



A Manual for Pastor Nominating Committees in the Presbytery of Ohio Valley

An Overview of the Pastoral Search Process

A Pastoral Letter from the Executive Presbyter

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Sample Emails

- initial email to matches
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- email to those no longer being considered after reference checks
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Downloadable Forms for PNC Chairs

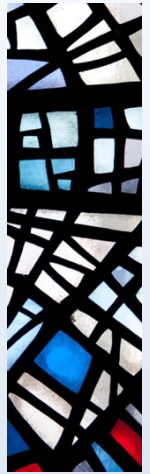
Web Links to Church Leadership Connection

- CLC Manual: On Calling a Pastor
- PNC Training Videos
- Downloadable Ministry Information Form

All material not adapted from
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by telephone: 866-344-7853
or email: office@presbyteryov.org

An Overview of the Pastoral Search Process in the Presbytery of Ohio Valley

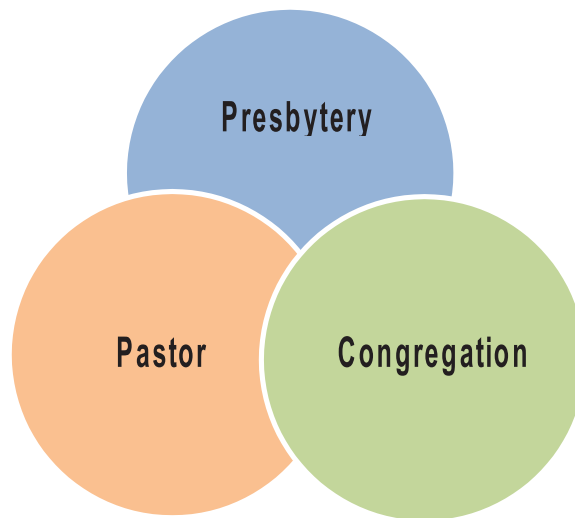
providing introductory information
to sessions, congregations and pastor nominating committees



The Call Process

“Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission in the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. Christ alone rules, calls, teaches, and uses the Church as he wills.” (Book of Order, F-1.0202).

Presbyterians believe that God uses committees, papers, procedures, and our polity, sprinkled with a generous measure of prayer, Scripture, and worship, to help you discern who it is that God is calling to be your pastor. This call is confirmed as the pastor, the church, and the presbytery each say “yes” to the relationship.



This three-way partnership is acted out throughout the pastoral call process, with the presbytery having the primary responsibility for oversight of the process: “No pastoral relationship may be established, changed, or dissolved without the approval of the presbytery” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0502).

With excerpts from “On Calling a Pastor”
produced by the Church Leadership of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
and revised by the Presbytery of Ohio Valley for use within its bounds

Presbytery as a Participant in the Pastoral Call Process

The presbytery will be your companion in the search process. We consider it a privilege to partner with you at such an important time in your life and work. Here are the people with whom you'll work most closely:

- **The Committee on Ministry (COM) Liaison** will be your primary guide through the process. He or she will attend the organizational meeting and training session, and will stay in touch throughout your work to offer support and advice. Please copy the COM Liaison on your emails, and keep him or her informed as to your meeting dates and times. And be sure to let your Liaison know if you'd like for him or her to be present for a meeting. The presbytery will pay for that person's mileage from per capita dollars.
- **The PNC Training and Support Liaison (Jean Beaver)** performs her work on behalf of the Executive Presbyter. Most often, she is the one who: 1) conducts initial PNC training; 2) assists PNCs in posting the MIF to the Church Leadership Connection; and 3) performs matching. She is also available for further consultation at the request of the PNC and with the approval of the Executive Presbyter. Jean's wages and expenses are paid for by the presbytery from per capita and shared mission dollars.
- **The Executive Presbyter (Susan McGhee)** works in consultation with the **Committee on Ministry Moderator** to provide general oversight of the search process on behalf of the Committee on Ministry. She also offers support and guidance at particular stages in the process, including occasional PNC training and matching, conducting presbytery clearance checks, arranging for COM interview teams, and guiding congregation and candidate through the final stages of the call process. Susan's salary and expenses are paid for by the presbytery from per capita and shared mission dollars.
- In addition to those named above, the PNC will receive support and guidance, often behind the scenes, from the **Committee on Ministry Moderator**, who works with the Executive Presbyter to provide general oversight of the search process, the **Stated Clerk**, who initiates criminal background checks on perspective candidates, and **Committee on Ministry Members** and other **Presbyters**, who assist with COM interview teams. Their expenses are paid for by the presbytery, from per capita dollars

Key Times for Presbytery Involvement in the Process

Working with the Pastor Nominating Committee. Presbytery has the responsibility to guide the PNC through the pastoral call process, providing training, oversight, and assistance. Presbytery will also have a role in reference and background checks for the finalists being considered. Presbytery must examine the PNC's finalist for presbytery membership and concur with the PNC's final decision before a call can be issued.

When the New Pastor Is Called. Presbytery has the responsibility to ensure that the call to your new pastor is in order and that the appropriate actions are taken by the congregation and presbytery.

When Your Pastor Is Ordained and/or Installed. The call process for your new pastor is completed at a service of ordination and/or installation that is organized and conducted by the presbytery, often through the work of a presbytery-appointed administrative commission.

Other Participants in the Pastoral Call Process

The Session

The session's responsibility is to set a positive and reassuring tone during the pastoral search process. This includes assisting the congregation in coping with the departure of the pastor, carrying on with the ministry of the congregation, and looking forward to the next stage of the congregation's life together. During this process, the session should meet regularly with the moderator appointed by the presbytery in order to continue to fulfill its responsibilities for the congregation's worship life, Christian education, pastoral care, fellowship, mission, and administration. Session responsibilities, in consultation with presbytery, include:

- Securing guest preachers and providing for pastoral care during the immediate vacancy;
- With concurrence of presbytery, finding and contracting with temporary pastoral leadership for the longer vacancy period;
- Providing for and participating in a congregational mission study, if appropriate or required by the presbytery;
- Providing a process for the congregation to elect a PNC, including suggesting the number of PNC members, with consultation from the presbytery;
- Calling a congregational meeting for the election of the PNC with the approval of the presbytery;
- Budgeting funds for the PNC to cover search expenses;
- Determining the financial compensation available for your new pastor, including moving costs;
- Reviewing and approving the completed MIF in order that the clerk of session may attest to it in CLC;
- Praying regularly for the PNC;
- Calling a congregational meeting when the PNC is ready to present its nominee to the congregation, with the approval of the presbytery;
- Preparing for the new pastor's arrival by attending to such details as manse renovation, moving, and welcoming;
- Arranging for the ordination and/or installation of your new pastor in consultation with the presbytery.

The Moderator of Session

During a pastoral vacancy, the presbytery will appoint someone to moderate the session and congregational meetings. In many instances, the temporary pastor working with the session will be appointed to serve as moderator. The moderator's responsibilities include helping the session fulfill its responsibilities for the congregation's life and ministries.

The Temporary Pastor

The temporary pastor provides pastoral leadership during the congregation's search for the next pastor. The presbytery can help the session determine if the church needs a temporary pastor and what responsibilities the temporary pastor will have. An interim or transitional pastor is a temporary pastor who has special expertise and training in working with congregations in the midst of a pastoral transition. The temporary pastor's responsibilities often include:

- Worship leadership, including preaching and administration of the sacraments;
- Providing pastoral care;
- Serving as moderator of session (when appointed by presbytery) and working with the session to provide for the life and ministry of the congregation;
- Administrative work, including supervision of other staff persons;
- Supporting the work of the PNC, but not being directly involved with their work;
- Assisting with the congregational mission study (with presbytery approval);
- Helping the congregation prepare to welcome the leadership of a new pastor.

