will accompany these "self referrals."

8. You may, but you are not obligated to, correspond with ministers whose PIFs you receive from the Call Referral Service. However, once you have entered into any correspondence (in person, by letter, or by telephone) you are obliged to notify that person of her/his status from time to time, indicating whether she/he is still under consideration. When you eliminate a particular minister from consideration, it is not necessary to supply justification for your decision. As a matter of courtesy, be careful not to leave any minister "dangling" once you have initiated contact.
9. By a process of evaluating PIFs, listening to sermon tapes, telephone interviews, reference checking, etc., the list of candidates will be prioritized and a determination will be made as to which candidates will constitute the "short list."

10. Normally, you will narrow your selection to about **three to five** candidates. When you have reached this point, you will contact these candidates to ascertain their current degree of interest in the position. If a particular candidate is interested, she/he will probably want to see a copy of your Church Information Form. NOTE: The final names of candidates for a position must be submitted to the Presbytery Executive through the COM liaison for Presbytery reference checks.
11. Credentials sub-committee of the Committee on Ministry must review candidates prior to the final interview process by your pastor nominating committee!
12. Of the finalists, you will hear each candidate preach, and you will conduct a thorough interview with them. You will show them your church facilities and grounds and give them maximum and almost continuous exposure to the members of your committee for the several days they are among you. Decide ahead of time the questions which will be asked of the candidate and by which members of your committee.
13. Once your committee has decided in favor of a particular pastor-candidate the COM liaison will inform the EP and Stated Clerk. If one has not already taken place, arrange for an interview with your candidate by the Credentials Committee of the Committee on Ministry through the liaison to the Committee on Ministry.
14. Terms of the call must be approved by COM, in particular, the salary figures, before formal presentation to the candidate for his/her acceptance.

Remember, the final decision is a three-way agreement between the minister, the church, and the presbytery.

You are now ready to proceed to Procedure No. 5.

VI. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Race, Ethnic Origin, Age, Sex, or Marital Status
Your attention is called to the instructions in the Form of Government (G-11.0502.g) as follows:

"It (PNC) shall provide for the implementation of equal opportunity employment for ministers and candidates without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability. In the case of each call, it shall report to the presbytery the steps in this implementation taken by the calling group."

B. Securing Information on Candidates

You will probably find very soon that the help from the national church and presbytery are invaluable to you during your search for a pastor. Usually, the Call Referral Service is able to secure valuable background information for you on any minister within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at your request.

C. Budget for your committee

It is helpful to establish a budget for the work of your committee from the beginning, or to have an understanding with the session (and trustees, if they are a separate body), so that necessary monies are available to do your work. Committee expenses are of two kinds: a) committee travel, telephone calls, correspondence, etc.; and b) expenses for bringing a minister from a distance, when your committee wants to hear that minister in a neutral pulpit and interview the minister. .

To maintain complete CONFIDENTIALITY, the Pastor Nominating Committee should establish a separate bank account, making a full and final financial report when they have completed their assignment. It is appropriate to reimburse the liaison from the Committee on Ministry for their travel costs. No honorarium is expected - they are volunteers.

- D. When you are ready to seriously consider a particular minister, before she/he is asked, you must contact the Committee on Ministry in order that we may share with you whether she/he is acceptable and available (NOTE: It is the Committee on Ministry that must approve and present the call to the presbytery for final action).

VII. ORGANIZE YOUR COMMITTEE

Elect a moderator, a vice moderator, and a secretary (often a recording and a corresponding secretary are needed), and a treasurer, if necessary.

Set a date for your next meeting, at which you will begin writing the Church Information Form from the information in the Congregational Study.

VIII. CLOSE YOUR MEETING WITH PRAYER