

SEARCHING FOR YOUR NEXT MINISTER THROUGH THE NACCC

Importance

As you prepare to search for your next minister, the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) is ready to help you through this important process. The freedom of local churches to call their own pastors carries with it a responsibility on the Association's part to do all we can to insure that ministerial integrity and honesty are held in the highest regard.

Disclosure Protocol and Policy

The NACCC's **Disclosure Protocol and Policy** helps churches in the process of searching for a minister by collecting professional documents from clergy that may be inspected by churches if that minister is under serious consideration as a candidate for their pastoral vacancy. This file also contains the candidate's permission to run a background check. Additionally, this file may contain documents submitted by churches related to the behavior of the pastor while serving their congregation. For information on the disclosure protocol go to: www.naccc.org – Services Member Churches – Pastoral Search Process.

Our committee is very grateful for the step-by-step help that the forms that our National Headquarters had prepared and encouraged us to follow so carefully. . . *FCC, Searsport*

Ministers who may be seeking a call to a member church, wish to update their Minister Information Forms (MIF), view Church Information Forms (CIF), or update chaplaincy endorsement are required to establish their disclosure file as a condition of access to the NACCC search process. While this process may seem inconvenient, we feel it is of utmost importance to the churches and the people we serve.

While you are free to consider any candidate that applies for your pulpit, we strongly recommend that you use the NACCC Disclosure Protocol and Policy to collect the candidate's relevant professional documents. In our experience, churches benefit greatly when they insist that candidates create a Disclosure file with the NACCC before the church will consider their candidacy. This holds true equally for all NACCC clergy as well as non NACCC clergy.

Getting Started

Many churches, when facing a pastoral vacancy, ask us what they need to do to start the process of looking for their next minister. First of all, check your Bylaws to see if there are any guidelines on selecting a search committee.

How to Advertise your Vacancy through the NACCC

The NACCC provides the electronic means by which searching clergy know that you are seeking a new minister. Clergy learn about you and the position through your Church Information Form (CIF). All information is completed on-line.

Once a search committee is formed, you will need to select one person who is comfortable using a computer and who will be entering your information in the CIF on line. That person then contacts the Pastoral Relations Coordinator at the NACCC office. lwright@naccc.org or 1-800-262-1620 x1614

And, thank you so much for your guidance and assistance along the way. You are a real gem for the association. . . *First Union CC*

providing us with their contact information (name, address, phone, email). We will then provide that person with log-in information to access the online CIF form.

Once the CIF is complete that person can simply click a button that will post the position on the NACCC website under

Pastorates & Pulpits. Once the position is posted on the NACCC website, we will then ensure that the posting is listed in *The Congregationalist* until the position is filled. If you wish to also purchase a display ad, check the latest issue of the magazine for rates and contact information.

Deciding if you will Use the NACCC Disclosure Protocol and Policy Procedure

One of the next steps as a search committee is to decide if you will only consider applications that are submitted through the NACCC using the minister information form (MIF). There is great value to using the NACCC system and having all candidates complete the MIF. You will be better able to compare them as they will all be filling in the same information and answering the same questions. If someone is unwilling to complete the MIF, the committee might want to explore with the candidate their reluctance to participate in a system that we know from experience helps increase the success of the call process. We find that most clergy want to participate in the disclosure process as a way to demonstrate to the church their desire to work cooperatively with the congregation. The search process is a very important step in the next phase of your church life and every effort should be made by both committee and candidates to determine a good fit.

We are grateful to you and your colleagues for the guidance and help you have provided . . . *Baleville CCC*

You are likely to receive some applications from other individuals through the mail or by email. If a church finds an attractive candidate in this manner, many search committees will notify the candidate of their desire to enter into dialogue about the candidacy but that the candidate must complete a disclosure file with the NACCC. For those ministers outside of the NACCC, there is a one-time administrative fee of \$100 which is that individual's responsibility to pay, although some churches offer to pay it on the candidate's behalf.

For More Information

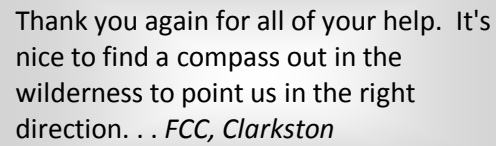
For more complete information on search committees go to:

<http://www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org/pastoral-search.html>. There are many helpful resources on this page that you can print and distribute to search committee members. Two very important resources are *"Searching for a Minister: A Church Overview and Guide to Best Practices"* and *"Calling a Congregational Minister"* a Search Committee Handbook. There is also a sample Church Information Form to get started. Most churches do a church questionnaire to find out what people want in a minister. There is a sample form on our website that can be used as is or add questions to it.

Questions?

As always, if you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us. From the documents on our website, to telephone or Skype conference calls, or in-person visits, we are ready to help you in what ever ways we are able.

May God bless you during your time of search and discernment of your next pastor.



Thank you again for all of your help. It's nice to find a compass out in the wilderness to point us in the right direction. . . *FCC, Clarkston*