The Pastor Nominating Committee

The pastor nominating committee (PNC), representative of the whole congregation and elected by the congregation, has the ultimate responsibility for nominating a minister to the congregation for election as the next pastor or associate pastor. Over a number of months, the PNC will journey through the pastoral search process, seeking to hear the call of Christ and to participate in the wisdom of God in the search for your next pastor. In the pastoral call process, the PNC's responsibilities include:

- Completing the congregation's MIF and submitting it to session and presbytery for approval;
- Entering the approved MIF online with Church Leadership Connection (CLC);
- Receiving, reading, and evaluating Personal Information Forms (PIF) in a spirit of prayerful openness to the movement of God's Spirit;
- Regularly providing reports to the congregation on the pastoral search progress;
- Narrowing the field of prospective pastors through listening to sermons, reference checking (by both the PNC and the presbytery), and phone or video conference interviews—all while sharing, listening, and praying together;
- Interviewing face-to-face the "short list" of prospective pastors, providing for a welcoming and hospitable visit to your church community;
- Arranging with the presbytery for the necessary examinations and approvals of your finalists;
- Selecting one nominee to present to the congregation and negotiating the terms of call;
- Obtaining presbytery approval of the call;
- Presenting the nominee to the congregation for its vote;
- Following the affirmative vote of the congregation, signing the pastoral terms of call.
- Notifying Church Leadership Connection (CLC) when a call has been extended and accepted.

The Congregation

The responsibilities of the congregation, while few, are no less important than those of the other participants in the pastoral call process. The responsibilities of the congregation include:

- Continuing to support the ministry of the church through prayer, participation, and financial support during the time of pastoral transition;
 - Electing the PNC, and supporting its work through prayer and encouragement
 - Electing the new pastor and approving the terms of call;
 - Welcoming the new pastor as the ministry begins.
-

The ABCs of a Pastoral Search

You'll encounter quite a bit of alphabet soup in our pastoral search process. Here are some of the main ingredients:

PC(USA): The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A Protestant Christian denomination of 1.7 million members in over 10,000 congregations and worshipping communities in the United States. Its national offices are in Louisville, Kentucky.

POV: The Presbytery of Ohio Valley. A regional body of the PC(USA) in central and southern Indiana, “responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness.” – from The Book of Order, G.3-0301

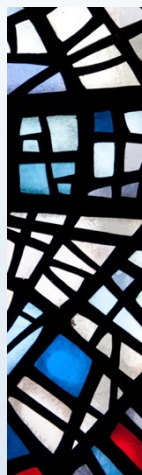
COM: Committee on Ministry. A committee of the presbytery, commissioned to act on matters relating to pastoral relationships, and to provide guidance, support, and approval at various stages in the pastoral search process.

CLC: Church Leadership Connection. The Internet-based matching and referral system of the PC(USA) which connects congregations, presbyteries, synods, educational institutions and other Presbyterian entities seeking leaders for ministry positions with pastors, Christian educators, administrators, executives and other church professionals seeking a call to service within the denomination.

PNC: Pastor Nominating Committee. A committee elected by a congregation, charged to conduct the search for its next pastor and to present a nominee to the congregation for its consideration.

MIF: Ministry Information Form. A church profile completed by the PNC and approved by the Session and COM in preparation for the pastoral search, posted online through the CLC and available for matching and self-referrals. This form describes the size and make-up of the congregation/entity, the type of community where the ministry is located, the position to be filled and the salary for the position. Answers to narrative questions describe the ministry and mission of the church/entity in more detail.

PIF: Personal Information Form. An individual pastor's profile, posted online through CLC, and available for matching or self-referral to individual congregations. This form lists the person's education, work experience, ecclesiastical standing, and any professional memberships and certifications. It also lists the types of positions the person is interested in serving along with minimum compensation they will consider. Leadership Competencies and interests are listed along with narrative answers to several questions.



A Grand Adventure is Bound to Happen!

A Pastoral Letter from Susan McGhee,
Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley



A Manual for Pastor Nominating Committees in the Presbytery of Ohio Valley

Units of Work in the Pastoral Search

01: Preparing and organizing the PNC for its work

to equip the Pastor Nominating Committee for a successful search

02: Completing and submitting the Ministry Information Form (MIF)

to enable the PNC to receive Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

03: Preparing for telephone or videoconference interviews

to maximize the PNC's use of time and make ready for effective interviews

04: Receiving and reviewing Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

to begin narrowing the field of candidates for further consideration

05: Conducting telephone or videoconference interviews and follow-up

to help determine which candidates to invite for a face-to-face visit

06: Conducting reference and background checks

to help determine which candidates to invite for a face-to-face visit

07: Preparing for a face-to-face visit and interview

to finalize details for a successful and productive visit

08: Conducting the face-to-face visit and interview

to help PNC and candidate discern goodness of fit

09: Choosing a nominee, extending an offer and negotiating terms of call

to finalize steps toward the official nomination of a candidate

10: Presenting the candidate to the congregation

to nominate your chosen candidate to the congregation for its consideration

11: Celebrating! And other final tasks

to give thanks for a job well done and tie up any loose ends



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Our congregations are communities of faith, hope, love. and witness.

01: Preparing and Organizing the PNC for its Work

to equip the Pastor Nominating Committee for a successful search

Following the election of the Pastor Nominating Committee, the Clerk of Session or Moderator reports the names and contact information of the committee members to the presbytery.

A representative from the presbytery will contact the PNC members to send introductory reading material and arrange for a meeting to conduct the initial training.

The meeting will include:

- Introductions
- An overview of the PNC process, including role clarifications
- Detailed training about the first stages of the process
- Selection of a PNC Chair and Secretary
- Setting a schedule for regular PNC meetings

Scheduling Meetings:

Plan to set regular meeting days, times, and places, making certain that all PNC members will be available and that your presbytery liaison will be able to attend as needed. Many PNCs, wisely, decide to meet every week. Regular and frequent meetings are a major factor in helping to move the call process along. If you will be meeting at the church building, be sure the room in which you will be meeting is adequate for your confidentiality needs. Some PNCs choose to meet away from the church building due to the number of other church activities going on during their scheduled meeting time. ✧

Maintaining Confidentiality:

Maintaining confidentiality within the PNC is of the utmost importance. Maintaining confidentiality ensures that the identities of the prospective pastors your PNC is considering are protected. Maintaining confidentiality within the PNC is an issue of integrity, trusting God in the process, and spiritual leadership. To respect the discernment of prospective pastors, work to uphold within the PNC a covenant of confidentiality that honors the integrity of the call seeker and the committee. This means that information about prospective pastors and all conversations, deliberations, and perceptions should not go beyond the members of the PNC, your COM Liaison, the PNC Training and Support Liaison, and the Executive Presbyter. Therefore, only certain people and groups have the right to know information about the pastors under consideration at specific times in the call process. As you maintain confidentiality in your process, you will ensure the integrity of the work of the PNC, keeping it free from outside influence or interference. ✧

02: Completing and Submitting the Ministry Information Form

to enable the PNC to receive Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

The Ministry Information Form (MIF) is a document that will enable pastors who may be interested in the position to learn more about the congregation and its hopes for pastoral leadership.

When the PNC has finalized the MIF, it will go to the Session approval, and then to the Committee on Ministry for approval. Once the MIF has been approved, the PNC Training and Support Liaison will provide you with a user ID and PIN so that the form can be entered online to the Church Leadership Connection. It will then be available for matching and self-referral.

A copy of the MIF and instructions for completing it are provided in this booklet, under the “Ministry Information Form” tab. A Microsoft Word version can be found on the flash drive, in the “POV PNC Materials” Dropbox, or online at <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/calling-organizations/>.

At this stage in the process, however, we suggest that you do your work from this worksheet. This process will allow you to skip over the initial demographic information and get right to the meat of the form.

*The first section of the form asks for **contact and demographic information** and can be completed later.*

*The “meat” of the form is a series of **narrative questions**, asking the congregation to reflect on who it is, what its mission is, what are the needs that it seeks to address, and how a pastoral leader can help it do so. Thoughtful attention to these questions is time well spent. The questions appear below, and we’ve left room below each question so that you can make notes.*

Please note that each response is limited to 1500 characters, including spaces.

The foundational question is: What is your congregation’s or organization’s Mission Statement?

Once that statement is written, the MIF asks five narrative questions. The questions should be considered in the order in which they appear. The first two questions deal with the parish's vision for ministry and the emerging needs of the communities that the congregations serve:

1. *What is the congregation's or organization's vision for ministry? Additionally describe how this vision is lived out.*

2. *How do you feel called to reach out to address the emerging needs of your community or constituency?*

The next set of questions deals with the specific position of pastor. These should be considered only after the previous two are answered.

3. *How will this position help you to reach your vision and mission goals?*

4. *Provide a description of the characteristics needed by the person who is open to being called to this congregation and/or organization.*

5. *For what specific tasks, assignments, and program areas will this person have responsibility?*

Next is a series of **leadership competencies** (such as preaching and worship leadership, teacher, hopeful, advisor, spiritual maturity, communicator, etc.). PNCs are asked to identify ten competencies. Each of you will receive a set of cards to help you identify your top choices. After the narrative questions have been answered to the satisfaction of the PNC, we suggest that each committee member take home a copy of the answers and a set of the competency cards, and select ten leadership competencies. At the next PNC meeting, the committee can compare their selections and agree on the top ten.

