



PRESBYTERY OF THE
CASCADES



Presbytery of the Cascades
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Welcome to the Presbytery of the Cascades

*A Handbook for those who are
Considering a Call and/or Entering
Cascades Presbytery*

Revised: April, 2021
Updated: August 8, 2023

Welcome to God's Call in Cascades Presbytery

This booklet has been created for you. Every presbytery has its own set of procedures for bringing teaching elders onto its membership rolls. You could be coming as the result of a call from a congregation, retirement within the presbytery, a non-parish-based ministry, or some other reason that brings you to request membership. We have created this booklet as an introduction to the process used by the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The booklet, out of necessity, will tend to focus on those who are considering or have received a call. During the Pastor Nominating Process, the PNC has used another Cascades Presbytery resource titled *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees*. It has served as their guidebook for the process, and is available to view at: <https://www.cascadespresbytery.org/commission-on-ministry/>. Many sections of this booklet also fit if you are coming into this presbytery as a non-parish clergy or entering through honorably retired status. This booklet is not a substitute for the advice of the COM liaison or the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy – the presbytery staff person who works with the Commission on Ministry and new minister members of the presbytery.

In these pages we cover a variety of topics:

- your meeting with the COM Interview Team and the material you need to prepare and send before this meeting;
- the Congregational Action and the Call Forms (if pastor);
- the Administrative Commission and plans for your installation service (if pastor);
- your introduction to the presbytery;
- information on your participation in the Discovery Retreat which is required for all clergy new to the presbytery;
- the Cascades' process and program for responding to the important issue of sexual misconduct.

The Pastor Nominating Committee has been guided by prayer and the seeking of God's Holy Spirit in the discernment process. You and they have come to this place. There is a prayer in our *Book of Common Worship* that is helpful:

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.

Your Meeting with the COM

From *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees*:

14. 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.

As part of the examination for membership in the Presbytery of the Cascades by a regional COM, each candidate shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G-2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a candidate, which the regional COM has otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a departure, the authority of a regional COM to act as a commission of the presbytery shall end and the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission must be done at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the departure is from an essential tenet or not and whether to approve membership in the presbytery. If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position, the PNC / APNC of the church seeking pastoral staff will be notified that action on the teaching elder's reception must be deferred until the next stated meeting of the presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to receive the teaching elder into membership. The PNC / APNC may then seek another candidate for examination by the regional COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The Interview Team consists of two teaching elders and two ruling elders from the regional Commission on Ministry and functions independently of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

In your meeting, they will ask you about your experience of ministry, your sense of call and will review your statement of faith. While they ask questions of you, it is very definitely an opportunity for you to ask questions of them, including their perceptions of the congregation, its potential for ministry and its life and character as a Presbyterian Church. It is the recommendation of this group that goes to your regional Commission on Ministry, so we encourage your good preparation.

As a part of the process, the COM liaison provides the Interview Team with copies of your Personal Discernment Profile (PDP, formerly known as a PIF). Should you receive a call, or are entering the presbytery as a member at large, we ask you to bring material that will eventually appear in the Commission on Ministry' report to presbytery. Specifically, we ask for a one-page Work and Educational History, a one-page Statement of Faith, a photograph (preferably in digital format), and a signed copy of the "Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct and Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct" form. The Work History includes a brief outline of pastoral experiences, educational background, and ecclesiastical status, and may include additional information such as other experience and community service. Both your Work History and Statement of Faith should be sent via email to the presbytery office (office@potc.life) for distribution to the Interview Team.

Every call process is unique to that particular people of God; it is as different as the PNC, and the candidate they wish to nominate for the congregation's consideration. *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees* is a general reference and continues with this information:

15. PNC makes the final selection and reports this information to COM. The PNC requests session to call a congregational meeting on _____.
16. At this point, the PNC will do some planning and thinking: what is the best way to communicate information about the nominee with the congregation?
17. The COM liaison will work with the PNC, session, and pastor-elect/associate pastor-elect in developing recommendations for the terms of the call (Step 18), installation and/or ordination.
18. The PNC Chair contacts their COM liaison for the official Call Forms and information regarding the congregational meeting and how it is to be conducted.

You will find the COM liaison and the Advocate for Congregations and Clergy helpful in sorting out the questions you may have. Don't hesitate to make contact; we're happy to help!

The Congregational Action

A sample of the official form for the Pastoral Call is found in the Appendix at the end of this booklet. These will be signed at the time of the congregational meeting and sent to the regional Commission on Ministry to be finalized.

Plans for Your Installation (if applicable)

In the Presbytery of the Cascades, newly called pastors are invited to design their own installation service. Ideally, this service will occur within three-months of the new pastor's start date and be on a day and time which is both sensible in the worshipping life of the calling church and accessible to other members of the presbytery.

For the service, an Administrative Commission (AC) needs to be established by the Presbytery to conduct the installation [see G-3.0109b(2)]. Serving on the AC shall be the regional Vice Moderator, or their designee, who will preside at the service as an officer of the presbytery and ask the Constitutional Questions of the pastor being installed. Additionally, there shall be a minimum of two ruling elders and two teaching elders representing different ministries within the presbytery. The newly called pastor is responsible for inviting members to serve on the AC, and when needed, can request assistance from the regional Commission on Ministry in locating suitable people for this role. The names, titles, and home churches of each member of the commission should be submitted to the regional COM in advance of the service so that the COM can officially commission the group. Additional people of significance to the pastor or congregation may also be invited to take part in the installation service and are not required to be members of this presbytery or the PC(USA) denomination.

