

INTRODUCTION:

1. The following outline of the call process for a pastor in the Presbytery of Lake Michigan highlights the responsibilities of the congregation, its session and its Pastor Nominating Committee as they, in partnership with the Presbytery through its Commission on Ministry, seek the next pastor for that congregation.
2. This process is a spiritual process, not a hiring process.
3. The term **pastor** used in this outline refers to any dissolved pastoral relationship whether it be a Pastor, Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor position.
4. The list below does not constitute a rigid order. Some steps may be modified depending on local circumstances.
5. Acronyms used in this outline:

AI – Appreciative Inquiry	MDP – Ministry Discernment Profile
BOP – Board of Pensions	MS – Mission Study
CLC – Church Leadership Connection	PNC – Pastor Nominating Committee
COM – Commission on Ministry	PDP – Personal Discernment Profile
EQ – Equal Opportunity	PLM – Presbytery of Lake Michigan
EP – Executive Presbyter	TC – Transition Counselor

DISSOLVING THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP:

1. EP and COM notified of an anticipated pastoral relationship dissolution
2. Session and congregation notified of this anticipated dissolution
3. COM Region assigns TC to congregation (ideally the congregation's COM liaison)
4. If necessary, COM Region appoints a moderator for that congregation's session
5. Session meets to concur with pastor's request to dissolve pastoral relationship and calls Congregational Meeting to take action
6. EP and TC or COM Representative meet with session to outline Call Process and discuss options for temporary/transitional pastoral leadership
7. Covenant of Closure signed by session and pastor
8. Exit interviews conducted (session with pastor, COM with session, and COM with pastor)
9. Congregational meeting to act on request to dissolve pastoral relationship
10. COM Plenary, on behalf of PLM acts upon request to dissolve pastoral relationship
11. If desired, congregation and pastor close pastoral relationship with a service of dissolution
12. Departing pastor and clerk of session must each inform BOP of change in service

BEGINNING THE TRANSITION

14. COM and EP assist session in securing temporary pastoral leadership. If the session decides to use pulpit supply only they must comply with the Pulpit Supply Policy.
15. COM interviews person selected by session to provide temporary pastoral leadership.
16. COM receives and approves temporary pastoral relationship and Covenant Agreement.
18. EP, TC, and COM assist session in making preliminary decisions regarding future such as terms of call, position description, full/part-time status, indefinite period/designated term relationship, etc.
19. Session adopts a budget for PNC and their search
20. Session completes MS and requests COM approval via TC.

INITIATING THE SEARCH PROCESS

21. Session requests permission from COM to proceed with formation of PNC via TC
22. When COM approves request to form PNC, session calls Congregational Meeting to elect PNC. The PNC shall be representative of the whole congregation.
23. Congregational meeting to elect a PNC
24. TC orients PNC regarding search process. The Interim/Transitional pastor may help at the invitation of the COM.
25. After initial PNC orientation the PNC elects officers, sets meeting times, and leads the search process. The role of the TC shifts from that of leader to one of training, guidance, information, and support provider as needed/requested. Temporary/Interim Pastor has been helping, this is the point they removes themselves from the search process and the work of the PNC.
26. PNC develops MDP
27. Session approves MDP
28. COM Region approves MDP
29. PNC enters MDP into the CLC database. The COM Moderator approves the release of the MDP in the CLC database.
30. PNC develops informational packet (MDP, information about church, information about community, etc.) for prospective candidates.

CONDUCTING SEARCH

31. TC provides orientation to PNC on reading, evaluating and ranking PDPs
32. PNC reads, evaluates, and discusses PDPs
33. In order to keep everyone informed about the status of applicants PNCs should respond to applicants in a timely manner:
 - a. PDPs received through CLC data run do not need a response from PNC unless the individual is contacted by the PNC for additional information
 - b. PNC responds to individuals who independently submit a PDP
34. PNC narrows list of potential candidates
35. TC provides orientation to PNC on interviewing potential candidates.
36. PNC conducts phone/virtual interviews.
37. PNC contacts references of individuals under consideration
38. PNC may choose to conduct second phone/virtual interviews.
38. Before inviting individuals for a face-to-face interview the PNC requests (through TC) Executive Reference Checks, a COM interview with the candidate, and a background check be completed.
39. COM region conducts interview with candidate and PNC to discern suitability of potential candidate for this pastoral relationship and PLM membership.
40. TC informs the PNC when these checks have been completed.
41. PNC makes all arrangements for on-site interviews by potential candidates, including arrangements for a neutral pulpit worship/preaching experience with assistance from TC.

SELECTING THE CANDIDATE

42. PNC discusses issuing and, if moved by the Holy Spirit, extends a pastoral call
43. Potential candidate receives and, if moved by the Holy Spirit, accepts the pastoral call
44. PNC (in consultation with TC) negotiates terms of call with candidate
45. In consultation with the TC, the COM region approves the terms of call.
46. PNC and candidate arrange a weekend for them (and family) to be presented to congregation

CALL PROCESS OUTLINE

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47. PNC informs session that a candidate has been selected and requests that a Congregational Meeting be called to receive the PNC's report
48. Session calls Congregational Meeting for the purpose of electing a pastor and approving terms of call
49. PNC makes news public as agreed upon (time and method)
50. PNC arrange "Meet the Candidate" event and informational brochure for congregation
51. Candidate prepares and leads Sunday morning worship on day of Congregational Meeting to vote on candidate
52. Congregational Meeting immediately following Sunday worship to approve a pastoral relationship with candidate

ORDAINING AND/OR INSTALLING THE NEW PASTOR

53. TC reports to COM Region that PNC has issued a call that has been accepted by the candidate and that the congregation has voted (or shortly will vote) to confirm a pastoral relationship with individual selected
54. PNC submits signed EO and Pastoral Call Form to COM through TC
55. Pastor-elect and PNC confer with Presbytery Moderator and PLM Office Master Calendar concerning availability of date and time preferred for ordination and/or installation service
56. Pastor-elect submits names of persons to serve on the Administrative Commission (for their ordination and/or installation service) to TC
57. Pastor-elect prepares and returns: Clergy Information Form, Nominating Committee Form, Statement of Faith, Personal Biographical Information, Sexual Misconduct Policy Acknowledgment Form, and Conflict of Interest form to the Presbytery Office
58. If Pastor-elect is an ordained Teaching Elder, COM Plenary, on behalf of PLM, approves call and Administrative Commission to install them as pastor
59. If Pastor-elect is a Candidate for Ordination and has not been examined for ordination by PLM or another Presbytery, COM recommends the call and Administrative Commission (to ordain and/or install) be approved pending a successful ordination examination by PLM or by the individual's Presbytery of Care. Pastor-elect will meet with the CPM before they are examined on the floor of the presbytery.
60. COM appoints a clergy mentor for newly ordained pastors.
61. Pastor-elect, congregation, and Moderator of PLM or designee plan for pastor's Ordination

and/or Installation Service

62. Presbytery conducts Ordination and/or Installation Service
63. Exit interviews are conducted with temporary pastor (session with temporary pastor, COM with session, and COM with temporary pastor)
64. The new pastor is introduced to members of Presbytery at its next meeting
65. PNC dissolved of official responsibilities – encouraged to act for a year as advisor to the new pastor