The next section deals with **compensation**. Please note that both a minimum and a maximum salary must be listed. While the maximum salary will not be published, it is used for matching purposes.

The final section asks for **references, endorsements, etc.** You will be able to name three reference. People to consider: your COM Liaison and/or Executive Presbyter, your transitional pastor, and a neighboring pastor who knows the congregation well

When this worksheet is complete, transfer the information to a Word version of the MIF, and add the contact and demographic information requested. Don't hesitate to be in touch with your COM Liaison as you work to complete the MIF. He or she can be available to read the form, and give suggestions or advice. And be sure to keep that person in the loop as the form is being finalized. If you have a trained and experienced transitional pastor in place, it would also be appropriate to ask that person to give you any feedback before the form goes to session for approval.

When the Session has approved the MIF, the Clerk of Session should forward the completed form to the Committee on Ministry Moderator and the Executive Presbyter. The COM Moderator will send it to the rest of the COM for approval. This task is usually accomplished by electronic vote. The COM often approves the form as submitted, but sometimes will suggest or require edits. The COM action will be communicated back to the PNC.

The PNC Training and Support Liaison will then provide you with a user ID and PIN so that you can enter the form online to the Church Leadership Connection. Once entered, an email will be sent to the Clerk of Session and COM Moderator to attest the form. It will then be available for matching and self-referral.

After the MIF has been completed and is awaiting approval, posting, and attestation, we recommend that the PNC turn immediately to the next unit of work, preparing for telephone or videoconference interviews. Doing so will save valuable time!

03: Preparing for Telephone or Videoconference Interviews

to maximize the PNC's use of time and make ready for effective interviews

We encourage Pastor Nominating Committees not to rush by this important unit of work!

Once the MIF has been entered online and attested by the Clerk of Session and Committee on Ministry, it will be released by the Church Leadership Connection for matching and self-referrals. It is tempting to begin reviewing PIFs immediately and selecting candidates to interview, making contact with them, and conducting the interviews. It's often the case, however, that if a PNC has not devoted time to prepare properly, the first interview it conducts does not go well, leaving both candidate and PNC members unimpressed with each other. Preparing for the initial interviews is a good task to complete while the PNC waits for the MIF to be approved, posted and attested.

The purpose of these interviews is to narrow the field of potential pastors further, helping you decide on a smaller pool of candidates to invite for a face-to-face interview. The following steps will guide you through the process of preparing:

- **Establish an interview process.** The PNC's interview process should be consistent to ensure fairness and due diligence. Interviews are an opportunity to learn more about the person to help you discern call, fit, and a shared vision for ministry. ✧
- **Consider what questions you will ask.** Most of the questions used in the interview should be consistent for all candidates. In addition to these, however, specific questions raised by the Personal Information Forms (PIF) should also be included in the interview process and may differ among candidates. On the following page is a list of questions you may want to use. Keep In mind that you need to allow time for the candidate to ask questions of you as well. ✧
- **Decide on and test the interview format.** Many PNCs conduct their interviews by Skype or another videoconference service. Some use the telephone. Whatever format you use, test the technology before you conduct your first interview.
- **Consider conducting a mock interview.** Some PNCs choose to conduct a mock interview with the interim pastor or someone provided by the presbytery. Mock interviews allow a PNC to test the technology, practice asking questions, and practice answering questions that the candidate might pose.

After completing this unit of work, you are now ready to review PIFs!

Suggested questions for the initial interview:

1. Please describe the highlights of your faith journey and how they have influenced your work as a pastor.
2. What has influenced your decision to seek a new call?
3. What specifically has led you to consider serving our congregation?
4. As you read over our MIF and consider the opportunities and challenges before us as a congregation, please share with us why you believe you might be a good match.
5. As you reflect on your pastorate [or seminary experience] to date, what have been one or two highlights for you?
And what would you like a chance to "do over"?
6. What do you see the future of the small [or mid-sized] church to be and why?
7. How would you describe your leadership style? Please share a time when your leadership style has been particularly effective.
8. Please describe a time when your administrative/organizational skills have been particularly effective.
9. What were you expecting us to ask that we haven't asked?

Use this space for other questions you might ask:

04: Receiving and Reviewing Personal Information Forms

to begin narrowing the field of candidates for further consideration

Receiving Personal Information Forms:

Once the MIF has been entered online and attested by the Clerk of Session and Committee on Ministry, it will be available for matching and self-referrals. The PNC chairperson, COM Moderator, and EP will be notified by email when new matches or self-referrals are made. To check the referral status, visit the CLC website and log in with your user name and password.

Here's a sample of the report that you will see (with the names redacted):

Verizon
4:05 PM
100%

Church Leadership Connection
Home
Matching
Opportunity Search
Reports
Admin
Logout

View Referred PIFs

◀ Go back

Referred List for MIF No. 02211.ADo

PIF ID	Name	Leadership Competencies Matching	Experience Level	Salary Requirements	Referral Time	Referred By	Decision
100021351.2	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	No Experience	\$60,000	2/22/2017 9:21:21 PM	100021351	Does not meet minimal requirements
100023484.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	0 to 2 Years	\$45,000	1/10/2017 12:27:19 PM	EP100504	Referred to committee
100025269.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/16/2016 9:12:55 PM	100025269	Recommended for interview
100027315.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$45,000	11/16/2016 3:40:36 PM	TITUN000	No longer available
100027224.1	[REDACTED]	3 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/6/2016 2:24:47 PM	100027224	Additional information needed
100023635.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$30,000	10/24/2016 5:04:30 PM	100023635	No further consideration

You'll be able to see the number of leadership competencies that are a match between the person's PIF and your MIF, as well as his or her experience level and minimum salary requirements.

Referred List for MIF No. 02211.ADo

PIF ID	Name	Leadership Competencies Matching	Experience Level	Salary Requirements	Referral Time	Referred By	Decision
100021351.2	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	No Experience	\$60,000	2/22/2017 9:21:21 PM	100021351	Does not meet minimal requirement
100023484.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	0 to 2 Years	\$45,000	1/10/2017 12:27:19 PM	EP100504	Referred to committee
100025269.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/16/2016 9:12:55 PM	100025269	Recommended for interview
100027315.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$45,000	11/16/2016 3:40:36 PM	TITUN000	No longer available
100027224.1	[REDACTED]	3 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/6/2016 2:24:47 PM	100027224	Additional information needed
100023635.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$30,000	10/24/2016 5:04:30 PM	100023635	No further consideration

You will also be able to see whether the PIF came as a match or a self-referral by checking out the “referred by” column. The code EP100504 are matches made by this presbytery (either the EP or her designee). Codes that begin with EP but followed by a different number are matches made by that pastor or candidate’s Executive Presbyter. Codes that begin with TITUN are matches made by a seminary, and codes that begin with CRS are matches made by Call Referral Services (a branch of CLC). Self-referrals appear as numbers only.

To the right of the “Referred By” column is a newly added feature that allows PNCs to indicate what action it has taken to a particular match or self-referral. This is purely optional, and is for information only.

When an MIF is first entered online, the presbytery conducts an initial set of matches. Ordinarily, we won’t do any additional matching unless the PNC chairperson requests it. Matches from seminaries and other presbyteries may continue to be made, as will self-referrals. You will be notified by email from CLC whenever a new PIF has been matched or referred.

If the PNC chair wishes for the rest of the committee to be able to log in to CLC and view PIFs, simply ask the PNC Training and Support Liaison or Executive Presbyter, and we will be happy to provide a log-in and password for committee members.

