



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 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!

The Search committee will be trained for this task by an Association staff person. The staff will meet with the Search committee at least twice. First, to train about completing the church profile. Second about the process of interviewing candidates and more.

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/>