

Process for Pastoral Placement

Shenandoah District of the Church of the Brethren

1. When a pastoral vacancy occurs the congregation informs the District Executive Minister.
2. The District Executive Minister (DEM) or member of the Pastoral Placement Team (PPT) meets with the church board and reviews the placement process.
 - a. The District representative encourages the board members to share the story of their congregation. This is an important time of listening and letting each congregation know that they are important, regardless of their journey, struggles, or size.
 - b. The District representative asks about congregation's mission and/or vision statement.
 - c. Ask for a current copy of the congregation's constitution and by-laws. A copy should be placed in the congregational file at the District Office.
 - d. The District representative reviews interim pastoral placement procedures and process.
 - e. The District Representative reviews "Game Plan for Search Committee" process, including appointment of the Search Committee.
3. The PPT representative submits potential candidate (s) to the church board for consideration to serve as interim pastor for the congregation. The PPT representative guides the church board through the interview process with the interim candidate (s). When an appropriate candidate is selected, the DEM or PPT member drafts an agreement to be signed by both parties. (See attached interim template)
 - a. A copy of the interim agreement shall be kept on file by the congregation and at the District Office.
 - b. The District Office communications assistant will be informed so as to post the placement in District communications.
4. Upon final selection by the Church Board, the PPT meets with the search committee to orient the committee to the placement process. Of specific interest is orientation to the completion of the congregational profile, including receiving feedback from the congregation. This can be done in various ways, including but not limited to:
 - a. Receiving congregational feedback via available surveys.
 - b. Interviewing members of the congregation about the needs of the church and considerations for the next pastor.
5. The congregational search committee completes a congregational profile. The District office will provide access information for the designated member of the search committee to complete this process. The District Office will assist in the completion of the profile as needed.
6. The District Executive Minister reviews the congregational profile and, if necessary, follows up with the search committee chairperson regarding recommended adjustments to the profile.
7. The District Executive Minister submits the completed profile to the Office of Ministry. The completed profile is posted in the denominational database and Placement Report.
8. The District Executive Minister and PPT member, in consultation with the search committee, compile a list of candidate profiles for the search committee's review.

Confidentiality is maintained through the process from this point on.

9. The search committee reviews the profiles and determines which of the candidates they wish to interview.

10. The District Executive secures clearance from appropriate persons, provides congregational profiles for the potential candidates and determines the interest of potential candidates. When additional pre-interview resources are used, care for fairness and equity are exercised by all parties.
11. In consultation with the chair of the search committee, the PPT representative makes preliminary arrangements for the interview(s) with the candidate(s).
12. The search committee, with the assistance of the Pastoral Placement Team, conducts initial interviews with the candidate(s). The search committee is responsible for the travel expenses of the candidates.
13. Upon completion of initial interviews the search committee may:
 - Discontinue process with one or more candidates
 - Request a second interview with one or more candidates
 - Decide to enter negotiations with one candidate.
14. Upon completion of the second interview the search committee may:
 - a. Cease conversation with all candidates, requesting additional profiles
 - b. Request additional information for a candidate(s)
 - c. Offer to proceed with negotiations with a candidate.
15. When an agreement has been reached between the candidate and the search committee, the chair of the search committee notifies the church board that the search committee has a candidate to recommend for a call. The church board acts upon this recommendation and sends it to the congregation for action. (In some cases, the search committee's recommendation goes directly to the congregation.)
 - a. Two-three weeks prior to the weekend the candidate's name is released to the congregation with appropriate details. The search committee plans a candidate's weekend at which time the candidate and family are introduced to the congregation. The candidate meets formally and informally with the congregational groups as deemed appropriate, concluding with the trial sermon on Sunday morning.
 - b. The church board calls a special congregational business meeting to take place at the conclusion of the weekend, normally immediately after Sunday morning worship. The church moderator will oversee the meeting with a District Representative present to observe the vote. At this time there are two votes.
 - i. a vote on the candidate (requires a two-thirds majority)
 - ii. a vote on the terms of the call (requires a simple majority)
16. Following the congregational vote, results will be turned in to the DEM.
17. If the call vote is successful, the DEM will contact the Office of Ministry so that the congregation and candidate can be updated on the weekly placement report and the communications assistant will be informed for district publication.
18. The Church Executive Committee, or Team which holds the authority of employment will complete the Contractual Agreements, such as moving expenses, starting date, housing, etc. The interim pastor shall be informed of the successful call vote, and anticipated start date of the new pastor.
19. The search committee completes their service upon the successful call of the new pastor(s).
20. The District Executive Minister (or designee) will perform the installation service for the new candidate at a mutually acceptable time, usually during a Sunday morning worship service.