Reviewing Personal Information Forms:

PNCs may design their own process for reviewing PIFs, making it as simple or complex as they choose. The Church Leadership Connection suggests the following process: ✧

*Each PNC member reads **all** the information in a PIF
and ranks the PIF 1, 2, or 3:
1 for those in whom you are very interested
2 for those in whom you have some interest
3 for those you do not want to consider further*

Keep in mind that PIFs referred through computer matching are selected based on the compatibility of the information your committee has submitted in the MIF and the statement of preferences, experience, leadership competencies, and financial needs of each person as submitted in their PIF. PNC members would be wise to keep notes to be shared with the rest of the committee about why they ranked a PIF a particular way. ✧

After all PNC members have had a chance to read and evaluate a PIF, carefully review and evaluate the PIF together as a committee. Allow each member to share reasons for the particular ranking and listen attentively to one another. Reach some kind of consensus on the PNC ranking for each PIF. ✧

Contact your higher ranked individuals to determine whether they are interested and available to consider your position. The simplest way is to send an email (sent separately to each individual, and including a pdf copy of your MIF). You may, at this time, also wish ask to for videos of audios of a sermon, if a link is not available on the person's PIF. ✧

Repeat the process until all PIFs have been read and evaluated and the interest of your higher ranked prospective pastors has been ascertained. *

If your PNC is interested in a prospective pastor who is unable to sign the PIF sexual misconduct statement in the affirmative, refer the matter to your Executive Presbyter, who will provide you with guidance. ✧

Set aside those prospective pastors the PNC has rated 3. If you are sure that you will not be returning to these PIFs, notify them that they are no longer being considered. Please see the Sample Emails section elsewhere in this manual. ✧

05: Conducting Telephone or Videoconference Interviews and Follow-up

to help determine which candidates to invite for a face-to-face visit

You've established your interview process, selected the questions you'll be asking of every candidate, chosen and tested the format (Unit of Work #03), and selected some candidates to interview (Unit of Work #04). Now it's time to talk to some candidates!

1. **Select some dates and times when the PNC can be available for the telephone or video interview.** If you'd like for the COM Liaison to be present, please clear those dates with him or her as well.
2. **Contact the candidates and arrange for the interview.** The most efficient way to do this is by email to the candidates (sent individually to maintain confidentiality). See the Sample Emails section for an example.
3. **Prepare and send a pre-interview email.** Once the date, time, and format of the interview have been decided, it's helpful to send an email to confirm the details of the interview, as well as introductory information about the members of the PNC. We've included a sample email, but feel free to use your own style.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

We look forward to our telephone interview with you on Thursday, May 6, at 6:00pm EDT. We will contact you at the number you provided us, (123) 456-7890. Please allow ninety minutes for our conversation. In addition to the questions we have of you, we will set aside time for you to ask us questions. And we will invite you to conclude our time with prayer.

Just as we're eager to get to know you better, we'd like for you to know a little bit about us:

I'm **Alejandro Pérez**, the PNC Chair. I joined Reformation Church three years ago. My wife Tracy and I own and manage a popular restaurant in town. I sing tenor in the gospel choir, and serve on the mission committee.

Bob Jones is a ruling elder, and has been a member of Reformation Church for twenty years. He currently serves on the session, and chairs the music and worship committee. He is a retired high school band teacher. Bob and his wife Jane have three grown children and five grandchildren.

Pam Lumenske is a member of the board of deacons. She and her husband joined the church ten years ago. They have two middle-school children, both of whom are active in the youth group. Pam is a pharmacist. She teaches church school and plays in the hand bell choir.

Pete Washington is a junior at Montgomery High School, where he runs track and field and is a member of the debate club. He was baptized and confirmed at Reformation Church, as were his three sisters.

Shondra Williams is a ruling elder and clerk of session. She is a chiropractor, and a single mother of eleven-year-old twins. She has been a member of Reformation Church for fifteen years. She is an active volunteer in the Wednesday after-school program.

Again, we look forward to our conversation. Don't hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Alejandro Pérez
phone number

4. **Conduct the interview with the candidate, and debrief as a PNC afterwards.** It's a good idea to set aside time to debrief the interview immediately afterwards. Sometimes the committee reaches a consensus right away, although it's possible that the committee will need more time to consider. Be sure to allow everyone a chance to voice opinions.
 5. **Send a follow-up email.** See the Sample Emails section for two examples:
 - Candidates in whom you continue to have interest
 - Candidates whom you have decided are not a good match
 6. **Consider how you will move forward to narrow the field of candidates.** What more does the PNC need to determine which candidates to invite for a face-to-face visit? Do you need to listen to or watch the candidate preach a sermon online or via CD, DVD, mp3, etc.? Is there other material you wish to review, such as newsletter articles, supplemental questions, lesson plans? Do you need to conduct a second telephone or video interview? Are there follow-up questions you wish to pose via email or a conversation with one or more members of the PNC? Would you like to confer with the presbytery liaison or executive presbyter? Would you like to see another round of PIFs? Don't hesitate to follow up as needed!
-

06: Conducting Reference and Background Checks

to continue to narrow the field of candidates to invite for a face-to-face visit

This chapter outlines three kinds of checks that are conducted on potential candidates.

- **PNC Reference Checks:** A PIF can contain up to six references. Pastors often list both colleagues and current or previous church members; some may also list staff members, mentors, teachers, or judicatory leaders. It's best for more than one person to check references on any individual pastor. We also recommend that those checking references contact the referee in advance and arrange for a time to speak.
- At the appointed time, introduce yourself and the name of your congregations, and proceed to ask the questions that the PNC has agreed will be asked. Specific questions usually yield more helpful responses than "can you tell me a little bit about...?" Suggested questions appear below. If the person you're considering is a seminary student, please consult your COM Liaison to help you develop a set of questions.

For how long and in what capacity have you known ____?

Do you know why ____ is seeking a new call?

How would you describe ____ work habits? any specific examples?

How would you describe ____ leadership style? any specific examples?

How would you describe ____ administrative style?

How would you describe ____ preaching style?

How would you describe ____ pastoral care style?

Please give an example of how ____ dealt with a challenging situation?

What strengths have you witnessed in ____?

What areas of needed growth are you aware of in ____?

Are you aware of any reason why a move would be difficult for ____?

If so, please elaborate.

Is there anything I have not asked that we need to know?

PNC members sometimes wish to ask for secondary references. If you choose to do so, please get the permission of the pastor before checking the reference in order to maintain the necessary confidentiality.

Please remember that those on the receiving end of a reference check are under no obligation to keep the conversation confidential. Assume that they will report to the pastor, including the questions you asked and any information you gave.

- **Executive Reference Check:** This is a check that the Executive Presbyter or her designee conducts with the leader of that pastor or candidate's presbytery. This check is conducted on persons that the PNC is considering for a face-to-face visit.
It is very important that the Executive Presbyter conduct this check before any discussion is had with the candidate about the possibility of a face-to-face visit.

To initiate an executive reference check, please complete the attached "Information for Executive Reference Check" Form and send it by email to the Executive Presbyter. A digital copy is available on the flash drive and webpage.

Among the questions the Executive Presbyter asks are these:

- Is ____ a member in good standing of your presbytery?
- Are you aware of any concerns with sexual misconduct?
- Are you aware of any concerns with financial malfeasance?
- Are you aware of any problems _____ has had with drugs or alcohol?
- Do you know why ____ is seeking a new call?
- In what ways has ____ been active in the life of the presbytery?
- What strengths have you witnessed in ____?
- And what areas of needed growth are you aware of in ____?
- Would you welcome _____ as the pastor of another congregation
in your presbytery?
- Is there anything I have not asked that I need to know?

Other areas may be explored as well, particularly if something on the person's PIF raises questions or concerns. Please know that the Executive Presbyter will likely not be able to report any specifics of the conversation to the PNC; this is necessary to ensure that she will receive trustworthy responses from her colleague. When concerns arise, she will do her best to verify them, and will counsel with the PNC and COM Liaison as to the best way to proceed.

Be aware that it may take up to two weeks to complete this check, as much depends on the schedule of both presbytery leaders. The Executive Presbyter will report to you as soon as possible. Most often, she is able to tell the PNC that it is free to invite the candidate for a face-to-face meeting.

On occasion, however, her response may be that she cannot recommend that the PNC invite this candidate for an interview. In those cases, it is best to communicate with the candidate via email, saying only that the PNC is focusing its search on other candidates. It's vital to the process that no more information be given to the candidate. A sample email can be found under a separate tab.

- **Criminal Background Check:** This is a check that the Stated Clerk or Executive Presbyter conducts using *Presidium*, a service that has been recommended by the presbytery's insurance company. The presbytery bears the cost for the background check. Once the check is ordered, an email is sent by Presidium to the pastor, asking him or her to log on and authorize the check. Results are made available to the Stated Clerk and Executive Presbyter. Because the person being considered must authorize the check, we do not conduct the check until after an invitation to a face-to-face visit has been made and accepted.

