



Guidelines for Congregational Meeting to Call a Pastor – 2015

These guidelines cover the process for a congregation to elect an installed pastor. There are various titles for installed pastors including: pastor (solo and head of staff), associate pastor, designated pastor, and designated associate pastor. This is the process to call any pastor with any of these titles.

Some congregations have pastors who are not installed. These titles include interim pastor, temporary pastor (short term), or stated supply (longer term). They are called by a covenant between the session and the pastor, with the oversight of the Presbytery. This process is not used for calling non-installed pastors.

1. The Moderator opens the meeting with prayer.
2. Organization of the Meeting
 - a. The Moderator announces that the Clerk of Session shall serve as secretary of the meeting. If the Clerk is not present, a secretary pro tem is appointed with congregational approval.
 - b. The Moderator determines whether a quorum of the congregation is present. (The quorum is set by the congregation in its by-laws.)
 - c. The Clerk reads the call for the meeting and certifies that public notice of the call has been given in accordance with the congregation's and Presbytery's rule for minimum public notice for its meetings.
 - d. The Moderator introduces the Pastor Nominating Committee to present its report.
3. Report of the Pastoral Nominating Committee
 - a. Members of the PNC present their story of the search process and discovering God's call to the candidate. They should explain why they selected the candidate and present the terms of call. The terms of call must be on the Presbytery of Cincinnati Terms of Call form and printed for the congregation. A written introduction of the candidate is often provided – many times this introduction has been distributed when the call to the meeting is sent to the congregation.
 - b. If this is a Designated Pastorate, a Presbytery representative will explain what it means to elect a pastor for a designated term.
 - c. The candidate is invited to take five to ten minutes to share her or his vision for ministry with the congregation, plans for the first year of ministry, and some personal history.
 - d. The congregation has the opportunity to ask the candidate questions about the vision for ministry and plans.
 - e. The candidate and any family members are excused. Someone should be appointed to escort them to a comfortable place to wait, out of hearing distance. If the representative is a member of the congregation, that person may cast her or his ballot before departure.
 - f. The congregation then has the opportunity to ask any questions or make comments about the nomination and the terms of call. A representative from the Session and/or Finance Committee should be present to answer questions about the financial implications. Copies of the budget and the bylaws should be available for reference.

Adopted by COM November 2015

