

How to choose a PNC

re: Resources for Nominating Committee

Hello Session and Nominating Committee!

First, you can download the booklet "On Calling a Pastor" on-line. Here's the link.

http://www.pcusa.org/clc/handbook_pastor.htm (This link is to the national publication; PTCA has its own version available <http://www.ptcaweb.org/COMM/COM/pnc.htm>)

We pulled aside the section that should go to the Nominating Committee (which you will find at the bottom of this e-mail). A few highlights include:

- 1) members of the PNC will devote much time and commitment to the process over many months.
- 2) members need to understand and respect the boundaries of confidentiality and conflict of interest.
- 3) members should be persons willing to engage in discernment and a faith-led process, not just quick-fixes.
- 4) the committee shall represent the entire congregation (according to the book of order G-14.0502). Young and old, singles and partnered, introvert and extrovert, musical and not, etc. You get it-- you want the pastor to serve the entire congregation. So the committee "shall" represent all of you.

It is sometimes helpful for the Nominating Committee to identify people, and ask them to respond to a one-page survey. (If they aren't willing to take 15-30 minutes to do this, it might be an indicator of their commitment and desire.)

Questions might include:

- 1) What ministries of the church are you involved/interested in?
- 2) What gifts and skills would you bring to the PNC?
- 3) Why do you seek to serve on the PNC?
- 4) How do you understand the time commitment required by this work?
- 5) Describe your level of knowledge about the church, community, Presbyterian theology and government.
- 6) What is your willingness to learn?

Hope this is helpful to the Nominating Committee. This is not just about who expressed interest, but also discerning skills, gifts, energy and motivation for serving the church in this capacity (just as you would for elders and deacons).

from "On Calling a Pastor"

Election to A PNC Is A Sacred Trust

The members of the congregation must give careful and prayerful attention to the election of persons to serve in this important role. Those who are asked to serve should consider this to be a significant commitment of their time, energy, and very best wisdom. They should be persons who understand and accept this as a task of spiritual discernment, not being easily influenced by personal desires or congregational politics, but rather listening for the voice of God. They also should be persons of integrity who respect confidentiality.

In the Presbyterian call system, the congregation gives authority to the PNC. Once the PNC is elected, the other members of the congregation and the session have no role in determining who will be the next pastor until the PNC is ready to recommend someone to the congregation for a vote. Any Presbyterian may have names to suggest to the PNC, but the work of the PNC must be protected from pressure and intrusion. Names under consideration are not shared outside of the committee. This is both to protect the persons being considered and to protect the integrity of the discernment process.

The presbytery, through the Committee on Ministry (COM) and the executive or general presbyter, has a responsibility to work with your PNC, to advise you, and to evaluate the person whom you select as your next pastor. They are authorized by our Constitution to be partners in the discernment process.

The PNC will receive names from a variety of sources. All names should be considered and evaluated thoroughly, giving attention to the source of the referral. The services of Call Referral Services are provided as a support to your church free of charge. All PIFs that come through Church Leadership Connection have the following statement "This PIF is in the Church Leadership Connection database and has been signed by the person and has been verified." Your presbytery will be your best source for guidance during your search process.