

6.1420 PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

6.1421 Organizing:

1. COM appoints a liaison for the PNC, (the initial liaison may continue). Typically, the Committee on Ministry liaison will regularly attend the initial meetings until the church's Mission Information Form is written. During the time that the PNC is reviewing Personal Information Forms the liaison will maintain weekly contact with the committee chair. At the time the committee is ready to conduct phone/skype interviews the liaison should be present, especially for any face-to-face interviews that are conducted.

2. COM, upon the request of the session to form the PNC, and with the concurrence of the interim pastor, approves the request of the session to proceed to call a Congregation Meeting for the purpose of electing the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

Election of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) ordinarily should take place after the pastor has left, the session has met with representatives from the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) and a temporary pastor relationship has been secured. In cases when an adaptive transition model is being pursued, the election of the PNC may happen earlier in the transition process.

3. The congregation agrees to a nominating process to nominate members of the congregation to serve on the PNC (Note: the session can make recommendations to the congregation related to this process and the PNC ordinarily should consist of between five and nine members representative of the whole congregation. Many congregations will use one of the following methods to produce candidates that are representative of the congregation and are presented as a slate of candidates for the congregation's election: (a) use the existing Church Nominating Committee; or (b) session appoints a special nominating committee to put names before the congregation.

4. Selecting a Pastor Nominating Committee Guidelines: (Process also relevant for selecting an Associate Pastor)

a. Initial orientation meeting(s): Nominating a Pastor Nominating Committee is one of the most important responsibilities and will impact the congregation for years to come.

Therefore, it is valuable to take some time at the beginning of the process to agree on some basic understandings of how to proceed. Once this portion is completed, the next focus will be on gathering names of potential nominees.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Discuss goal
- Overview of PNC process
- Review a position description for the pastor to be called (if available)
- Consider organizational criteria (see 4b)
- Consider characteristics desired for PNC members (see 4c)
- Consider characteristics desired for PNC Committee as a whole (if not already covered)
- Develop a timeline for completing the task
- Assure responsibilities are clear on completing the task

b. Organizational Criteria

1. Is God working with us and through us during this nomination process?

We serve and pray with this hope. Based on past experience, we can be confident that God is leading—if we will follow!

2. Will we have enough qualified candidates to fill the number of positions?

Because this will be the biggest—and most important—decision we make for many years, almost everyone we ask will accept and serve well.

3. How many members should serve on the PNC?

Most PNCs have 5-9 members. Some prefer an odd number in total.

4. How broadly should it represent the congregation?

The PNC MUST represent the congregation. The goal is for every member of the congregation to look at the PNC members and see someone they know and trust.

5. What age range? Should mobility be an issue?

How young—is it better to have someone who is a youth or someone that represents the interests of the youth (parent, teacher, etc.)? How old—will the person need to visit candidates, drive at night, computer literacy,

etc.?

6. Are there special skills required?

It is important for one person to have strong computer skills and be willing to be the PNC recorder/secretary.

7. How closely should the genders balance?

The ideal is to have an equal number of males and females—unless you choose an odd number!

8. Who is eligible? Members of Nominating Committee? Family members of leaders?

Generally, members of the nominating committee are not eligible. Immediate family members—spouses, parents, children—may/may not be eligible. Exceptions can be considered, especially in smaller churches.

9. Should Ruling Elders and/or Deacons be included in consideration?

At least one session member and one deacon should be nominated for the PNC. Both are important groups to represent. More may be acceptable as appropriate.

10. Should we include a youth representative?

Usually answered under question #5, but it's important to agree and articulate the rationale for your decision.

11. Should we nominate the moderator and vice-moderator?

There are merits to either nominating or not. If yes, the Nominating Committee can balance abilities and personalities, helping the PNC to get off to a good start. If no, an important organizational beginning is provided for the PNC for them to participate in the selection of their leaders.

12. What church groups should be represented?

Consideration should be given to representation by the “major” groups in your congregation: choir, Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men, etc. However, the PNC MUST represent the congregation as a whole.

13. What characteristics should PNC members embody?

See 4c for Desired Characteristics

c. Desired characteristics for PNC members:

1. Participation in the life of the church e.g. regular worship attendance, involvement in education, outreach, and/or fellowship.

2. Ability and initiative to communicate—speak and listen—with the congregation and other PNC members.
3. Ability to absorb information, use own judgment in decision making, and follow through on agreed actions.

Desired PNC candidate qualities include the following (partial list): integrity, calm manner/non-anxious presence, team builder and player, sound judgment, organizational and communication skills, open-mindedness, patience, ability to keep information confidential, sense of humor, hopeful attitude, and love of others.

d. Searching for and selecting PNC nominees :

After a Nominating Committee has completed the initial work, suggestions for possible candidates should be broadly encouraged. Direct communication with the congregation is essential.

The Nominating Committee should next discuss the suggested candidates and identify those candidates to present as a slate for a congregational vote. If a candidate is to be recommended, a discussion should be held with the candidate so that the individual understands what will be expected if elected, especially an estimate of the time and skills required. Any candidate presented should have given assurance that they will serve if elected.

Candidates should be made aware of the timing of the congregational meeting and vote. Nominating Committees may use a variety of approaches to introduce their proposed slate of candidates to a congregation. Congregations should be reminded that electing a PNC is one of its most important responsibilities and will impact the congregation for many years to come.

e. Congregational meeting—election of PNC:

Session calls a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing a PNC. The Nominating Committee presents its recommended slate of candidates and any supporting comments it would like to make. Nominations are open to the floor. If there are more candidates than the recommended size of the PNC, a secret vote should be taken. If not, an open vote may be taken.

5. Session approves a salary range, a position description for the PNC to use in recruitment, along with search expenses budget for travel and relocation.

6. COM liaison and General Presbyter instructs and trains the PNC, and provides regular guidance. If the search is for an Associate Pastor, the Pastor/head of staff will be involved in appropriate ways (to be determined in consultation with COM, the COM liaison, and members

of the APNC). The PNC will also be provided with a copy of *On Calling a Pastor*, a manual from the PC (USA) about the search process.

7. The PNC should organize, identifying a chairperson and secretary. Many PNCs also have a vice chairperson. It is advised that the secretary be computer literate.

8. The congregation and the session need to understand that the PNC works in extreme confidentiality and, except for regular progress reports on the process, does not consult with or report to either the congregation or the session during its work.