



PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

**Prepared by
the Commission on Ministry**

**(More complete and detailed information is available
in the [*Pastoral Search Manual*](#))**

Revised October 2017

You've Been Elected to the Pastor Nominating Committee

The process of calling a Pastor, Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor is first and foremost ***an act of spiritual discernment***. There are lots of instructions and paperwork that go into this process, but do not be deceived; this is a ***spiritual task*** not an executive search. Your task is to find the person that God is calling to fill the vacancy at your church. That will require of you and of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) prayer, careful listening, and reflection. Indeed, every member of the committee should make it part of their daily devotional life to pray for the work of the committee and for the discernment to discover the one God is calling.

As was mentioned above, there are lots of instructions and paperwork that go with this process. You will be introduced to a whole new language with some puzzling abbreviations. Your Commission on Ministry seeks to make this task a bit easier by providing this handbook and a person, your Pastor Nominating Committee Liaison, to assist you in this task. This handbook is a work in progress. If there are places where it doesn't make sense or is difficult to understand, ***please*** contact the Presbyter for your Neighborhood at the Presbytery office (336-766-3393) to let them know.

Alphabet Soup

In the process of searching for a Pastor (Co-Pastor or Associate Pastor), you will encounter all sorts of abbreviations. Below is a list of most of them. If you do not find an abbreviation listed below, contact your Liaison or one of the Co-Moderators of the Commission on Ministry.

AAEEO – Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity.

COM – Commission on Ministry, the Presbytery commission charged with the responsibility of helping churches find ministers and ministers find churches.

C&V – Calls and Vacancies, the sub-committee of COM directly responsible for working with churches in the search process, the sub-committee that approves your MIF.

CLC – Church Leadership Connection, the official name given to the General Assembly Internet process of handling leadership matching (churches and ministers).

CRS – Call Referral Services, the name for the office that manages CLC and provides help to COM's and Churches, and Ministers in the matching process.

MIF--Ministry Information Form, the form which a church fills out during the search process which describes the position they are seeking to fill and the information necessary to help match potential candidates.

PIF – Personal Information Form, the form which ministers and candidates fill out to share who they are and in what sorts of ministerial positions they would be willing to serve.

PIN – Personal Identification Number, each church has an assigned identification number. You can generally get that number from your Clerk of Session.

PNC – Pastor Nominating Committee, sometimes called Pulpit Nominating Committee, the search committee elected by the congregation to nominate a Pastor (Co-Pastor, or Associate Pastor) for the congregation.

There are three distinct stages to calling a Pastor: The Pre-Search Process, The Search Process, and The Call Process. Your tasks are different in each stage. This handbook will be divided into those three stages. We shall attempt to explain what is going on in each stage and offer information and explanations that will be helpful in that stage.

THE PRE-SEARCH PROCESS

During this stage of the search, the Session secures Interim/Transitional Pastoral Leadership for your congregation. If your Session has secured a trained Interim/Transitional Pastor, s/he will be assisting your Transition Team in the preparation of your Ministry Information Form. Generally, by the time the PNC has been elected, the Interim/Transitional Pastor has completed the Mission Study, and the church in the process of developing a Vision/Mission Statement about the future direction of the church. This will be a helpful part of your MIF writing.

Organizing the Team

The work of the PNC will be greatly facilitated by electing leaders. Typically, a Chair and Vice-Chair, or Co-Chairs are elected. This allows for the work of the committee to continue even if the designated convener/leader is not able to attend.

The committee should have a clerk to keep a record of conversations, considerations and actions by the committee. This might not be appreciated early on, but as time goes by and memories start getting fuzzy, it is good to have a clear record of why you have proceeded in a given way.

In addition, the committee might want to elect a corresponding secretary or clerk. The responsibility here will be to serve as the official communicator with the candidates. This will be a very busy position during the middle part of the process, and requires someone who will be diligent in initiating, maintaining, and closing communications in a timely manner with candidates.