The information provided in the background check is for the presbytery's use, and will not be released to the PNC. Should the results of the check reveal a concern, the Stated Clerk and/or the Executive Presbyter will first contact the pastor for any clarification or explanation. If we believe that there is continued or further concern, we will require that the pastor contact the PNC and discuss the situation. Sometimes the situation may simply warrant an email; in those cases, we will instruct the pastor to copy the Executive Presbyter and COM Liaison on the communication. At times when a conference call or face-to-face meeting is the better option, we will arrange for a time when one of us can be present.

We stand ready to assist the PNC through this process.

Information for an Executive Reference Check

to be completed before an invitation is made for a face-to-face visit

please complete this form and attach it, along with the PIF, in an email to susan@presbyteryov.org

Name of Congregation:

Name and contact information for PNC Chair:

Name of person being considered:

Please check one:

PCUSA Teaching Elder

Candidate under care (awaiting a call before moving forward to ordination)

Other (please explain):

Presbytery of Membership (or Presbytery of Care, if a Candidate):

What are some of the things that interest you about this person, and that lead you to believe that he/she may be a good fit for your congregation?

What, if any, concerns or questions does the PNC (or individual members) have?

07: Preparing for a Face-to-Face Visit and Interview

to get ready for a productive face-to-face visit with a prospective candidate

In order for a PNC to evaluate prospective pastors fully, it is necessary to meet face-to-face, engage in conversation, and participate in worship together. It is in time spent with prospective pastors that PNCs recognize the experiential nature of the call process as they attend to the chemistry between people and the movement of the Holy Spirit. As PNCs meet prospective pastors face-to-face, they would be wise to remember the Presbyterian balance between “ardor and order” or “heart and head.” ✧

***** Before any conversation with a prospective candidate about the possibility of a face-to-face visit, it is important to contact the executive presbyter and ask her to conduct an executive reference check. Await word before proceeding. (see chapter 06 for more information).**

Visiting Prospective Pastors in Their Ministry Setting

Some PNCs, or a small delegation of the PNC, elect to visit prospective pastors in their current ministry setting, including attending worship. If your PNC decides to visit prospective pastors, do so only with the permission of the prospective pastor. If the prospective pastor feels it is unwise for you to visit the church he or she is currently serving, a face-to-face interview in your own area should be arranged. ✧

When visiting the church of a prospective pastor, keep the following in mind:

- Before going, become thoroughly familiar with the prospective pastor’s PIF.
- Confirm the time of worship, and that the pastor will be preaching on that particular Sunday
- Visit discreetly. Especially in smaller congregations, it is difficult to conceal the identity of a PNC. Do what you can to arrive, sit, and leave separately or in pairs. Do not introduce yourselves to church members as members of a PNC!
- Arrange to meet the prospective pastor in the afternoon if you want to hold an interview or have informal conversation at the time of your visit. Do not expect to do so immediately following the service.
- If only a portion of the PNC is visiting, engage only in an informal conversation rather than a formal interview. Take notes on your visit so that on your return you will be able to give a full report to the other members of the PNC. ✧

Hosting Prospective Pastors in Your Community

Inviting prospective pastors in whom the PNC is most interested to meet with you in or near your own community will give your committee extended time so you can get to know them better and, continue to discern whom God is calling to be your next pastor ✧

If a prospective pastor should decline your committee's invitation, understand that this is part of the discernment process. You may need to hear a "no" from several prospective pastors in order to hear the "yes" from the one of God's own choosing. When you extend an invitation to the prospective pastor to meet with you in your community, also extend the invitation to the pastor's spouse, if there is one. Most married pastors wish to include a spouse in visiting a community and meeting with a PNC, because their spouse's impressions will be part of their own discernment process. ✧

Always coordinate any prospective pastor's visit with your presbytery. Your COM Liaison can help arrange a neutral pulpit (see below). Your presbytery may also want to interview the prospective pastor while he or she is in the presbytery. If so, make sure to schedule this time with the presbytery, with at least two weeks notice (see below for more information on the COM interview). ✧

Decide how you will hear the prospective pastor preach. Ordinarily, face-to-face visits involve a neutral pulpit somewhere in your area that provides an opportunity for the prospective pastor to lead worship while you are present without sacrificing the important confidentiality of the search. At times, however, the logistics are such that the visit will not include a Sunday, and the PNC arranges instead for the prospective pastor to preach before the committee only.

The PNC should make the arrangements for the visit, in consultation with the prospective pastor and the presbytery, including arranging for transportation, housing, and meals. It is expected that the congregation will cover the costs of hosting a prospective pastor meeting with you in your community. *Please do not suggest that the pastor stay with a member of the PNC while visiting; it is important that he or she have the privacy of a hotel or bed-and-breakfast.* ✧

PNC members will need to use their gifts and talents to provide hospitality to prospective pastors who will be your guests during their time in your community. Such hospitality, which includes an availability and openness to your guests' needs, will need thoughtful and careful planning on the part of the PNC. ✧

Hospitality is not about how lavish you are but rather about all the ways you welcome and host a prospective pastor. The hospitality you show (or fail to show) will shape impressions of the kind of hospitality a pastor might expect from the congregation as a whole and will have a direct impact on a prospective pastor's discernment process. ✧

Develop a written schedule for the visit. Hosting prospective pastors usually includes the following:

- Informal time of fellowship with PNC members
- A tour of the church (at a time when others are not in the building)
- A tour of the community
- Meals with the entire PNC
- Meals with a few members of the committee
- Formal interview time
- Neutral pulpit worship and preaching
- Candidate's visit with a team from the COM (see below for additional information)

A face-to-face visit may also include an opportunity for the candidate to meet with the transitional pastor. If the transitional pastor is living in a manse, he or she would be the best person to show the house to the candidate. Regardless, it is appropriate to inform the transitional pastor about the upcoming visit. Feel free to contact the executive presbyter if you have any questions.

Share the written schedule with the PNC, the visiting pastor, the COM Liaison and the Executive Presbyter. Make restaurant and hotel reservations as needed.

Determine what information you will provide prior to the visit. Examples include: material from the Chamber of Commerce; brochures about local attractions and parks, information about local schools, the most recent annual report of the congregation, a recent newsletter and a worship bulletin or two.

Allow time for a Committee on Ministry interview. The Committee on Ministry acts on behalf of presbytery to give "guidance and permission" to congregations in their search for a pastor (G-2.0801). Part of that process includes an interview with the finalists for the position. Whenever possible, the COM arranges for a time to interview a candidate while that person is in the area for a face-to-face visit, as this can save both time and money.

Ordinarily, a team of four to seven people conducts this interview on behalf of the committee, and will be prepared to make a recommendation to the entire COM concerning goodness of fit between the candidate and the congregation, as well as membership in the presbytery. The interview team will also give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions about the congregation and presbytery. Interviews last between sixty and ninety minutes, and take place at the presbytery office in Bloomington, or in a church building in a nearby town.

Prior to the interview, the team will review the congregation's MIF and the candidate's PIF, as well as a "Goodness of Fit Questionnaire" submitted by the PNC (see pages 5-6). The team may choose to follow-up with the PNC if it has additional questions.

The COM has asked the Executive Presbyter to take the lead in arranging for these interviews; please keep her in the loop during this stage in the process.

Consider what questions you will ask. Review the questions and responses from your previous interview(s) with the candidate, as well as questions and responses from the reference checks; these may lead to follow-up questions.

Other possible questions include:

- What resonated with you following our telephone/skype interview?
- What are some of the opportunities you see for our congregation? What are some of the challenges you see?
- What specifics in your background, education, experience and passions equip you to help us embrace these opportunities and address these challenges?
- How might you begin your work with us?
- How do you prepare for worship and preaching?
- How would members of your former congregations describe the impact you have had on their spiritual growth?
- As a pastor, you will not always be able to “do it all”. How will you set priorities?
- Tell us about your style for moderating session meetings, including times when there might be strong disagreements among the elders.
- What are one or two of the most pressing issues facing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in these times?
- When do you know it’s time for some self care, and how do you address it?
- What should we know about you that we have not yet asked?
- is there anything that you need to know for your discernment?

PNC Goodness of Fit Questionnaire

PNC Chair: please consult with the committee to complete this questionnaire prior to the candidate's meeting with the Committee on Ministry. Save the document with the candidate's name and send it to kevin@firstpresevansville.com and susan@presbyteryov.org.

Name of Congregation or Parish:

Name and contact information for PNC Chair:

Name of person being considered:

What leads the PNC to believe this may be a good fit?

