

## PROCEDURES FOR PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

### 1. Preliminary Steps

- a) Contact the Minister of Pastoral Services' office at MCEC to inform them of your search process and to request an MCEC Resource Person to work with the Search Committee.
- b) The Church Council or "governing body" needs to appoint a Search Committee that is representative of the congregation, designate a Chair for the Search Committee, negotiate a clear mandate under which the Search Committee will do its work, and establish a common understanding about the process and time line for the work. For instance, to whom is the Search Committee accountable, who has authority to determine the contents of the Congregational Profile, and Job Description, whether full-time or part-time, who needs to be consulted if changes are made and who will bring recommendations to the congregation?
- c) Request a "Congregational Search" packet and pay special attention to "Basic Qualifications for Leadership Ministries" and "Process of Calling to Pastoral Leadership".
- d) Review the "Congregational Search" packet and use the material provided to help you develop the necessary profiles. Consult with the congregation as necessary.

### 2. Prepare Background Materials

- a) Using the "Congregational Information Form," prepare a congregational profile. This should also include financial and demographic information. (Please provide five copies of the profile to the MCEC office, "Attention: Minister of Pastoral Services".)
- b) Prepare a Pastoral Candidate Profile, describing the kind of person and gifts you believe your congregation needs based on your Congregational Profile. Use the "Ministerial Leadership Information" form ("Twenty Pastoral Tasks") as a guide.
- c) Prepare a job description for the pastor(s) based on the Congregational Profile and the leadership needs that have been discerned by the Search Committee and congregation. Please forward a copy to the MCEC Minister of Pastoral Services.

### 3. Interviewing Potential Candidates

- a) The Resource Person, in consultation with the Minister of Pastoral Services will share profiles of candidates whose gifts seem to match your Congregational Profile, Pastoral Candidate Profile and Job Description.
- b) From this short list, select the candidate(s) you would like to meet for a preliminary interview. The Resource Person will usually be the one designated to make contacts with the candidate(s). The Search Committee Chair functions as the contact person between the Search Committee and the Resource Person.
- c) After you have conducted the preliminary interview(s), you may decide to hold a second interview with **one** of the candidates. At this point, you have narrowed the list to **one** person and need to complete the process with him/her before you go on to further interviews with any other candidate(s).

### 4. Extending the Call

- a) When the Search Committee decides to extend a call, the Search Chair or Resource Person will extend the call to the candidate on behalf of the Search Committee.
- b) Prior to going public, spend some time with the candidate clarifying details of job description and contractual arrangements. Refer to conference guidelines on "Recommended Remuneration" for pastors. (Note: the guidelines should be viewed as minimum rather than

maximum remuneration.) Determine who works with the Search Committee and candidate around personnel issues.

- c) When a candidate is willing to have her/his name forwarded to the congregation, the Search Committee needs to submit a written recommendation to the Church Council and/or congregation describing the person who is being called, the position they are being called to, whether full-time or part-time, and the length of term. It also needs to be determined who will bring the recommendation to the congregation. Does the recommendation come from Church Council, Search Committee, or both?
- d) Plan an appropriate process to introduce the candidate to the congregation. Be creative and provide as much exposure as possible in a variety of settings.
- e) Plan an appropriate process for congregational decision-making in terms of affirming the call to ministerial leadership. Clarify who manages this process and the percent of affirmation required. Inform the congregation how and when the decision will be made.
- f) Forward the results of the congregation's decision to the Resource Person and determine who will contact the pastoral candidate.
- g) If the results are positive, meeting with the candidate to finalize a written Job Description and Memo of Understanding to be signed by both pastor and congregation. Determine who signs for the congregation. Forward a copy of each to the Minister of Pastoral Services.

## **5. Arrange for a Service of Installation**

- a) Plan an appropriate service of installation.
- b) Invite representation from the Conference and your local church community.
- c) Conference requests that the pastor and congregation sign a mutual covenant of ethical standards that will guide pastoral and congregational ministry. (Available from MCEC.)

## **6. General Search Committee Procedures**

- a) It is important that all Search Committee members be present at all meetings, especially decision-making meetings. When possible, the MCEC Resource Person will also be in attendance at each meeting.
- b) Record detailed minutes with a copy for the MCEC Resource Person.
- c) Search Committee deliberations and decisions must be kept in strict confidence within the Search Committee.
- d) It is inappropriate for persons other than the Search Committee to relate to potential candidates.
- e) It is important that the Search Committee be unanimous in its choice of candidate.
- f) The "Twenty Pastoral Tasks" is a guide and should not be interpreted too literally.
- g) It is not wise to focus on potential candidates before the congregational profile, pastoral candidate profile, and job description are complete.
- h) It is important that the Search Committee have a confidential budget to pay the costs of interviewing candidates from a distance and to cover costs accrued by the Resource Person such as mileage, copying expenses and phone calls. In addition, the Resource Person is a volunteer and an honorarium and note of thanks would be appropriate.
- i) Keep the congregation informed as much as possible in terms of how the search is proceeding. Pray for God's guidance in this very important assignment.
- j) After the task is completed, celebrate the good work your committee accomplished!