Your COM Liaison will attend your first meeting to help explain these positions and help train you. Further, your Liaison will be a regular part of your search process to advise and answer questions,

Finding someone who is computer literate

It is of **the greatest importance** that someone on your committee be **computer-literate**, able to send and receive email, compose correspondence and maintain a basic spreadsheet. This entire process depends on using a computer and the Internet. If you don't have someone on your committee, do as one of our congregations has done and find a "computerist" to serve on your PNC.

Finding your vision for the search

As you begin your thinking about preparing your MIF, you will need to think seriously about the vision of the congregation for ministry. What is your mission as a congregation at this point? What kind of leadership do we need in service of that mission? What kinds of skills and personal qualities are desired? Answering these questions will help you determine the type of leader for whom you are going to be searching.

Your Interim/Transitional Pastor (if you have one) will have led your Transition Committee in a Mission Study and the development of a new vision for your congregation. This work may carry over into the work of the PNC but must be completed before the MIF is developed as it will help define the vision for your search.

Obtaining a MIF

To begin writing your MIF, you'll need to get a copy of the blank form. To do that you need to download it from the General Assembly Internet web site at <<http://www.pcusa.org/clc/>>. You can download a MIF in either PDF or MS Word format. You will only need MIF (Part II), because Part I will automatically be filled out by the computer based on last year's annual statistical report. The CLC Handbook is online and available at the same web site. The Skills Definition List is included in the MIF. Your COM Liaison can help you with all this if you have questions.

In conversation with your Session and with your COM Liaison, you will then complete your MIF. Your Session will give direction about the position and about the compensation package you can offer a new minister. Your Liaison has a copy of the current Presbytery Minimum Compensation Package. You will need to be sure your Session understands ALL the minimums, including leave times. Your Liaison can help explain these. Your COM has experience with pastor searches and will be able to help you present your church in the best way.

Fill out the MIF form on a computer

This is so that when you come to put it "online" (see below), you will be able to "cut and paste" it onto the form online, rather than having to retype all the entries.

Comments about separate lines on your MIF

When the form asks for Church/Organization ID, type in your church PIN number (your Clerk of Session will have the number).

"Experience desired" is the minimum amount of experience you want to see in the PIF's you receive from matching.

On the narrative questions, the boxes will only hold 1500 characters so be sure you stay within that limit as you compose your draft.

For references for your church, you may want to consider listing your COM liaison, your General or Neighborhood Presbyter, a neighboring pastor, your Interim/Transitional Pastor, or others who have worked with you recently. **Do not** list current church members.

When you come to **skill choices**, you will want to have discussed this thoroughly before filling out the form. Include your Liaison in that discussion; s/he can assist you. You will be listing your top 10 skills. Your pastor candidates will select 10 skills.

Compensation and housing - enter "effective salary" (salary + housing) in the boxes – both minimum and maximum that your Session feels it can offer. Indicate with an "X" whether you have a manse, or provide a housing allowance, or whether you are open to either. **Geographic choices** - unless you have some strong reason to limit your search, you will be wise to select "unlimited" to get the most good candidates in your referral list. (**That is Louisville's advice.**) **BUT**, consider also whether you can afford to fly a candidate from Oregon here, or whether you can afford to fly your committee to Oregon to hear a person.

PNC Chair Details - It is **very important** to enter an email address for your PNC. This may be the PNC Chair, or another member of the committee. Since you will be receiving PIF's through this email, it should be a personal, secure email (not the church inbox or someone who is not an elected member of your PNC). You may want to create a new email address specifically for the Search Committee. You can do that at places like Gmail or Yahoo (and they are generally free). ***If all else fails, ask your COM Liaison if you may use theirs.***

MIF Approval

Once your MIF is complete, print it out so that your Session can read and approve it. After the Session has approved it, email it to the Office Administrator in the Presbytery's office (lscott@salempresbytery.org) so that the Neighborhood COM can approve it at its monthly meeting. Once that has happened, you are ready to put your MIF "online." After it is "online," your Clerk of Session and one of the neighborhood COM's Co-Moderator will "sign" your form electronically.

