



PRESBYTERY OF THE
CASCADES



Presbytery of the Cascades
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Toward Calling Your Designated Pastor

*A Handbook for **Designated**
Pastor Nominating Committees*

Welcome to an Exciting Experience of God's Call

Congratulations on your election to the Designated Pastor Nominating Committee of your congregation. You and those you serve with will nominate a pastor who will work with you in the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ.

This booklet, entitled *Toward Calling Your Designated Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees*, (hereafter called **Handbook**) leads you through the pastoral change process. It is not a substitute for the advice of your Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison or the support provided by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its Church Leadership Connection (CLC). This Handbook will help you to know and understand what to expect throughout this process. Other materials and help will be provided by the COM liaison and the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy – the presbytery staff person who supports the COM and churches in transition.

This *Handbook* will be used in combination with the PCUSA Church Leadership Connections', *On Calling a Pastor* (hereafter referred to as "**OCP Manual**"). Copies are available on the Presbyterian Church (USA) website: [CLICK HERE](#) With these resources and support from your region's COM, you should find the guidance and resources you need to fulfill your responsibility to nominate pastoral leadership for your congregation.

For the Christian the very best resource is prayer:

Eternal God: you called us to be a special people, to preach the gospel and show mercy. Keep your Spirit with us as we meet together, so that in everything we may do your will. Guide us lest we stumble or be misguided by our own desires. May all we do be done for the reconciling of the world, for the up building of the church, and for the greater glory of Jesus Christ our confidence, guide, and friend. Amen.

From the Book of Common Worship

May God richly bless and enhance your work!

Getting Started: How to Use This Handbook

First things first: start by printing out a copy of this Handbook as it will become your quick reference and allow for notation when tasks are completed and notes along the way.

In our Presbyterian understanding, pastoral service within congregations involves a three-way covenant and agreement among the pastor, congregation and presbytery.

A regional COM liaison will meet with your congregation to provide support, direction, resource, counsel, and guidance. Your COM liaison is either a teaching or ruling elder from your region who has volunteered to serve on the COM and work with your congregation as an expression of call and service to the larger Church. You will get to know that person well. It is important to remain in close contact with your COM liaison and the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy.

Note contact details here:

COM Liaison: _____	Advocate for Cong. & Clergy: Clark Scalera _____
Phone: _____	Phone: 541.606.5699 _____
Email: _____	Email: clark@potc.life _____

In this *Handbook*, we establish a process that moves forward in an orderly fashion. Calling a pastor works best when you follow *each step in sequence*. We encourage you to resist the temptation to skip an item. Taking each step in turn will ensure your new pastor is called “decently and in order.”

A Key to Abbreviations in this Booklet

You will find this process is full of acronyms; below are the definitions of a few. The *OCP Manual* includes others on page 5.

COM: The presbytery Commission on Ministry. It fulfills our presbytery’s constitutional responsibility as outlined in the *Book of Order* G-3.0307.

DPNC: Designated Pastor Nominating Committee elected by the congregation.

MDP: Ministry Discernment Profile developed by the PNC and approved by the session and the COM; it is eventually placed online.

PDP: Personal Discernment Profile developed by those who are seeking a call.

CLC: Church Leadership Connection of the Presbyterian Church which electronically matches the online MDPs and PDPs.

Definition of a Designated Pastor

The COM Manual (Section 6.3c) defines the unique character of a designated pastor:

A designated pastoral relationship, full or part time, is a call to a teaching elder established by the presbytery for a term of not less than two nor more than five years. Ordinarily in the Presbytery of the Cascades, designated pastor terms are written for terms of three years. The term is renewable and may be converted from designated pastor to pastor after two (2) years. The designated pastor relationships are only those of pastor, associate pastor, or co-pastor. Selection is from a limited group of candidates provided by the Commission on Ministry.

It is important for the congregation to know that the search is limited and that the call is initially for a specified period of time.

The Pastoral Change Process

For a review of our Reformed Faith's understanding of "the call," and a preview of the call process please read the *OCP Manual*, PART ONE & PART TWO, pages 5-12.

As Your Committee Begins to Meet

A first and critical word about your meetings: It is very important that you begin and end your meetings with prayer. It may seem strange to read this, but sometimes a PNC gets so involved in its "business" members forget a committee working on its own strength will not succeed. Depend on God's gracious Spirit to guide your deliberations and your decision-making.

