

## **PROCEDURES FOR SEARCH AND CALL: CONGREGATIONS**

### ● **First Contact re Pastor's Departure Announcement**

- **CM/ACM reaches out to the Pastor** to be updated on their plans and offer support if needed.
- **Contact the church moderator** to hear of plans and offer support. Offer assurance that the Conference will be accompanying them through the process of transition and can always be contacted with questions and guidance. The CONFERENCE will be their partner in this process, not their outgoing pastor.
  - Be sure they **understand some good practices of ending and celebrating a ministry**: planned celebrations and opportunities for story-telling and appreciation, plan a departure Sunday when Conference reps can be present for the Liturgy of Release and Farewell.
  - **Go over immediate steps to begin considering and planning for what will happen after the departure date** (pulpit supply? Pastoral care coverage?) Encourage working with their Church leadership team/council/board to pull together a transition team who will begin thinking about and coordinating next steps in the transition. **HOWEVER**, don't let the planning for after the pastor's departure overshadow or take precedence over the focus on a good and meaningful ending. They should be discouraged from trying to plan out the **WHOLE** interim period, and just do the next steps of planning temporary pastoral coverage.
  - Plan to have an **exit interview** between the pastor and the Pastoral Relations committee.
  - **Send them the Search and Call Guide** for Congregations, to begin reading.
  - **Encourage learning and starting good departure boundaries** as a congregation, and also supporting their pastor in doing so. If the pastor is planning on staying in the congregation or serving or retiring locally, this is *particularly* important! Conference staff can assist in being intentional.
  - **Generally establish a good working relationship** so the congregation has confidence that the conference will be a solid accompaniment partner.

### ○ **After Pastor's Departure**

- **Check in if necessary** with the Moderator or Transition committee chair to make sure they've been successful at setting up temporary pastoral coverage.
- **Discuss models for transition ministry** (This can also happen before the pastor leaves). This can just be working with the local church leader, or can be an offer to meet with the committee.
- **Discussion of *dynamics of transition*** can be helpful.
- **Encourage & coach working on job description for posting**. Conference staff can supply samples and instructions. This includes knowing what the compensation package is.
- Once the church finalizes and submits the **job description, it is posted in Employment Opportunities by Conference Staff**.
- Also this is the time for CM/ACM to **consider what local clergy might be interested in** the transitional position. Depe

- CM/ACM can offer to meet with the transition committee to answer questions and give guidance.

- **Transitional Minister is On Board**

- Depending on what type of transitional minister is hired, churches will be on different timelines. An intentional interim will take time to carry out the interim tasks, 12-18 months. At some point later in that time, the church will start working on their profile and put together a pastoral search team. A transitional or designated-term minister may have a different timeline, but CM/ACM should encourage the church to have evaluation and benchmarks in place for the pastor to come to evaluative decisions for the transitional period. If the church is basically being covered by long or short-term pulpit supply, or a bridge pastor, they may be ready to jump immediately into profile writing.

- **Local Church Profile Writing**

- Local church should **recruit a Profile Committee**. (i.e. 5-7 people if possible, good variety of representation of the congregation. The one or two transition committee can be on it, but best if it is not a majority.)
- **CM/ACM can offer to meet with the Profile committee** and train them in writing the profile.
- Conference Staff can **provide samples**. CM/ACM will review and validate it. They may make suggestions.
- Conference Staff **posts it to the UCC Employment Opportunities**.

- **Recruiting and Training the Search Committee**

- The **Church Board recruits a search committee**. CM/ACM can give guidance.
- **CM/ACM provides materials to help in organization and training**. The committee, once recruited, should also be **strongly encouraged to have a training** – which includes the different roles of the search committee members, how to organize, frequency of meetings, confidentiality, how to read a ministerial profile, the UCC search and call process, their own process for discernment and interviewing, financial responsibilities, etc.
- If you haven't already, send the search committee the Call Agreement Handbook. They should begin/continue work to formulate a compensation package and job description.
- As profiles are received and submitted by Conference staff, **CM/ACM continue to help coach the committee through issues** that arise in the discernment and interview process.
- CM/ACM does a **“red flags” check** once a candidate has moved to a second or third interview.

- **Offering a Call**

- CM/ACM coach search committee through how to **schedule and set up a candidating weekend**. Discuss procedures for voting and contingency plans if the congregation does not have a strong majority.

- **Call Accepted and New Pastor Arrives:**

- Ask for a **copy of the covenant and call agreements** for a new clergy file.
- CM/ACM **contacts new clergy to welcome them. Send a packet of information** materials on clergy practices, resources, events, and requirements.
- Conference Staff **adds clergy to distribution lists, SWC directory, and Clergy closed Facebook group.**
- Talk to the new pastor and moderator about **scheduling an installation service.**
- Talk to the new pastor about the transfer **of standing procedure.**