To enter the MIF "online:"

The Presbytery office will assist you in getting your MIF on-line and will send you detailed instructions. The instructions will include login and password information. Once you are logged in, much of what you will do will be copying and pasting what you have previously composed.

When your form is received, the computer will confirm it and generate a MIF ID. It is made up of your church PIN and some other digits that will identify that particular MIF. It will look like **23456.AA0**. **Write it down and keep it.** You will need it to edit your MIF.

MIF Identification Numbers

Search Committee Chairperson's login ID looks something like this: **P0023456** (P, zero, zero, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). The Clerk of Session of that church will also be given a login ID number. It will look like **COS23456** (C, O, S, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). Both login ID's will be assigned an initial password. The password is case sensitive and it will look something like this **W6ytI9p**.

The church's PIN in this example is **23456**

When you submit the MIF, it will give them a MIF ID which will look like this - **23456.AA0** (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, period, A, A, zero).

THE SEARCH PROCESS

Shhhhh!!!.... A Word About Confidentiality

Presbyterians don't have bishops. And we don't appoint pastors to serve congregations. Instead, we work from the classically Reformed understanding that "the studied wisdom of the few, is more profound than the ignorance of the many, or the prejudice of the one." This is why we use nominating committees. Toward this end, it is vitally important that you as a committee be able to speak openly and honestly to each other about any candidates who come before you for consideration. You must be able to share your thoughts, insights and intuitions. **BUT**...these must be shared **only** in committee. Confidentiality is an absolute must.

The work of leading a congregation as a pastor is difficult work. When a congregation finds that its pastor is in conversation with a PNC, it will often times assume that this pastorate's days are numbered and the pastor is now a lame duck. Should the conversation not end in extending a call, what might have been a good ministerial relationship is damaged, often beyond repair. Therefore, to honor the health of sister churches, it is essential that both names AND places of candidates not be shared beyond the PNC – not even with spouses.

Is Anybody Out There?

Once your MIF has been approved and put online, and signed off by the Clerk of Session from your congregation, and the COM representative, you move into the next stage, the Search Process. During this stage, you will receive and process PIF's, solicit suggestions, evaluate potential candidates, check references, and interview persons who may become your next pastor.

Receiving PIF'S

There are several ways in which you will receive the Personal Information Forms of potential candidates for your position. By far the largest number will come via the Internet; both from CLC and also self-referral. The CLC referrals will come via an email note to the PNC Chairperson and COM liaison from your Neighborhood Presbyter. S/he will get an email indicating that matches have occurred. (These matches are "triggered" by Salem Presbytery staff members. The Chairperson will log onto the CLC website (www.pcusa.org/clc), and when the "Task List For PNC Chairperson" appears on the screen, the chairperson will select "View Referral List." There you will find the names of all those whom the computer has matched to your MIF. The number to the left of their name is the PIF ID number. By double clicking on the number, you will see their PIF. You may download any or all these PIF's. You can print them out and copy them so that all persons on the PNC have a copy, you can also download the PIF's and email to your other PNC members. When you need more PIF's to review, you may send a request to your COM liaison or directly to Presbytery staff.

Another way you will receive PIF's via email is by self-referral. Ministers and Candidates for Ordination will send their PIF's to the email address of the PNC Chairperson as it is listed on your MIF. You will need to handle these as you did the ones that were referred by CLC.

The fewest number of MIF's will come in hardcopy format. These will either be self-referrals that you receive via the USPS or from your Liaison who may offer some referrals from Presbytery's file of ministers looking to relocate.

Another way of soliciting PIF's is by placing an ad in our denomination's magazine "Presbyterians Today," and/or a denominationally related publication, such as "Presbyterian Outlook" or on a related web site (such as Covenant Network or others).