A Prayer

*By your word, Gracious God, your creation sprang forth,
and we were given the breath of life.
By your word, Eternal God, death is overcome,
Christ is raised from the tomb,
and we are given new life in the power of your Spirit.
May we boldly proclaim this good news,
by the words of our mouths and the deeds of our lives,
rejoicing always in your powerful presence;
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.*

1. The Designated Pastor Nominating Committee is Elected

You are now at your beginning as a group, standing together at the heart of the process. Some on the committee you will know well, others may be new to you. Learn to work with each other, grow to respect and enjoy each other. *Build your life together with prayer and care. Attend to the community your committee builds.*

One of your first responsibilities when the DPNC is formed, is to plan who will open each meeting with prayer. Pass the experience around and ask each to include a meditation and opportunity for faith sharing among the group. *This time you spend together will be immensely important. It is an opportunity to grow in faith even as you seek a pastor.*

Your COM liaison is able to provide excellent advice as you work through this process. Before beginning, it might be best to scan the full process in the *OCP Manual*, PART THREE, pages 14 - 16.

1. The Designated Pastor Nominating Committee (DPNC) is elected on _____.
 - ▶ *OCP Manual*, pages 23
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____

2. The DPNC receives its orientation and training by COM liaison and begins its organization on _____. The session and DPNC agree to follow the Equal Opportunity Policy of our presbytery. [CLICK HERE](#) for resources including this policy.
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____

3. A Mission Study may be required. This depends on how recently the congregation has engaged in deep reflection on its situation, ministry and program. The Mission Study is the opportunity to think carefully about your congregation's life and mission. The results of the study feed directly into the work of the DPNC and the development of the Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP). Cascades Presbytery has a number of resources at its disposal and your COM liaison is eager to share them with you. If required, the Mission Study is completed on _____.
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____

4. The DPNC begins the MDP by downloading and printing a copy to use as a work sheet from the CLC at [CLICK HERE](#). The MDP is the important tool introducing your congregation to potential candidates. Work through it carefully so it authentically represents your church's mission, program, and vision with fairness and vitality. Descriptions of the various terms used in the Primary Skill Choices of the MDP are found at www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/clc/doc/skills_01.doc.

Your COM liaison will help in this process.

 - ▶ *OCP Manual*, pages 27 - 31
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____

5. The first draft of the MDP Form is completed on _____
 - ▶ *OCP Manual*, page 28
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____
6. This draft MDP is forwarded to your COM liaison and to the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy on _____ for review and suggestions.
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____
7. The MDP is revised and the final form is presented to session for approval.
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____
8. Once the MDP is approved, the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy will generate a login ID and password for the CLC website for two persons in your congregation: (1) the PNC chair and (2) your clerk of session. You may change your passwords after you sign on for the first time. If you do change it, be sure to record the new password in a safe place. With this information you may enter your approved MDP into the CLC system. The CLC website can be challenging to navigate, so if it gives you problems, reach out to the presbytery staff for help.

Here are the steps to take:

- a. Go to <https://clc.pcusa.org/login> and login.
- b. The website should automatically identify your congregation and generate Part 1 of the MDP. Please review the information and edit it if necessary.
- c. Move to Part II of the MDP. It is important to enter an e-mail address for your PNC. It may belong to the chair or a member of the committee. It must be one that is personal and secure. It should not be the church's email nor should it be an email of a person not on the PNC.
- d. Click "Submit MDP."

When your form is received, the computer will confirm it and generate a MDP ID. This ID is made up of your church PIN and some other digits that will identify your particular MDP. **You will need this ID to edit your MDP.**
Write it down and keep it. Report it to your COM liaison and the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy.

- ▶ *OCP Manual*, page 27
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____
9. Your MDP is now in an electronic "holding area" awaiting on-line approval from your clerk of session and the COM (it can take several days to complete the approval process). Once the approvals have been granted, the CLC will place the MDP into the database where it will be accessible for job seekers across the denomination.
 - * initial when done _____ Date _____

10. Ordinarily, the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy will receive all PDPs and determine which candidates will be presented to the DPNC for their consideration. In certain approved situations, the DPNC may receive all applications directly. It is important that you acknowledge all PDPs that are received and also to promptly notify a person if they are no longer being considered. Establishing a process for how the DPNC's intentions and timelines are communicated is an important step.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

2. The Committee Considers Candidates

You will want to develop your own criteria for evaluating interested persons. Read the *OCP Manual*, pages 36 - 37, for an overview. The good work you did on the MDP bears directly on this part of the process; the quality of your MDP will invite the interest of potential candidates. Again, note the *OCP Manual's* warning on page 38 regarding the presbytery-to-presbytery reference check performed by presbytery staff.

When you arrive at the point of interviews, think very carefully about the structure of the experience and plan your questions well. The *OCP Manual* suggests possible questions, you can think of others, and your COM liaison can suggest more. The *OCP Manual* makes some excellent suggestions on structuring the interview, starting on page 38.

This period in the DPNC work represents a significant commitment of time and energy. You will be engaged in evaluating candidates, phone conversations with them, listening to sermons, checking references. All of this effort is focused toward building a consensus in the committee as you move toward those individuals you wish to interview in person.

As a matter of courtesy, it is very important that you communicate with the candidates regarding their place in your process and your anticipated timelines.