How might this person's training, skills, and experience support the mission and vision of your congregation or parish?

What, if any, concerns or questions does the PNC (or individual members) have about this person?

How many times, and in what contexts, did you interview this person?

____ # of telephone interviews ____ # of video interviews ____ # of face-to-face visits

Did you hear the person preach?

If so, in what context? (please check all that apply)

____ audio recording ____ video recording ____ neutral pulpit ____ before the PNC only

____ a visit to that person's church ____ other:

Did you check references?

If so, how many?

Were there any concerns raised by the references?

If so, please share what the concerns were:

Where is the PNC in its decision whether to move forward with this candidate at this point?

If a decision has been made, what was the vote count?

Is there anything else that the PNC thinks that we should know?

08: Conducting the Face-to-Face Visit and Interview

to help PNC and candidate discern goodness of fit

Some PNCs and candidates consider the face-to-face visit in the congregation's community to be a mere formality, simply a means to "seal the deal." We encourage you not to view the visit this way, but rather to understand it as essential for discerning goodness of fit. In fact, we hope that the PNC will choose to invite more than one candidate for a face-to-face visit.

In the previous unit of work, arrangements have been made for a smooth and successful visit, allowing PNC members and the candidate (and his or her spouse, if present), to get to know one another in both formal and informal settings. Approach this time with open minds and open hearts, and allow the Spirit to be at work.

Even if a face-to-face visit with only one candidate has been scheduled, resist the temptation to make an offer before the candidate returns home. It's best to have a follow-up PNC meeting on the calendar to allow PNC members to reflect on the visit and discuss next steps.

Be sure that any expenses incurred by the candidate related to the visit are reimbursed in a timely fashion.

A follow-up email is appropriate. You can find an example in the Sample Emails section.

Don't hesitate to be in touch with your COM Liaison if you have any concerns or questions.

09: Choosing a Nominee, Extending an Offer and Negotiating Terms of Call

to finalize steps toward the official nomination of a candidate

Choosing Your Nominee: As your PNC prays together, shares perceptions and insights, and listens to one another, it will, become increasingly clear to you who God is calling to be your next pastor. The PNC should strive to make this decision both unanimously and enthusiastically. ✧

Contacting Your Chosen Nominee. When the PNC has reached a final decision and has received presbytery approval to call your chosen nominee, the PNC chairperson should phone the chosen nominee and invite him or her to be the nominee presented to the congregation. Be sure that you let the person know why he or she was chosen by the PNC, and tell him or her about the enthusiastic response of the committee. The person whom you have chosen may be ready to respond immediately, or he or she may need time to talk with family, spiritual advisors, and/or mentors to consider all of the aspects of this call and to listen again for God's voice. If he or she asks for this time, it is important to give it. If that is the case ask, "How soon can you let us know?" or "Would it be possible to hear from you by one week from today?" Except in unusual circumstances, one week should be sufficient time in which to expect a response. ✧

When the Nominee Accepts the Invitation. When your chosen nominee accepts your invitation, notify your presbytery. Do not reveal your final decision to the session or congregation until the presbytery has given its final clearance. If the COM has not already examined your selected nominee, it will need to do so before you present the nominee to the congregation. Confirm with the COM Liaison or Executive Presbyter your next steps so that they will be done "decently and in order." ✧

Discuss with your chosen nominee the terms of call (please see the following page for guidance), effective date of the call, and the tentative schedule for the next steps, which will include approval by the presbytery, a congregational meeting to call the pastor, dissolution of the nominee's current position, and the installation service. Coordination with all the involved parties will be key.

If your chosen nominee is a candidate for ministry yet to be ordained, there are additional steps in the process, including examination for ordination on the floor of presbytery, and the service of ordination. The Executive Presbyter can help you work out a timeline in coordination with the nominee's presbytery of candidacy. ✧

In the unusual occurrence that the nominee declines to accept the invitation, thank that person for his/her consideration. Contact the COM Liaison and Executive Presbyter to discuss next steps.

Items to consider in negotiating Terms of Call:

Start Date:

Sufficient time should be given following the congregational meeting for the pastor to give at least thirty days' notice to his or her current congregation and arrange for moving onto the field.

Full or Part Time?

Is the call full or part time? If part time, approximately how many hours per week?

Financial and Annual Leave Details:

Cash Salary: \$

Housing Allowance: ____ Manse or ____ Housing Allowance of \$

Other, such as SECA offset, professional expenses:

No minimum is required; pastor and PNC may negotiate this amount.

Vouchered Continuing Education Expenses: \$

The presbytery minimum is \$1,200; the recommended amount is \$2,000.

Continuing education funds may be accumulated for up to three years.

Vouchered Auto Mileage reimbursed at current IRS rate (non-commuter mileage only).

Board of Pensions Dues

Please check with the presbytery office for guidance as needed

Vouchered Moving Expenses: \$

Vacation:

The minimum is four weeks, including four Sundays.

Study leave:

The minimum is two weeks, including two Sundays. Study leave time and continuing may be accumulated up to three years.

10: Presenting the Candidate to the Congregation

to nominate your chosen candidate to the congregation for its consideration

While The Book of Order requires that an installed pastor, co-pastor or associate pastor be elected by the congregation, it does not require a candidating visit (a candidating visit is when the nominee is present the weekend of the congregational meeting and preaches at the worship service prior to the meeting). It is the general practice in this presbytery that the congregational meeting to call a pastor include such a visit, and the following pages reflect this assumption. If your congregation's practice is different, please consult the Executive Presbyter for guidance.

Preparing for the Visit

Calling the Meeting: It is the session's responsibility to call a congregational meeting to act on the PNC's nomination of a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor. It may do so once the candidate has accepted, the terms of call have been negotiated, and the Committee on Ministry has given its approval. The date of the meeting must be coordinated with the COM, the PNC and the nominee. Care should be taken to preserve confidentiality at this point. It is not necessary to share the name or any other identifying information with the session.

Informing the Congregation: The congregation should be informed as soon as possible about the date of the meeting, as well as any meet-and-greet opportunity (more on the "meet-and-greet" later). Again, it is not necessary to give any identifying information at this time. A week prior to the meeting, the PNC should send a mailing with the name of the nominee, some biographical information, the terms of call, and perhaps a few comments from PNC members about why you believe this is a good choice. You may also wish to include a picture of the nominee.

Conducting the Visit

Hospitality: Please practice the same hospitality that you provided upon the nominee's face-to-face interview. The nominee may bring spouse and children for this visit, so an additional hotel room or two may be necessary. Snacks and age-appropriate gifts for the children are a good idea; check with the nominee if you have questions.

Meet-and-Greet: Many PNCs have a reception the day before the congregational meeting to allow members of the congregation to meet the nominee (and family, if any are present) in a less formal way.

Congregational Meeting: Please see the following pages for detailed instructions on the congregational meeting to call a pastor, as well as the Pastoral Call Form.

Presbytery of Ohio Valley

Congregational Meeting to Call a Pastor

The congregational meeting for the purpose of hearing and acting upon the final report of the Pastor Nominating Committee shall be moderated by the moderator of Session or his/her designee. If there appears to be a conflict of interest, another moderator should be appointed. A representative of the Committee on Ministry shall be present to provide assistance.

Prior to the meeting:

1. The Clerk of Session shall secure from the membership two tellers who are not members or close relatives of the PNC
2. The following documents shall be prepared:
 - a. Four copies of the Pastoral Call Form
 - b. Copies of the terms of call for each member of the congregation
 - c. Paper Ballots that read "Shall the congregation of _____ Presbyterian Church call _____ to the position of pastor (or co-pastor or associate pastor), with the terms of call that have been presented?
_____ yes _____ no"

The congregational meeting shall have the following docket: (The candidate and his/her family will be excused prior to the meeting)

1. Moderator calls the meeting to order and opens with prayer.
2. Moderator states the purpose of the meeting: "to hear and act upon the final report of the PNC and to elect _____ as (pastor, co-pastor, associate pastor) of the congregation.
3. Moderator asks the Clerk of Session if there is a quorum.
4. Moderator recognizes the Chair of the PNC to give its report, including:
 - a. A review of the process followed by the PNC
 - b. Information about the candidate, including why the PNC believes this is the right match, etc. If it has been arranged in advance, other members of the PNC may wish to speak about the candidate.
 - c. Terms of call and effective date (distributed to the congregation)
 - d. And finally, a motion: "Moderator, on behalf of the Pastor Nominating Committee it is my privilege and pleasure to move that the congregation of _____ Presbyterian Church, call _____ to be its pastor (or co-pastor or associate pastor), with the terms of call as they have been presented."