Sources of PIF's

Again, by far the largest source of PIF's will be CLC matches. However, as suggested above there are other sources: self-referral, Presbytery referral, and suggestions from the congregation and friends of the congregation. **You will want** to seek the suggestions of members and friends of your congregation. New members from out of town may suggest their former pastor, folks who know your congregation will want to offer suggestions of persons to consider. In these cases, you will not have a PIF; you will need to get one. Presbytery **is not** able to access these for you; you will have to contact the person and ask if they are interested in being considered, and if so, would they please send a PIF?

Processing the PIF's

The first thing that you will want to do with the PIF's that come from computer matching is contact each one (probably by email) and indicate that the computer matched you with the person and then find out whether the person is still available to be considered. Sometimes ministers and churches are slow in informing the CLC of a new position, and therefore some persons will be matched when they are no longer available.

In the case of self-referred PIF's, it is important to acknowledge that you have received the self-referral. In addition, it is important that you indicate where you are in the process, and when the person might expect to hear from you again.

Indeed, it is very important to keep people up-to-date in your process. For instance, "We have just gotten organized and are now receiving PIF's. It will probably be at least four weeks until you hear from us again."

When you have received a requested PIF from a particular minister, it is also important to let that person know when they can expect to hear from you again.

Keep a running log of these correspondence details and honor the dates you have given for communication. A spreadsheet template is available for you to download from the Presbytery web-site for use in this tracking. It is appropriate to go no longer than a month without letting a candidate know where you are in process and whether they are still under consideration. Remember, you are being evaluated not only by what you say, but in your courtesy toward your possible new pastor.

Sorting PIF's

Once you start the process of reading PIF's, you will want to sort them into different groups. You might well want to try the "ABC" system. Group "A" contains those PIF's that sound exactly like what you are searching for. "Group "B" PIF's sound quite interesting but don't

seem to match exactly. Group “C” is composed of those PIF’s that are not a match you would consider.

One way to go about the sorting is to have two members of the PNC read each PIF and on a sticky note put their suggested pile assignment on the PIF (if you all have email copies, they could email the chairperson the name and pile). If there is not agreement on a PIF, have a third person read it. By this process, you can get folks into all three piles. Of course, you may want all members of the PNC to read each PIF, and discuss each PIF’s pile assignment at a PNC meeting.

However you sort the PIF’s, you will want to release the Group “C” from the search. Therefore, you will send them a note that is something like this:

Dear _____,

We have reviewed your PIF, and although you seem to us to be well qualified for ministry, it does not appear to us that your gifts match well with our direction for ministry. We wish you God’s blessings in your work.

Only if the person **self-referred**, you will also thank them for their interest in your position. Moreover, make sure that you have had some prior contact with the person (informing them that they were on your list of potential candidates). **No one** likes to receive **a rejection letter** for a position **for which** they did **not know** they were **under consideration**.

Further evaluation of PIF’s

After you have communicated with Group “C” you will also want to communicate with Groups “A” and “B.” You will need to say that the process of reading and evaluating PIF is taking longer than you expected. You wanted them to know that they are still under consideration.

Through reading and group evaluation, you will want to select your top 5 – 10 candidates. Let the COM Liaison and/or Presbytery Staff for your neighborhood know who those persons are and of what Presbytery they are members or candidates for ordination. The Presbytery staff will do a background check to see whether there are any “red flags” which might cause problems. Once the list is cleared, you will begin the interviewing portion of this stage.

Interviewing Pastoral Candidates

As you begin this process, you may wish to ask the persons to send you copies of bulletins, newsletters, tapes of sermons, etc. so that you might get to know them better. After you have received this information and after you have re-read the PIF, you may want to re-rank the candidates, and proceed to interviewing them.

A word about telephone interviews: regarding telephone interviews, this is better than communicating by mail (email or otherwise) **but not much!** You will want to communicate face to face as well. A Skype or Facetime interview is much better than a telephone interview.