The service itself should be a full worship service in the Reformed tradition, but should also be expressive of the worshipping life of the calling church and the new pastor. A sample liturgy for the service of installation can be found at the PC(USA) website at:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/teaching-elderpastor-installation-service/> .

The structure of the Installation portion of the worship service should look something like:

- **Litany for Ministry/Litany of Gifts**
- **Presentation of the Minister of the Word and Sacrament**
- **The Constitutional Questions to Minister of the Word and Sacrament**
- **The Constitutional Questions to Congregation**
- **The Installation Prayer (*ordinarily, laying on of hands is reserved for times of ordination*)**
- **The Declaration of Installation and Welcome**
- **The Charge to the Pastor**
- **The Charge to the Congregation**

Cascades Presbytery also asks that an offering be taken for the Presbytery's Ministerial Assistance Fund. The offering should be indicated in the installation ceremony bulletin with an announcement similar to "The offering will be donated to the Presbytery of the Cascades' Ministerial Assistance Fund, which provides relief and emergency support to ministers and their families during times of need." The offering should be collected and accounted for by the hosting church and sent to the presbytery as part of their regularly scheduled remittance notating *Ministerial Assistance Fund* on the Remittance Form. Checks should be mailed to Cascades Presbytery, 245 S. Bancroft, Suite D, Portland, OR 97239.

Your Introduction to the Presbytery

The Presbytery of the Cascades meets three times a year: in March, June or July, and November. When the meeting begins, usually on Friday, we like to introduce new members of the presbytery. We hope you will be able to join us and offer a brief greeting to the presbytery. Your Statement of Faith and Work History are included as part of the background papers.

Discovery Retreat

Part of our mission as a presbytery is to provide pastoral care and support for clergy and congregations. The fact that Cascades is a large and diverse presbytery makes this an especially important goal to pursue. In a presbytery our size, it is easy for clergy and congregations to feel isolated and marginalized.

Presbytery has approved several programs that will help clergy and congregations find inclusion and participation in our presbytery. One such program for pastors is the Discovery Retreat. The Discovery Retreat is an opportunity to orient new clergy into the presbytery. The retreats are usually scheduled twice a year, one in early Spring and one in the Fall.

The purpose of the Discovery Retreat is to introduce new clergy to the Cascades family and our way of doing things. Because attendance is required for all new clergy members, presbytery covers the cost of the retreat; congregations or individuals cover travel.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

The Presbytery of the Cascades has developed a sexual misconduct prevention policy with two components.

The first component of our program is your required sign-off on the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy of Cascades Presbytery. The policy and sign-off form will be given to you in preparation for your meeting with COM. The policy applies to all in the presbytery who are ordained to the office of teaching elder. It is essential that all who are subject to the policy and its procedures, read and understand the policy, acknowledge that they have done so, and formally consent to being bound by the presbytery's discipline in the matter.

The second component of the Cascades' program is attendance at a presbytery sponsored and conducted workshop aimed at preventing sexual misconduct in the church. Undoubtedly, under other presbyteries or church entities you have already attended a workshop similar to this; we would hope that is the case, since this is such a crucial topic in

the church. However, presbytery policy and our insurance provisions require that you attend a Presbytery of the Cascades' workshop. Moreover, your attendance is part of your permanent record in this presbytery. As you consider becoming a continuing member of this presbytery as a teaching elder, please understand this requirement to attend a workshop sponsored by the Presbytery of the Cascades as binding and non-negotiable. Cascades also requires all active pastors to take a mandatory refresher training in misconduct prevention once every four years.

Once Again – Welcome!!

Finally, to you, as a continuing member of presbytery, we wish for you a strong start in your ministry in this new place. Please feel free to contact your COM liaison or the presbytery office if other questions or concerns arise.

The Presbyterian Church (USA)

Pastoral Call

The

(Name of church)

of

(City and State)

belonging to the Presbytery of the Cascades, being well satisfied with your qualifications for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls you,

to undertake the office of

of this congregation, beginning _____ promising you in the discharge of your duties all proper support, encouragement and allegiance to the Lord.

That you may be free to devote yourself full-time to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you the following: (stated in annual amounts)

Salary	\$	Housing	\$
Professional Expense	\$	Vacation	4 Weeks
Continuing Education	\$	Study Leave	2 Weeks
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each six years of service.			
Attendance at the NEXT OFFERED Discovery Retreat (this is the misconduct prevention class that we require all new ministers to Cascades to take).			

We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this _____ day of _____ (month, 202?) _____

<In this blank space, place actual signatures of members desiring to make this pledge.>

Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended a call to **Name of Minister** for ministerial services, I certify that the call has been made in all respects according to the rules laid down in the Form of Government, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of **Name/City of Church**.

Signed _____

Certification of Call

By the Presbytery of the Cascades

This call has been approved by the Commission on Ministry of The Presbytery of the Cascades.

Date of Action _____ Signature _____ COM Chair

The approval of this call was reviewed by the Stated Clerk of The Presbytery of the Cascades and has been approved as the action of the presbytery as authorized under the provisions of the constitution.

Date _____ Signature _____ Stated Clerk

By Minister/Candidate

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of Acceptance _____ Signature _____

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/>

Presbytery of the Cascades Office

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