5. Moderator reminds the congregation that, as the PNC is a committee of the congregation, the motion does not need a second. Moderator asks if there are questions or discussion. Most questions will probably be referred to the PNC Chair.
6. Once the time of questions and discussion has concluded, the Moderator states, “I perceive that you are ready to vote.” Moderator asks members of the congregation to stand, if able, and for the tellers to distribute the ballots. Members vote, and return ballots to the tellers.
7. The tellers, accompanied by the COM representative, go into another room to count the votes. Votes “yes” and “no” are recorded on paper.
8. IF the votes are at least an 85% majority of those present and voting, the COM representative asks the tellers to remain in the counting room while she/delivers the results to the candidate, and asks if the candidate will accept the call.
 - a. If he/she says Yes,
 - i. the COM representative delivers the vote count to the Moderator, who announces “Friends, you have elected a pastor.”
 - ii. The candidate is escorted into the sanctuary, and asked to say a few words.
 - iii. The Moderator entertains a motion to dissolve the pastor nominating committee, with deep thanks, effective the date of installation. Once the motion is moved/seconded, the congregation votes.
 - iv. The Moderator asks for a motion to adjourn, etc.
 - v. The Moderator closes the meeting with prayer.
 - vi. Moderator, PNC, and Pastor-Elect sign the call papers. COM representative mails the papers to the presbytery office the next day.
 - b. If he/she says No, or desires time to consider
 - i. The COM representative confers with the Moderator and PNC Chair.
 - ii. Ordinarily, the Moderator calls on the COM Chair to make a statement, at which point the matter is explained to the congregation, with the assurance that the Committee on Ministry will consult with candidate and PNC, and will communicate with the session and congregation concerning next steps.
 - iii. The Moderator asks for a motion to adjourn, etc, and closes with prayer.
 - iv. Moderator and COM representative may need to stay and consult with PNC, candidate, and others.
 - v. COM representative informs EP and COM Moderator as soon as possible.

9. IF the votes are in the affirmative by a margin smaller than 85% of those present and voting, the COM representative asks the tellers to remain in the counting room while she/delivers the results to the candidate, indicating that presbytery rules require further consultation with the COM. The candidate may, at this time, indicate that he/she will not accept the call. A procedure similar to that specified in 8(b) above shall be followed.
10. IF the votes are a majority in the negative of those present and voting, the COM representative asks the tellers to remain in the counting room while she/delivers the results to the candidate. A procedure similar to that specified in 8(b) above shall be followed.

**The Presbytery of Ohio Valley
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PASTORAL CALL**

_____ Presbyterian Church, _____, Indiana, belonging to the Presbytery of Ohio Valley, being well satisfied with your qualifications for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit, earnestly and solemnly calls you, _____, to undertake the office of pastor, beginning _____, with the following terms of call (annually):

_____ Full-time or _____ Part-time (approximately _____ hours per week)

Cash Salary: \$

Housing Allowance: _____ Manse or _____ Housing Allowance of \$

Vouchered Continuing Education Expenses:

Vacation: Four weeks, including four Sundays

Study leave: Two weeks, including two Sundays.

(Study leave and continuing education funds may be accumulated up to three years)

Vouchered Auto Mileage reimbursed at current IRS rate (non-commuter mileage only).

We will pay regularly in advance to the board responsible for pensions a sum equal to that requisite percent of your salary which may be fixed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for full participation in its pension plan, including dental coverage, during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in this call to this church. We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

Pastor Nominating Committee Affirmation:

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this _____ day of _____, A.D. _____:

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING RECORD:

Having moderated the meeting of the congregation which extended a call to _____ for ministerial services, I do certify that the call has been made in all respects according to presbytery policy and the *Form of Government*, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

Commission Vote _____ yes _____ no (please record number of affirmative and negative votes)

Moderator of the Meeting _____ Date _____

CERTIFICATION OF CALL

ACTION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF CALL:

The Presbytery of Ohio Valley, acting through its Committee on Ministry or Presbytery Council, has reviewed and approved this call.

Moderator: _____ Date of Action: _____

Stated Clerk: _____ Date of Action: _____

ACTION OF THE MINISTER'S/CANDIDATE'S PRESBYTERY:

The Presbytery of _____ finds it expedient (not expedient) to release
_____ to accept this call.

Stated Clerk: _____ Date of Action: _____

ACCEPTANCE OF THE CALL:

This is to certify that I have received and accepted this call.

Minister: _____ Date of Action: _____

Please complete and sign four original forms and send to the Office of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley. When all parties have signed the forms, an original will be returned to: 1) the minister, 2) the calling congregation, 3) the presbytery of call, and 4) the minister's presbytery of membership/care.

11: Celebrating! And Other Final Tasks

To acknowledge a job well done and tie up any loose ends.

You. Did. It. Congratulations on a job well done. Following the election of the new pastor by the congregation, the PNC has a few final tasks to complete.

Notifying CLC of a “Call Pending”

The PNC chairperson needs to notify CLC of the call of your new pastor. This can be done through the CLC online system using the PNC chairperson’s password and entering the information under “Admin >> Notify of New Call.” Please provide the MIF number, the PIF number (if there is one), the pastor’s full name, and the effective date of the call. The PNC chairperson can also notify CLC by phone, e-mail, or fax. Self-referrals and matches will continue to be made until CLC receives this information. ✧

Notifying Remaining Prospective Pastors

If you have any other prospective pastors that have not yet been notified that they are no longer being considered, each one needs to be contacted, thanked for their consideration, and informed that a nominee has been chosen. This communication should be written with compassion and grace. If you are notifying prospective pastors electronically, remember to correspond with them individually rather than by mass e-mail messages. It is important to continue to honor confidentiality and good process. (An example of this email can be found under the “sample emails” tab) ✧

Disposing of PNC Materials

Information and references regarding your pastor-elect should be sealed and kept in the church’s personnel files. All remaining PIFs and supplemental material should be destroyed or returned to each prospective pastor. Any notes and references should be destroyed. These materials cannot be reused and should not be passed on to other PNCs. Please contact the presbytery office if you have any questions about the disposition of materials. ✧

Sharing Agreements with Session

The PNC chairperson should inform the session of any agreements the PNC may have made with the pastor-elect, such as starting date, moving details, financial arrangements, time away for prior commitments, travel expenses for house-hunting, or planning for renovation of the manse. Once this information is passed along, the session assumes the responsibility for the ongoing work with the pastor-elect. ✧

Understanding Your New Role

Once the PNC has completed its work and has been dissolved by vote of the congregation, the PNC is no longer a committee. However, PNC members often find that the relationships forged during the pastoral search process turn into lifelong friendships. While you are no longer an official committee required to meet, you may wish to spend some time together to reflect on the journey you have been through and to celebrate and give thanks to God for the successful completion of your work. ✧

With the dissolution of the PNC, there is no longer an official connection between you and the new pastor. Certainly, each member of the PNC will want to pray for the new pastor as he or she begins ministry with you. You will want to extend hospitality and provide for a ready welcome as he or she arrives in town. It's important to remember, however, that the new pastor's official relationship is now with the congregation and session. ✧

The installation of your new pastor will complete the call process that has brought a new pastor to your congregation. Plan to attend this service of worship as your final act as a committee. Your presence will not only be a show of support for your new pastor, it can also be an opportunity to worship God, who faithfully guided your committee through the pastoral call process. ✧

As all the tasks above are completed, the PNC's work concludes. Your good work will greatly effect the future of the congregation as it continues to fulfill God's call for its mission and ministry. With grace and joy the Church Leadership Connection office celebrates with you as you enter a new phase in your congregation's history. ✧

May God richly bless you and your new pastor! ✧

Sample Emails Table of Contents

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initial email to matches

PIFs come either as matches or self-referrals. In the “Referred By” column, a **match** is a number preceded by one or two letters: CRS (Church Referral Services), EP (Presbytery), or TIT (Theological Institution).

PIF ID	Name	Leadership Competencies Matching	Experience Level	Salary Requirements	Referral Time	Referred By
100021351.2	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	No Experience	\$60,000	2/22/2017 9:21:21 PM	100021351
100023484.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	0 to 2 Years	\$45,000	1/10/2017 12:27:19 PM	EP100504
100025269.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/16/2016 9:12:55 PM	100025269
100027315.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$45,000	11/16/2016 3:40:36 PM	TITUN000

Pastors whose PIFs are matched may or may not be interested in the position, or even be aware that their PIF was matched. Before reviewing the PIF, it's best to determine if the pastor is interested. Here's a sample of an email to send; feel free to make it your own.