Because PNC's recognize that much about the call process is experiential - "the chemistry between people", "the movement of the Holy Spirit", they often move quickly to meet with potential candidates. This is a good time to remember the Presbyterian balance between "ardor and order" or "heart and head".

Preparation for the Interviewing

Before you meet with any candidate:

Every member of the PNC should read the PIF thoroughly and score the candidate based on criteria your committee has set for its future leader.

Compare the PIF with your MIF.

Do this person's experience and skills match what you are seeking?

- Have they lived and worked in a setting like yours?
- Do they have the years of experience you are seeking?
- Do they exhibit skills that you need?
- Do the pastoral activities ratings match yours closely?

Review other materials the candidate may send you:

Video or audio tapes of sermons, bulletins, newsletters, etc.

Do thorough reference checking.

Call each of the references listed and ask both general questions and questions that your PNC has developed about this particular person. A list of questions for references is included in the appendix (Appendix A.) of the handbook.

If this position will involve work with children, your state may require you or your presbytery to do a background check on the person you call. Check with your COM.

Prepare for the interview. What information do you want and need in order to evaluate this person as your future leader? What questions will be asked and who will ask them? What information will the candidate want to know about your church and community? Gather this information before the interview.

Come to a consensus as a committee so that you convey clarity and harmony. Be clear about the job you are asking your new leader to do and the type of person you are seeking. Interviews are not the time for the committee to sort out their differences over the body of an unsuspecting candidate!

Be clear about your process for decision-making - what are the steps you will go through? What is your approximate time line?

If the candidate is coming to your community, arrange a tour that gives a good picture of your church and community, but be careful to protect confidentiality. Do not include non-PNC members in the visit or introduce the candidate around town. This is a small world and many stories are told about pastors who became "lame ducks" because congregations back home heard that they were out interviewing.

During the Interview -

Some Questions You Might Ask:

Tell us about your faith journey.

What are the things you feel best about in your present ministry?

What have been the challenges there?

What interests you about this position?

What do you bring to our ministry?

What are your greatest strengths in ministry? ...your greatest weaknesses?

One of our goals is to strengthen our _____. How would you envision doing that?

Describe a typical week in your ministry.

Share your perspective on the Presbyterian Church (USA).

One of the issues our Session has debated in the past few years is _____. Tell us how you might address that topic.

If we selected you as our pastor (or other role), when could you start and what would be your start-up plan?

How do you balance your personal/family life with your ministry?

What will you need from us, the members of this church, in order to be effective as our pastor?

What questions or concerns do you have?

You will also want to develop questions related to the specific candidate. These will come out of things you read in the PIF and things you hear from references.

Is there anything else you need to know that will impact this person?

What about questions that cannot be asked?

A few words about appropriate questions

Neither civil nor church law mandate prohibited questions. Many Presbyterians who serve on PNC's are familiar with secular employment practices where it is illegal to ask certain questions of a prospective employee. Because the ministries of the Church belong to the Church, the rules are different for search committees interviewing church professionals. Search

committees and presbyteries have the right and responsibility to ask questions that will help them determine “fitness for office”.

Pursuant to Salem Presbytery’s AAEO policy: “no one, either negligently or deliberately, will be excluded from consideration because of their race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, or disabilities.” Also, according to this policy, the PNC will need to provide documentation at the end of the process that these requirements have been fulfilled.

From Fred Jenkins, Director - Office of Constitutional Services, excerpt from PCUSA Polity Reflection #19, July 1998

“6. Q. What may those who examine church officers do?”

A. Each examining body, a CPM, COM, PNC, Nominating Committee, Session, or Presbytery decides its own procedures, as it does now. They may ask what is necessary to satisfy themselves of the fitness, or lack of fitness, of the person for the church office under consideration. The committee may not discriminate solely on the basis of sexual orientation. Each examining body decides when it is satisfied, but may be subject to administrative review or judicial review. For example, see the judicial decision in Bedford-Central Church v. Presbytery of New York City, Minutes 1987 page 119 in which the decision of the candidates committee received administrative review on the floor of presbytery and the presbytery’s decision subsequently received judicial review.

