



Job Description for Search Committees

HOW TO CHOOSE A SEARCH COMMITTEE?

- Members of the congregation are invited to submit names of those who they think would have the gifts to serve on the search committee.
- The Council (the Governing body) chooses 7 from the list of recommended persons, no more than 9 to serve, according to their gifts and representing the diversity of the congregation.
- Best practices suggest that no more than one Church Council member should serve on the search committee.

QUALITIES AND GIFTS OF THOSE WHO SERVE ON THE SEARCH COMMITTEE:

- A person of faith with commitment to the church demonstrated in active participation
- Capacity to approach tasks with openness rather than pre-determined agenda
- Integrity and respect for others
- Ability to keep confidences
- Ability to listen, collaborate and participate to reach consensus
- Trusted and respected by the congregation
- Ability to commit time and presence to the process

FIVE COMMITMENTS FOR SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMEBRS

A Faith Commitment . . . The task of the Search Committee is spiritual as you gather to make a faith commitment to listen to God in the process of seeking a new pastor.

A Time Commitment . . . Search Committee members make a time commitment. By the time the search process is completed (from first meeting to the calling of pastor) the committee would **have met 9 to 18 months**.

A Commitment to Confidentiality . . . Search Committee members make a commitment to confidentiality. They must not talk about the content of their work - sharing of names of candidates is a serious breach of process. Even to speak in generalities about location or gender are not acceptable. The congregation must be kept informed about PROCESS but not content.

A Commitment to Openness . . . Search Committees make a commitment to genuine consideration of all candidates. The commitment involves understanding that the gifts, skills, and experience of candidates are primary in determining their ability to serve the congregation.

A Commitment to Consensus . . . Search Committee members make a commitment to consensus. The committee needs to be of one mind in recommending their prospective pastor to the congregation. Members must be able with a clear conscience, to endorse the individual the candidate presented to the congregation.

A Commitment to Faithfulness. . . Search Committee members make a commitment to participate in the process faithfully by attending all Search Committee meetings and by engaging in the process wholeheartedly.

TASKS OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

A search committee is responsible for compiling the church profile and finding the best candidate for the open position.

- Compile the church profile. Depending on the church and the process, some of the content for the three narrative questions will be received from transition team.
- Submit completed church profile to the Association Office.
- Receive ministerial profiles from interested candidates through the Association office
- Acknowledge receipt of profiles by communicating with candidates
- Read candidate profiles allowing the Spirit to guide
- Check candidates' online presence. Google and search them on social media. Find and listen to some of their sermons.
- Interview candidates electronically first, in person for additional interviews
- Call candidate references
- Pick 2 or 3 finalists
- Interview finalists in person, and ask the Association office to schedule a "neutral pulpit"
 - A Neutral Pulpit is neutral church, chosen by the Association, for the search committee to attend as their candidate leads worship and preaches
- Choose a candidate
- Negotiate a call agreement and share a job description with the candidate in collaboration with church Moderator/President
- Present the candidate to the Council, then to the congregation. Check the church's constitution and bylaws to follow the process accurately.
- Schedule a Candidating weekend when a vote is taken in a congregational meeting to call the pastor. That weekend the candidate meets the congregation during a reception, leads worship and preaches. Following worship the congregation votes.
- Celebrate!

Resources for Search and Call:

www.UCC.org

http://www.ucc.org/ministers_search-and-call

www.livingwaterone.org

<https://livingwaterone.org/search-resource-library/>