Emails should be sent individually to pastors in order to maintain confidentiality.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Your PIF has been matched with the Ministry Information Form of Reformation Presbyterian Church, Calvin, Indiana. I am attaching the MIF for your review.

If you are interested in being considered for this position, please reply to me at your earliest convenience, and I will forward your PIF to the pastor nominating committee.

I wish you the best in your search for your next place of ministry.

Grace and peace,

Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana

initial email to self-referrals

In the “Referred By” column, a **self-referral** appears as a number without any letters proceeding.

PIF ID	Name	Leadership Competencies Matching	Experience Level	Salary Requirements	Referral Time	Referred By
100021351.2	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	No Experience	\$60,000	2/22/2017 9:21:21 PM	100021351
100023484.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	0 to 2 Years	\$45,000	1/10/2017 12:27:19 PM	EP100504
100025269.1	[REDACTED]	5 of 10	First Ordained Call	\$40,000	11/16/2016 9:12:55 PM	100025269

Pastors whose PIFs are self-referred are expressing an interest in the position. It's good practice to acknowledge the self-referral. Here's a sample of an email to send; feel free to make it your own.

Emails should be sent individually to pastors in order to maintain confidentiality.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Thank you for your interest in the Reformation Presbyterian Church, Calvin, Indiana. The Pastor Nominating Committee will review your Personal Information Form.

I ask for your prayers during this process. Please know that our prayers are with you as well in your search for your next place of ministry.

Grace and peace,

Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana

email to those no longer being considered after PIF review

It's not fun to tell people that they're no longer in the running, and many PNCs choose not to inform people, especially in the early rounds of this work. A simple, kind email, however, helps close the circle with candidates, allowing both them and you to move forward.

These emails should be brief, and they should not identify the reasons for the decision that the PNC made. Here's a sample of an email to send; feel free to make it your own.

Emails should be sent individually to pastors in order to maintain confidentiality.

Dear Rev. Phipps

Thank you for your interest in our congregation, as well as for your patience while we reviewed the many PIFs that have been matched and self-referred.

While we appreciate your sense of call and your gifts for ministry, we do not believe that you are the best fit for our particular congregation. We are focusing our search on other candidates.

We wish you the best in your continued search for a new place of ministry.

Grace and peace,
Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana

Ordinarily, a pastor will either send a simple acknowledgement or not reply at all. If the person replies and asks for more information, or requests that the PNC reconsider, please be in touch with the presbytery for guidance.

email to request a telephone or video conference interview

Once a decision has been made to conduct an initial interview with a candidate, the next step is to make contact and request the interview. While the pastor will most likely accept the request, it's possible that he or she may be further along with other PNCs.

Either an email or a phone call is appropriate at this point. Here's a sample email if you choose to go that route. Emails should be sent individually to pastors in order to maintain confidentiality.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Thank for your patience while we reviewed the many PIFs that have been matched and self-referred to the Reformation Presbyterian Church. We read your information with interest, and we would like to arrange for a telephone interview with you. We hope that you'll accept our invitation.

We have set aside four interview times, each beginning at 6:30pm, Central time.

Monday, September 3

Wednesday, September 5

Monday, September 10

Wednesday, September 12

If you are able and willing to speak with us, please let us know the time slots that will work for you. Once we hear from all the pastors we've invited, we'll be back in touch to confirm a date and time.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Grace and peace,
Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana

Once you're scheduled the times, send individual emails to each to confirm time and date, as well as details for the telephone call or videoconference interview.

telephone or videoconference pre-interview email

Once the date, time, and format of the interview have been decided, it's helpful to send an email to confirm the details of the interview, as well as introductory information about the members of the PNC. Here's a sample; feel free to use your own special style.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

We look forward to our telephone interview with you on Thursday, May 6, at 6:00pm EDT. We will contact you at the number you provided us, (123) 456-7890. Please allow ninety minutes for our conversation. In addition to the questions we have of you, we will set aside time for you to ask us questions. And we will invite you to conclude our time with prayer.

Just as we're eager to get to know you better, we'd like for you to know a little bit about us:

I'm **Alejandro Pérez**, the PNC Chair. I joined Reformation Church three years ago. My wife Tracy and I own and manage a popular restaurant in town. I sing tenor in the gospel choir, and serve on the mission committee.

Bob Jones is a ruling elder, and has been a member of Reformation Church for twenty years. He currently serves on the session, and chairs the music and worship committee. He is a retired high school band teacher. Bob and his wife Jane have three grown children and five grandchildren.

Pam Lumenske is a member of the board of deacons. She and her husband joined the church ten years ago. They have two middle-school children, both of whom are active in the youth group. Pam is a pharmacist. She teaches church school and plays in the hand bell choir.

Pete Washington is a junior at Montgomery High School, where he runs track and field and is a member of the debate club. He was baptized and confirmed at Reformation Church, as were his three sisters.

Shondra Williams is a ruling elder and clerk of session. She is a chiropractor, and a single mother of eleven-year-old twins. She has been a member of Reformation Church for fifteen years. She is an active volunteer in the Wednesday after-school program.

Again, we look forward to our conversation. Don't hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Alejandro Pérez

post telephone or videoconference interview emails

If you're interested in the possibility of moving forward with this candidate, an email such as this could be sent the day after the initial interview

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Thank you for time you spent in conversation with the PNC of Reformation Presbyterian last evening. We are grateful for the opportunity to get to know you better, and for you to learn more about our congregation. We are continuing our interviews with other candidates, and have begun checking references. We will be back in touch as soon as we're able to follow up with you.

Please know that you remain in our prayers during this time of discernment.

Sincerely,
Alejandro Pérez

If you're certain that you do not wish to move forward with this candidate, consider sending an email such as this in a few days following the initial interview

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Thank you for time you spent in conversation with the PNC of Reformation Church this past Wednesday. We are grateful for the opportunity to get to know you better, and for you to learn more about our congregation. At this point, however, we have decided to focus our search on other candidates. Please know that you remain in our prayers as you continue your search for a new place of ministry.

Sincerely,
Alejandro Pérez

email to those no longer being considered after reference checks

Occasionally, a reference check reveals information that could disqualify a pastor from further consideration. Please consult with the Executive Presbyter and COM Liaison before the PNC has any conversation with the pastor. Executive reference checks may also reveal such information; if so, the Executive Presbyter will recommend that the PNC not invite the pastor for a face-to-face visit.

In these cases, an email is usually the best way to tell the pastor that he or she is no longer being considered. While an email at this stage in the process may feel too impersonal, it reduces the chance that the PNC chairperson will be put into a defensive stance. The email should be brief, and should not identify the reasons for the decision that the PNC made.

Here's a sample of an email to send; feel free to make it your own. Don't hesitate to be in touch your COM Liaison or Executive Presbyter if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Dear Rev. Phipps

Thank for your patience while we continued our discernment and our consideration of potential candidates for Reformation Presbyterian Church.

While we appreciate your sense of call and your gifts for ministry, we have decided to focus our search on other candidates.

We wish you the best in your continued search for a new place of ministry.

Grace and peace,
Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana

If the person replies and asks for more information, or requests that the PNC reconsider, please be in touch with the Executive Presbyter for guidance.

an email to follow up from a face-to-face visit

Sending an email soon after the visiting pastor returns home is good manners. It's also a good way to reiterate whatever timeline has been discussed with the candidate, and to help alleviate the anxiety that pastors often feel at this stage in the process.

Here's a sample of an email to send; feel free to make it your own. Don't hesitate to be in touch your COM Liaison or Executive Presbyter if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Dear Rev. Phipps:

Thank you for the gift of your time and attention during your visit with us. It was a pleasure to meet you and Pat and to host you in our community. We hope that you arrived home safe and sound, and that the visit gave both of you a chance to get to know us better. We enjoyed the time we spent in conversation, both during the interview and over meals together.

As you know, we are meeting [or have met] with other candidates. We will be back in touch with you the week of October 6 with an update on our process. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to be in touch if you have any questions or need any additional information about our church or community.

Sincerely,
Alejandro Pérez
Pastor Nominating Committee Chairperson
Reformation Presbyterian Church
Calvin, Indiana