Applicants, especially candidates, need to understand that religious institutions are permitted to discriminate on the basis of religious belief and may enforce standards of n’s performance of ministry? character that apply to a person’s private life to a degree that is not legally permitted in secular occupations and professions.”

Given this legal environment, COM’s and PNC’s should, above all, exercise Christianity, common sense, and Presbyterian decency and order as they seek to discern the call to a leader for God’s people.

General words and Observations

Remember that the interview is a two-way street: the minister is also interviewing you. The minister will have questions to ask, so please leave time in the interview for this.

When you go to listen to a minister in his/her pulpit, either let him/her know that you are coming, and arrange (if you wish) a time to meet with the person after the service, or if you choose to appear unannounced, contact the minister by the middle of that week and identify yourself as having visited, and tell him/her when they can expect to hear from you further.

“Unless you are searching for a clergy couple, you are not normally interviewing the spouse of your candidate.” While that dictum is true, after you have had your first visit/interview with the candidate, you **should** consider including the spouse in your interviews. This is **especially** true **when you invite** the candidate to **visit your church**.

Remember: just because you have the minister's PIF, even if it was self-referred, it is almost certain, that his/her congregation does **NOT** know that he/she is considering moving. Please, do nothing to break that confidentiality.

Do not leave messages with baby-sitters, children, or answering machines, except your name and phone number. Baby-sitters can be church members. Children may not know that the parent is considering moving. You do not know who may overhear your message on an answering machine. And **never** leave a message on an answering machine at the minister's office.

Be sparse in your use of neutral pulpits. If the minister is talking to you, they probably are talking to others. They have only a limited number of Sundays when they can be away from their home pulpit [generally 6 per year]. They are using their vacation to preach in a neutral pulpit.

Suitability

When you have gotten to your final 3 candidates, and you are bringing them to the field for an interview, arrange for a one and one-half hour time for them and the PNC to meet with the neighborhood COM. This meeting is where the COM will determine the suitability of the match between the candidate and your congregation. Before discussion of a call with a candidate, that candidate must receive the approval of the Neighborhood COM. Details of this process are on the Presbytery web-site.

Offering the Call

Before a call may be issued, indeed before your congregational meeting may be called to issue the call to your candidate, s/he must be approved by the Commission on Ministry (via the Neighborhood COM, the terms of call must be approved by the COM, and if your candidate is not a member of this Presbytery, the candidate must also be approved by the Examinations Committee.

So, when you have reached a decision on your first choice, it is appropriate to offer the position to the candidate. If s/he says that they will accept the call, the PNC informs the COM Liaison who informs Presbytery's Office of the top candidate's willingness to accept the call if approved by the groups listed in the paragraph above. The Presbytery office then coordinates the meeting with the examination committee, assuring that the documents each group needs are submitted in time. (For example, the Examination committee will need a Statement of Faith and a biography. Instructions will be sent and appointments made.)

The PNC Liaison makes sure that four (4) copies of the call form are filled out properly and meet presbytery's minimum compensation, and that the AAEEEO Report form is filled out and submitted to the Neighborhood COM before moving onto the Call Process.

THE CALL PROCESS

The Call Process involves the time from the moment your top choice says, “Yes!” until the end of the Installation Service. Once your candidate says yes, there are several constitutional hoops to jump through.

Meeting with Examinations Committee

The deadline for getting a candidate before the COM is ten (10) days before the meeting, and the deadline is the same for the Examinations Committee. If the Minister is a member of Salem Presbytery (and therefore does not need to appear before the Examinations Committee), the deadline is five (5) days. If you are ready to act before the deadline, a time and date will be set for your candidate to meet with the Examinations Committee (if necessary).

