

THE CANDIDATE SEARCH

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Defining a Candidate

A 'candidate' is someone who in addition to the requirements of a 'prospect' (See info on defining a prospect), (1) meets the church's requirements and is willing to enter into deeper conversations about being the 'right' person to lead the church into the future; (2) Is willing and eager to fully engage in the discernment process, including agreeing to any church required background checks; (3) would be blessed as a candidate by the resident bishop and his/her own bishop if from another Conference.

As candidates make it through various rounds of assessment, Search Teams frequently filter their progression as a candidate in the following kind of language to chart progress leading to selection:

- Good Candidates (May be between 10-15)
- Top Tier Candidates (May be between 5-10)
- Finalists (May be between 1-3)

The Relationship between Candidates and the Search Team

There may well be multiple candidates to become the Sr. Pastor of the church. The Search Team realizes that every candidate will already have proven themselves to be great communicators, skilled and effective pastors, and accomplished leaders. Likely, every candidate could adequately serve most any church in the Connection. The Search Team is not necessarily trying to discover the 'best' pastor...but rather the discern the 'right' pastoral match for the church.

The Search Team is aware that while they are assessing candidates, candidates are assessing the church. They are also aware that they are not only recruiting a candidate, they are also recruiting a candidate's family...especially if the candidate would be moving from out of the area. In conjunction with the SPR, the Search Team will prepare a recruitment strategy based on finalists' needs and expectations. The strategy will:

- Encompass and allow for ways in which the candidate can do their due diligence in learning as much about the church as possible, including its staff and leadership, ministries and practices, and its culture.
- Clarify compensation considerations, moving expenses, and benefits.
- Include family considerations such as housing, spousal employment, childcare, and school situations if applicable.

Following the Bishop's protocols

The local church involved in a pastoral transition is proud to be part of a connectional system. As such, the consultant will ensure the church keeps a good faith relationship with the resident bishop. Therefore, the bishop will set the protocols and methods for how the search team will assess candidates and arrive at 'finalists' (usually 1 to 3) for consideration.

- For clarity, the consultant will provide the Search Team written protocols from the bishop regarding ways and means to assess candidates (resumes, references, zoom conversations, in person or consultant interviews, worship experiences, etc.)
- At some point the bishop will interview or be a part of finalist interviews with the Search Team. Remember...Only the bishop will make the appointment.
- Some bishops prefer the consultant present finalists to the SPR for their discernment, who then forward their preference(s) to the bishop for her/his action; Other bishops prefer the consultant present the bishop with the top candidates for episcopal and cabinet discernment, who then works with the SPR in finalizing the appointment.
- Either way, it is anticipated that deciding on finalists and receiving an appointment as the new Sr. Pastor will be a Holy Spirit led venture. In searches there are often diverse and divergent opinions by decision makers, so we encourage prayerful and grace-filled discernment and attitudes to come to consensus.

Announcements and Introductions

Great care and coordination with the bishop(s) will be given to the announcement timing of the selection of the new pastor to avoid any awkwardness. If the appointment will be an out of conference pastor, the respective bishops will develop an announcement timeline to be followed by the church. Only after announcements at the pastor's current church will the pastor be publicly announced to and introduced at the new church. The consultant will help the local church cooperate in the announcement timelines.