

CONSIDERING CANDIDATES.

Competency. Chemistry. Commitment.

Based on the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) submitted by the congregation, synod staff will submit to the call committee the names of pastors who seem to “match” this profile. The committee will officially be introduced to these candidates through their Rostered Ministry Profile (RMP) provided by synod staff.

Please carefully tend the confidentiality of the RMP from each candidate. Distribute one paper copy, rather than by electronic means, only to members of the call committee and immediately shred the RMP once the candidate is no longer in your interview process. Please do not share candidate RMPs with other congregations looking for a pastor.

The purpose of this document is to assist call committee members through the interviewing process.

We suggest ALL candidates presented for consideration by synod staff be contacted. The candidates agree to give their name to a congregation and receive a copy of the ministry site profile. Do not eliminate a candidate without at least one conversation.

INTERVIEWING ETIQUETTE.

The call committee should meet, perhaps several times, to carefully review the information about potential candidates given by synod staff. The call committee is also encouraged to review its commitment to trust and confidentiality.

At this point the call committee may be tempted to search for a candidate on the internet and/or social media. We suggest holding off on doing this until after you have had one interview so that you can get a sense of who the candidate is on their own prior to looking them up online.

Congregation should reimburse all interview expenses for the candidate including travel, meals, housing

When the plan is to interview more than one candidate, an attempt is made to conduct each interview in the same setting and manner. The call committee should be consistent in having the same person lead the interview each time and plan for committee members to ask the same basic questions of each candidate. This will assure that all the bases are covered in each instance once the interview process begins.

- We suggest doing the first interview on Zoom. However, if you do, it is recommended that each call committee member use their own device so faces are easily seen and audio quality is better for the candidate. Also, please remember good interview practices on Zoom; including turning off other devices or TVs that may be distracting the background.
- If this is a second interview, include spouse. (*where applicable*). The second interview can include follow-up questions, asking for a sample sermon or devotion to be led for the call committee, a tour of the community and church, a visit to the parsonage, if there is one.

- Be prepared to share additional information that candidates may request such as a recent annual report, worship folder, newsletter, listing of staff, congregation's constitution and mission statement, information about community-
- You may want to use a ranking system with each candidate. This should not be a predominant determining factor in deciding to recommend a pastor but can help the call committee discover its own sense of the candidate and impressions.
- Discuss timeline with each candidate and who will follow up. **(It is crucial that the call committee immediately notifies the candidate when he/she is no longer being considered.)**
- A crucial aspect of interviewing is the art of listening. To be a good listener, several things are important:

DISCERNING.

A process for recommending a pastor to the council and congregation:

- The "matching" of strengths and gifts from profiles.
- A ranking format – more objective process.
- Sensing the connection – intuitive – a subjective process.
- **PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!**
- "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us..."

RECOMMEDATION TO THE COUNCIL.

Once the call committee has decided upon a candidate to recommend and the candidate has accepted the offer of being the congregation's "candidate of choice", a meeting of the congregation council should be called. It is expected that when a candidate of choice has accepted the role and is being presented to council, the call committee no longer interviews other candidates, and the candidate will have withdrawn from the call process in other congregations. The entire call committee or only the chair of the committee may be present at this meeting. Careful preparation by the call committee member who is chosen to present the candidate is important. Thorough information about the candidate with ample opportunity for dialogue between the call committee and the council will enable the congregation council to come to a decision regarding concurrence with the call committee's recommendation. Please continue to respect the candidate's confidentiality at this stage in the process unless they are willing for the name and identity to be shared.

The congregation council may choose to meet the candidate the call committee recommends, or the council may decide to accept the recommendation and forward it directly to the congregation. If the recommended candidate lives nearby, the congregation council might consider asking him/her (and spouse) to meet for informal conversation. If this occurs, there may be discussion about salary, housing, benefits, and possible timetable. If there is a spouse, he/she may be encouraged to be fully involved in the occasion, with warmth and hospitality as benchmarks of planning.

The council is responsible for setting the date of a congregational meeting for the purpose of the call vote. Between the time of the council meeting and the call vote, a satisfactory compensation package should be negotiated by council leadership with the candidate.