

PROCESSING THE PASTORAL CALL  
FINAL STEPS

FOR: CHAIRPERSON OF PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

When you have reached a decision, normally by unanimous vote of your committee and the candidate has indicated his/her willingness to accept the call if approved, you are ready to process the call. Before proceeding any further, contact the chairperson of the presbytery Committee on Ministry to see if that committee will concur in your decision.

NEXT STEPS

1. A letter should be written by the pastor nominating committee to your pastor candidate including the following information:

Date candidate is to preach for congregation

Compensation

- a. Salary/Housing (Presbytery minimum is \$ \_\_\_\_\_)
- b. Percent and amount of Pension
- c. Study leave - length (two weeks) and allowance (Presbytery minimum is \$ 1,000)
- d. Vacation - length (Presbytery minimum is one-month = 30 calendar days) (The length and time of the vacation the first year should be made clear - full period or pro-rated).
- e. Other Allowances (e.g., auto/travel, professional expense, book allowance, supplemental insurance, etc.)
- f. Amount of moving expenses - if any (consider indicating a maximum dollar amount).
- g. Effective date of call (This is the date he/she is to begin service and cannot be prior to the date presbytery will meet to act on the call.)
- h. Housing arrangements/shared equity, if any.

Provide a place at the bottom of letter for the pastor or candidate to sign, affirming the terms of the call.

Note: A copy of this letter must be sent to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery.

2. Ask the session to call a congregational meeting, normally following the service at which the candidate will preach in your church, to act upon the recommendation of your committee. Your moderator will preside at this meeting or if unable to do so, another minister appointed by Presbytery will be designated. (See *"Congregational Meeting for the Call of a Pastor"* - Procedure 6).
3. Request official call forms from the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. From the information in item 1 above, the official call shall be prepared (four copies) by the Pastor Nominating Committee and sent to the Presbytery office for processing after the congregational meeting.

4. Prior to presentation to the congregation, you may wish to arrange for informal meetings with the candidate and leaders and staff of your church. Some candidates desire to have a meeting with the session before making a decision. This is in order. Some churches have had one or more “open houses” for the candidate (and family) to meet members of the congregation on the day prior to the congregational meeting.
5. It is suggested that the pastor nominating committee prepare a letter to be sent to every member of the congregation, giving a biographical sketch of the minister they are proposing and their reasons for feeling he/she is the person God has been preparing for leadership in their particular church. Sometimes a picture is used along with the letter.

It is suggested such a letter be sent out only a few days before the date of the congregational meeting. This serves a three-fold purpose; namely:

- a. To acquaint the members with the candidate being presented.
  - b. To avoid the possibility of small groups forming in support of another candidate who has been under consideration but not being recommended.  
Note: This is the only place where there is NO provision for nominations from the floor. Only your candidate can be voted upon.
  - c. To remind the members of the congregational meeting and the purpose for which it is called.
6. In addition to the foregoing, be prepared to tell how you came to your decision, and have other members of the committee, strategically chosen, give their particular reasons why they believe this person is God’s minister for your particular church. Enthusiasm is contagious at this point.
  7. The vote must be by written ballot. Hence, it is highly important that your recommendation be unanimous, enthusiastic, and given with conviction. If it is so given, then the congregation will be ready to accept your nomination. The fewer negative votes cast, if any, the better impression upon your nominee.
  8. Four copies of the official call form shall be brought by the moderator to the congregational meeting. A record of the congregational action, listing the number of “yes” and “no” votes together with all copies of the call shall be immediately forwarded to the Presbytery Stated Clerk.
  9. The pastor-elect will need to complete the “Arrangements for Installation” (*Form No. 7 and 7d*) which must reach the Presbytery office two weeks prior to the meeting of presbytery at which the installation commission will be approved.

Note: Installation cannot take place until AFTER the pastor-elect has been received by the presbytery if he/she is coming from another presbytery. (See “*Installation of a Pastor*” - *Procedure No. 7.*)

10. If not previously done, have the PNC secretary inform all candidates with whom you have had correspondence or conversation, that they are no longer under consideration.
11. If the minister is from another presbytery, the process of transfer normally requires two presbytery meetings:

- a. This presbytery, upon recommendation of the Committee on Ministry, reviews the terms of the call, finds it in order and transmits it to the minister's presbytery for its action and his/her acceptance.
- b. The minister's presbytery votes approval of the call and upon his/her acceptance of it, to release him/her from the present pastoral relationship and transfer him/her to this presbytery. "No minister or candidate shall receive a call except through the hands of that person's own presbytery." G-14.0507.

See also:

<i>Procedure No. 6:</i>	<i>Congregational Meeting for the Call of a Pastor</i>
<i>Procedure No. 7:</i>	<i>Installation of a Pastor, Associate Pastor</i>
<i>Procedure No. 7d:</i>	<i>Ordination and/or Installation Plans</i>