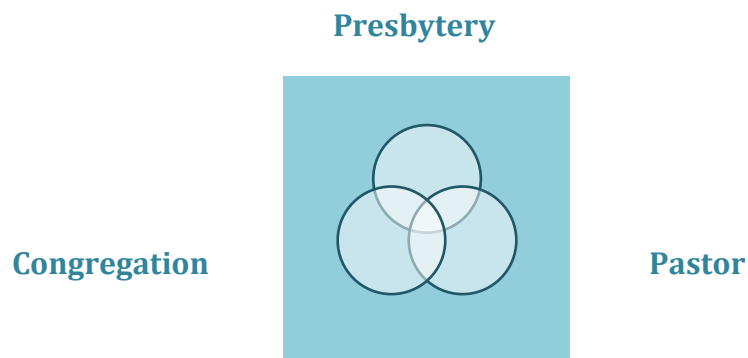


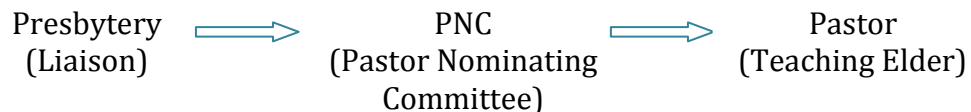
Presbytery Liaisons Supporting Congregations Calling New Installed Pastors

Presbyteries ministry commissions/committees play a vital role in assisting congregations in their search for new pastors. It is the responsibility of the liaison representative to guide, support and resource congregations during this transition period. By limiting the time a congregation is without pastoral leadership, the chance of loss morale and loss of membership are lessened. A knowledgeable liaison can make the way for an easy transition. Below is a best practice process for calling new installed pastors. Ultimately, it is the phrase, "According to the process of the presbytery..." that will give a variety of expressions to the way a presbytery's call process is conducted.

PARTNERS IN THE PROCESS



STEPS IN THE PROCESS



1. Meet with the Session upon receiving the pastor's resignation to hear concerns and provide support.
 - a. The Session calls a Congregational Meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationship.
 - b. *Share resources for a Healthy Goodbye such as On Calling a Pastor PDS# 72214-00-40 and 2011-2013 Advisory Handbook for Ministry Committees/Commissions.*
 - c. Schedule Exit Interviews with the Pastor and the Session.
 - d. Determine the congregation's immediate need for leadership whether Interim Pastor or other.
2. To provide reassurance to the congregation, it would be helpful for a presbytery representative to attend the congregation's worship service following the announcement of the pastor's resignation.
3. Convene a second meeting with the Session to consider the congregation's health together. Questions for consideration:
 - A. Is this congregation healthy enough to call their next installed pastor?
 - B. What is the congregation's financial health? Does the congregation have adequate funds to call a new pastor and support the mission of the church? Are the finances of the church sustainable?

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- C. What type of pastoral leadership is appropriate: fulltime or part-time; or installed for an indefinite period or a designated period or other temporary leadership?
4. When the congregation is ready to proceed and the presbytery has given approval, offer support and guidance for the election of a PNC. Pastor Nominating Committees work best together when they are represented by a wide membership of the church, when the members are active participants in the life of the congregation, when they possess a strong sense of the vision of the congregation, and when they have the ability to work collaboratively. (G2.0802)
 5. Orientate the new PNC to the process of calling a new pastor by using resources: On Calling A Pastor and The 2011-2013 Advisory Handbook for Ministry Committee/Commissions and individual presbytery resources.
 6. Help the PNC gather information to present their vision of God's call to potential leaders. The following resources may be helpful: pcusa.org/research, Percept for Ministry, MissionInsite, and the New Beginnings Assessment Tool (pcusa.org/ministries/church-growth/new-beginnings).
 7. Assist the PNC in writing the Ministry Information Form (MIF).
 8. Assist the PNC in scheduling regular meetings. Plan to attend meetings regularly to develop a good working partnership.
 9. Determine a process for receiving and reviewing Personal Information Forms (PIFs).
 10. Assist the PNC in developing an interview and discernment process for reviewing PIFs.
 11. *"Receive the presbytery's counsel on the merits, suitability and availability of those considered for a call (G-2.803)."* Follow the presbytery's policy on interviewing potential ministers or candidates requesting membership in the presbytery.
 12. Share the presbytery's counsel on potential candidates with the PNC.
 13. Help the PNC establish a process for conducting reference checks.
 14. Request presbytery to presbytery reference checks.
 15. Assist the PNC in conducting in-person interviews.
 16. Assist the PNC in conversation with the Session to determine the proposed Terms of Call. Ensure that the new call is within the stated budget. (See G-2.0804).
 17. Once the PNC selects a final candidate and before the call is extended, offer guidance about the presbytery examination and approval process.
 18. Assist the Session in calling a Congregational Meeting to elect the new pastor and approve the Terms of Call.

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19. *"When the congregation, the presbytery, and the pastor or candidate have all concurred in a call to a permanent or designated pastoral position, the presbytery shall authorize the installation and or ordination service"* (G-2.0805).
20. The action of the congregation in electing a new pastor should be reported to the presbytery.
21. The session in consultation with the PNC should plan a welcome reception for the new pastor.
22. Assist the PNC in establishing a new pastor's welcome team within the congregation.

Bibliography

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- Olsen, Charles M., and Ellen Morseth Selecting Church Leaders: A Practice in Spiritual Discernment. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2002.
- Phillips, Wm. Bud. Pastoral Transitions: From Ending to New Beginnings. Washington, DC: The Alban Institute, 1988.
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PCUSA Resources

2011-2013 Advisory Handbook for Ministry Committees/Commissions
New Beginnings Assessment Tool: pcusa.org/ministries/church-growth/new-beginnings
On Calling a Pastor, Churchwide Personnel Services: pcusa.org/resource/calling-pastor-word
New Times New Call: A Manual of Pastoral Options for Small Churches, 2003.,
<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/new-times-new-call>