It is the Examinations Committee’s responsibility to determine whether or not the candidate is theologically sound and appropriate for membership in the Presbytery. The Neighborhood COM will approve the terms of call, and grant permission to the PNC to request its Session to call a congregational meeting to issue the call.

In addition, the Commission on Ministry has the authority to allow a previously ordained person to move onto the field and begin work on the effective date of the call. That means, that we do not have to rush to get something done just to fit the schedule of a Presbytery meeting.

The Congregational Meeting

The Session calls the Congregational Meeting in accord with *The Book of Order* G-2.0803

The Congregation votes to issue the call. Following an affirmative vote, the Moderator certifies the vote on all four copies of the Call Form and signs them. The Search committee is elected by the congregation to sign the call and prosecute (present) it before the next Presbytery meeting. The Chairperson (or a designate) will appear at the Presbytery meeting, and at the appropriate time read a script and present the call. The Congregation, effective upon the Installation of the Pastor (or Associate Pastor or Co-Pastor) dissolves the Search Committee. [**N.B.** The members of the Search Committee may continue as an advisory group to the new pastor (or Associate Pastor or Co-Pastor)]. The Moderator of the Search Committee sees to it that the four copies of the Call Form are appropriately filled out and returned to the Presbytery’s Office (P.O. Box 1763, Clemmons, NC 27012) as soon after the congregational meeting as possible.

The Ordination and/or Installation Commission

While it is the responsibility of Presbytery to ordain and/or install all the pastors who are members, it is impractical for all of Presbytery to gather to do this. So, Presbytery appoints an Administrative Commission to do this task on behalf of the whole of Presbytery. It is the practice of Salem Presbytery to allow the minister to be ordained and/or installed to nominate her/his Commission. A form is provided for this purpose to the minister and to the PNC Chairperson. The form has a date on it. **PLEASE** see to it that your candidate has this filled out and returned to the office on time. The form comes with directions about the requirements of

the Commission. Since *the Book of Order* requires that the elders on a Commission may not be from the same congregation, you can help your candidate by suggesting elders from other congregations who might serve on the Commission. If there are any questions, call Presbytery's Office.

After your candidate is examined at a Presbytery Meeting, the Commission is appointed by Salem Presbytery to ordain and/or install your new pastor. The time of meeting and the appropriate dress for the minister members of the Commission are decisions worked out between the minister-elect and the Moderator of the Commission (that is the person Presbytery appoints "to preside and propound.") On the appointed day, at the time suggested by the Commission moderator, the Commission convenes and prepares for the service and conducts the Ordination and/or Installation Service. Following the service, the minutes of the Commission are sent to Salem Presbytery.

Appendix A. Questions for References

(This has been provided as an aid to PNC's as they interview the References listed on a particular PIF)

Candidate _____

Purpose of the call and thanks for willingness to help us.

Statement of intent: We are looking for that person whose natural gifts, training and prior experience is a "fit" with what we believe our church needs, given the opportunities God has placed before us.

How would you describe this person's work habits?

Could you tell me what you know about his/her past and present ministry and highlight your sense of his/her greatest strengths.

Since none of us are perfect at everything, are there some areas where s/he has noticeable weaknesses?

How have you seen this person demonstrate his/her administrative skills?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this person's preaching ability? _____

How often have you heard him/her preach?

How would you describe his/her style?

(On the following four questions, if the rating is low, ask "May I ask why you say that?")

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this person's teaching ability? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this person's spiritual development skills? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this person's administrative leadership? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate this person's pastoral care abilities? _____

How well does this person work with other staff members, and lay leaders?

Besides being professionally competent, we are looking for someone who fits well in our community. What can you tell me about his/her non-work activities, e.g. hobbies, community involvement, family, etc.?

To put you on the spot, if you were in my shoes, would you be enthusiastic about calling him/her?

NOTES