Any questions that you have about this process should be referred to the COM liaison for your DPNC or the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy. This is an important time of discernment.

11. At this point, your top candidate(s) must also be interviewed and approved by your regional COM. Your COM liaison will coordinate a time for this interview, which may occur via video conferencing, or in person when possible. Ideally, the interview will take place in advance of or as part of the neutral pulpit preaching experience. Following this interview, the regional COM will either give you approval to proceed with the applicant or advise you as to potential obstacles with calling that applicant.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

3. The Committee Selects a Candidate

The *OCP Manual*, pages 41 - 43 covers this part of the process. It is an exciting time when the PNC comes to its decision. The COM liaison and the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy are to be involved in this aspect of your task helping to negotiate the various approvals, interviews, and forms that are required by our *Book of Order*.

Final candidates for your congregation receive a Cascades Presbytery booklet titled *Welcome to the Presbytery of the Cascades: A Handbook for Those Considering a Call and/or Entering the Presbytery of the Cascades*. This outlines for the candidate their various responsibilities. Please be sure they receive a copy, which can be found at: [CLICK HERE](#)

12. DPNC makes the final selection and reports this information to COM. The DPNC requests session to call a congregational meeting on _____.

▶ *OCP Manual*, pages 42 – 43

* initial when done _____ Date _____

13. At this point, the DPNC will do some planning and thinking: what is the best way to communicate information about the nominee with the congregation?

▶ *OCP Manual*, page 43

* initial when done _____ Date _____

14. The COM liaison will work with the DPNC, session, and designated pastor-elect in developing recommendations for the terms of the call (Step 15), installation and/or ordination.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

15. The DPNC chair contacts their COM liaison for the official Call Forms and information regarding the congregational meeting and how it is to be conducted.

▶ Please use the forms supplied by your COM liaison or presbytery staff.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

16. The Congregational Action:

Action of the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____ held at a congregational meeting on _____, and moderated by The Rev. _____ to call The Rev. _____ to serve as their full (part- _____%) time Designated Pastor beginning _____ for a period of _____ years with annual terms as follows:

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional Expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing Education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, Medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Attendance at the Cascades Discovery Retreat.			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each six years of service.			

Other Benefits: _____

Any special information: _____

* initial when done _____ Date _____

17. COM / Presbytery Action taken to approve the Call of The Rev. _____ to the on _____ (Date) with the Call Forms signed by the COM chair.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

18. An Administrative Commission will be established by the presbytery through your regional COM to conduct the Service of Installation [see the *Book of Order W-4.4006*]. This is a service of the presbytery, and usually takes place within the first three months of a new pastor's start date. The new pastor is responsible for coordinating this service and inviting people to serve on the Administrative Commission after their arrival.

There are two resources available to guide this process:

- *Welcome to the Presbytery of the Cascades: A Handbook For Those Who are Considering a Call and/or Entering The Presbytery of The Cascades.*
- *The OCP Manual*, pages 44-45, also describes the service.

19. Presbytery Action taken on _____ to approve the installation of The Rev. _____ on _____.

* initial when done _____ Date _____

A Good Work Completed

Congratulations!

Your responsibilities are now officially over. The congregation has dismissed you with thanks. No longer are you a “DPNC.” Yet, as a group you have bonded and, as a group, there are unofficial things you can still do (see *OCP Manual*, pages 45-46).

You can be the support group for your new pastor and your common ministry together in the coming years. Here are some suggestions you might consider:

- Help your new pastor by facilitating details for the move to your community.
- Welcome your new pastor by stocking the pantry with food stuffs upon arrival. Some congregations have had a “pounding party” with a pound of this and a pound of that.
- Meet with your new pastor periodically throughout the year to check in and see how things are going.
- Serve as a sounding board for the ideas and insights of your new pastor.
- Plan a first year anniversary celebration with your new pastor and for all the things you will be able to accomplish together as a congregation in mission to Jesus Christ.

You will think of some other possibilities. The objective is to work together so this new relationship of pastor and congregation is a rewarding experience for all and lifts up the Good News of the gospel. May God richly bless your common work and ministry together.

Just as we began this process with prayer, may we finish it with prayer:

*Gracious and ever-living God,
ruler of all things in heaven and earth,
hear our prayers for this congregation.
Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless,
and restore the truly sorry.
Grant us all things necessary for our common life,
and bring us all to be of one heart and mind
as we serve our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ;
through our risen Lord. Amen.*

Useful web links:

Presbyterian Church (USA):

www.pcusa.org

PCUSA – *On Calling A Pastor* booklet:

www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/clc/doc/callingpastor.doc

PCUSA – Church Leadership Connection:

<https://clc.pcusa.org/login>

Presbytery of the Cascades

www.cascadespresbytery.org

Presbytery of the Cascades – Commission on Ministry Resources:

<https://www.cascadespresbytery.org/commission-on-ministry/>

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