

PASTORAL TRANSITIONS

Procedures of Committee on Ministry

The purpose of this document is to provide the core information for the many steps of Pastors and Associates receiving a call and concluding a call in a local Congregation. Pastors, Sessions and Pastor Nominating Committees will need this document as well as the PCUSA's document called "On Calling a Pastor" which can be downloaded at <http://www.pcusa.org/ocap>.

Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos looks forward to partnering with the Session and the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) to be a guide through the process.

Contact the Office of Stated Clerk in the Presbytery office as early as possible to begin any of the steps. Committee on Ministry will provide a person to serve as LIAISON with your PNC or APNC. The liaison will be the link to Committee on Ministry and Presbytery staff and will serve to facilitate the process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS AND CHAPTER TITLES:

- I. CONGREGATION** votes to dissolve the Pastoral relation.

- II. SESSION** works with COM to obtain an Interim Pastor/Transitional Pastor

- III. SESSION** conducts a Congregational study, after the departure of the installed Pastor.

- IV. CONGREGATION** elects a Pastor Nominating Committee or Associate PNC.

- V. PNC or APNC** searches for new Pastor or Associate Pastor.

- VI. PNC or APNC** identifies a candidate and obtains COM approval.

- VII. CONGREGATION** elects the Pastor or Associate Pastor.

- VIII. PASTOR OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR** begins the call and is installed by Presbytery.

- IX. APPENDIX**

CHAPTER IV

CONGREGATION ELECTS A PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) is a committee elected by the Congregation at a Congregational meeting. The PNC/APNC shall be representative of the whole Congregation. Care must be taken to consider representatives without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, age or disabilities.

A. DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION IN MINISTRY

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos to provide equal opportunity in employment for all qualified and qualifiable persons; to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or disabilities.

Committee on Ministry desires to provide a positive way to approach the goal of equal opportunity employment of pastors by our presbytery and congregations. No outside party or statute can force a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) or congregation to vote for a pastoral candidate they do not want. However, automatic rejection of possible candidates prior to reading Personal Information Forms (PIF) and/or interviewing is both a denial of equal opportunity in ministry and a severe limitation on the work of the Holy Spirit within a congregation.

BOOK OF ORDER

The following excerpts from the Book of Order shape the policies of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos for diversity and representation when employing pastors of the church.

Foundations of Presbyterian Polity – F-1.0403

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

General Principles of Councils – G-3.0103

The councils of the church shall give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and shall provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and employment practices (F-1.0403). In fulfilling this commitment, councils shall give due consideration to both the gifts and requirements for ministry (G-2.0104) and the right of people in congregations and councils to elect their officers (F-3.0106).

Each council shall develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing that body’s implementation of the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation. Councils above the session shall establish by their own rule committees on representation to fulfill the following functions: to advise the council regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity, to advocate for diversity in leadership, and to consult with the council on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of unity and diversity in F-1.0403. A committee on representation should not be merged with another committee or made a subcommittee of another

committee.

IMPLEMENTATION

Committee on Ministry will take the following steps to encourage “full expression to the rich diversity” within this denomination when it partners with congregations in the search process:

Sessions – COM representative will explain to sessions the importance of diversity and representation in selecting members for the PNC/APNC.

Congregation – COM representative will explain to congregations the importance of diversity and representation in electing a PNC/APNC and encouraging that committee to uphold the importance of diversity and representation as they search for the pastor or associate pastor.

Pastor (or Associate Pastor) Nominating Committee – COM representative will present during the orientation process of the first meeting, the importance and responsibility of the committee to diversity and fair representation as they read PIF and hold interviews. After the committee’s nominee has been elected by the congregation, the PNC/APNC will complete a form showing the diversity of persons considered.

B. THE SESSION INITIATES THE ELECTION:

A COM representative will meet with Session to discuss recommendations for the *size and representation* on the PNC/APNC. The COM representative will also present an overview of the work of the PNC/APNC to help the Session understand the process and the various qualities needed in persons serving on the committee.

1. Size of PNC/APNC:

Session will recommend to the Congregation the size of this nominating committee. It is suggested that it be between seven (7) and nine (9) members (except for very large and very small Congregations). Seven allows for not everyone making every meeting or one person not able to complete service and requires greater commitment. Anything above nine, becomes difficult to manage, consensus hard to achieve and it’s easier to miss a few meetings. It should be large enough to be representative, yet small enough to be able to work together without need for an Executive Committee. Note, that with seven person committee, at least one person should be a currently serving Session member. With a nine member committee, two currently serving elders should be on the committee.

2. Qualities in PNC/APNC Members:

It is very important that the members of the PNC/APNC represent the whole Congregation (Book of Order G-2.0802). They will be reading and evaluating Personal Information Forms (PIFs), listening to sermons and interviewing people based on their knowledge and understanding the needs of the Congregation.

PNC/APNC members should be spiritual leaders in the Congregation and active members in the life and work of the Congregation.

Some of the committee members will take on leadership responsibilities of the PNC/APNC when they elect their own officers. Some members need to be proficient at interviewing; some should have skills in hospitality and event planning when the on-sight interviews happen.

PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

Every member must be able to honor complete confidentiality and understand that serving will be a huge commitment of time. Most committees meet weekly and it is very important that a significant majority of the members be present at each meeting. There will be homework assignments between meetings. During the final stages, there may be additional time required, usually on week-ends, and may include trips out of town.

3. Possible methods by which PNC/APNC might be nominated:

- The Session itself may choose to place in nomination representatives that reflect a cross-section of the entire Congregation, its board and organizations. Session usually appoints a work group of three to do all the work and bring a report to a future Session meeting.
- The Church Nominating Committee can be asked by the Session to prepare and present a list of nominees. This assumes a strong, healthy, representative Nominating Committee.
- The Session names organizations of the church to submit to Session two names to consider. The persons should not also be on Session, Deacons or Trustees that are also putting forward names. Session will choose from these names the nominees to present to the Congregation.
- The Session names a work group of three or four people from the Congregation who will create a position description for PNC members; solicit people to submit their name and reason they want to be elected; then the work group filters the names to insure full representation of the Congregation and presents the nominations to the Congregation.

C. THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO ELECT:

1. Preparation for the Meeting:

The Session shall call a Congregational meeting to elect the PNC/APNC. Public notice of time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be given in advance according to the church's policy, but at least ten days in advance, which shall include two successive Sundays. The names of nominees shall also be announced and publicized in advance of the meeting. Nominees should be present at the time of election.

The Moderator of the meeting is to be the Presbytery appointed moderator of Session or his/her nominee.

Individuals planning to nominate a person(s) from the floor must consult with them in advance to secure their permission to place their name in nomination and their willingness to serve if so elected.

Arrange in advance for the COM liaison to be present at the Congregational meeting. After the election those elected and the liaison can meet briefly to set a date and time for the orientation meeting, which is led by the liaison.

2. Procedures for Meeting and Voting:

Clerk of Session prepares written ballots in advance which are used if there are nominations from the floor. The Clerk or Moderator should ask people to serve on a Tally Committee if written ballots are used.

After the opening prayer at the Congregational meeting, the Moderator confirms that a quorum is present, explains the purpose of this meeting and reminds those present that only church members will be allowed to vote.

An elder reports to the Congregation Session's recommendation on size of PNC/APNC, the list of the nominees and explains the Session's process for selecting the nominations. Information should be given about each nominee if it has not been included in the call for the meeting.

Ask for nominations from the floor. If any, confirm with the nominee that they were contacted in advance and do agree to serve if elected.

Allow for discussion of the motion. Vote by voice vote only if number of nominees equals size of committee recommended by Session. If number of nominees exceeds recommended size of the committee, the vote is by ballot with each person allowed to vote for the number of people equal to the Session's recommendation on the size of the committee. Ballots are distributed (if not done previously) and the voting process is explained.

Ballots are considered void (are not counted) if too many names are listed, if there are other notations/marks on the ballot which would identify it as unique or if it is a blank ballot. Be sure congregants understand this before the voting starts.

The Tally Committee collects all the ballots and takes them to another room to count them. During this time, the Congregation could sing hymns or announcements could be made.

Moderator of the Tally Committee brings the written results to the Moderator of the meeting, who reads the results to the Congregation.

The Congregational Meeting is closed with prayer. Moderator instructs the newly elected PNC/APNC members to gather at the front of the room to meet the COM liaison and set the date for the first full meeting, which will be orientation.

D. DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION IN MINISTRY REPORT ON SEARCH PROCESS

When the search process has been completed the chairperson of the PNC/APNC will complete the form found on the next page and submit it to the Presbytery.

PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

Diversity and Representation in Ministry Report on Search Process

TO: Moderator of Committee on Ministry
 Presbytery of Los Ranchos

CC: Committee on Representation

FROM: Name of Church _____, City _____

PNC Chairperson: _____

Title of Position: Pastor _____ Associate Pastor _____

Date position was first advertised or posted on CLC? _____ Date nominated to congregation? _____

Name of person nominated to congregation _____

The nominee is female? _____ The nominee is of what ethnicity? _____

Number of PIFs received _____

Number of persons interviewed (by phone, SKYPE, in person) _____

Number of persons offered the position _____

GENDER	CONGREGATION	SESSION
FEMALE		
MALE		
AGE	CONGREGATION	SESSION
25 AND UNDER		
26 – 45		
46 – 55		
56 – 65		
OVER 65		
RACE	CONGREGATION	SESSION
ASIAN		
AFRICAN		
AFRICAN AMERICAN		
BLACK		
HISPANIC		
MIDDLE EASTERN		
NATIVE AMERICAN		
WHITE		
OTHER		
DISABILITY	CONGREGATION	SESSION
HEARING		
SIGHT		
MOBILITY		
OTHER		

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____
 Chairperson of PNC/APNC

Note: Keep a completed copy and send completed copy to the Stated Clerk’s Office at Presbytery.