



Presbytery of the Cascades  
Presbyterian Church (USA)

# Welcome to the Presbytery of the Cascades

*A Handbook for those who are  
Considering a Call and/or Entering Cascades  
Presbytery*

Revised: August, 2017

## Welcome to God's Call in Cascades Presbytery

This booklet has been created for you. Every presbytery has its own set of procedures for bringing teaching elders onto its membership rolls. You could be coming as the result of a call from a congregation, retirement within the presbytery, a non-parish based ministry, or some other reason that brings you to request membership. We have created this booklet as an introduction to the process used by the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The booklet, out of necessity, will tend to focus on those who are considering or have received a call. During the Pastor Nominating Process, the PNC has used another Cascades Presbytery resource titled *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees*. It has served as their guidebook for the process. If you wish, you may ask the Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison for a copy. Many sections of this booklet also fit if you are coming into this presbytery as a non-parish clergy or entering through honorably retired status. This booklet is not a substitute for the advice of the COM liaison and the congregation's regional co-executive presbyter.

In these pages we cover a variety of topics:

- your meeting with the COM Interview Team and the material you need to prepare and send before this meeting;
- the Congregational Action and the Call Forms (if pastor);
- the Administrative Commission and plans for your installation service (if pastor);
- your introduction to the presbytery;
- information on your participation in the Discovery Retreat which is required for all clergy new to the presbytery;
- support group for Newly Ordained Clergy; and
- the Cascades' process and program for responding to the important issue of sexual misconduct.

The Pastor Nominating Committee has been guided by prayer and the seeking of God's Holy Spirit in the discernment process. You and they have come to this place. There is a prayer in our *Book of Common Worship* that is helpful:

*Eternal God: you called us to be a special people, to preach the gospel and show mercy. Keep your Spirit with us as we meet together, so that in everything, we may do your will. Guide us lest we stumble or be misguided by our own desires. May all we do be done for the reconciling of the world, for the up building of the church, and for the greater glory of Jesus Christ our confidence, guide, and friend. Amen.*

## Your Meeting with the COM

From *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees*:

14. At this point, your top candidate(s) must also be interviewed and approved by your regional Commission on Ministry (COM). Your COM liaison will be your guide through this process. This ought to be done when your PNC interviews the candidate in person and they preach in a neutral pulpit. If not done at that time, your church will need to bear the cost of the candidate's return to the presbytery for interview and approval. The regional COM interview and approval ensures your final choice can be freely made since approvals have already been secured.

As part of the examination for membership in the Presbytery of the Cascades by a regional COM, each candidate shall be asked if he or she has a departure from ordination standards as described in G-2.0105 of the *Book of Order*. That departure may be a matter of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a candidate which the regional COM has otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a departure, the authority of a regional COM to act as a commission of the presbytery shall end and the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission must be done at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the departure is from an essential or not and whether to approve membership in the presbytery. If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position, the Pastor Nominating Committee/Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of the church seeking pastoral staff will be notified that action on the teaching elder's reception must be deferred until the next stated meeting of the presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to receive the teaching elder into membership. The PNC/APNC may then seek another candidate for examination by the regional COM or wait until the presbytery as a whole has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of the Presbytery of the Cascades.

The Interview Team consists of two teaching elders and two ruling elders within the particular geographical region and functions independent of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

In your meeting, they will ask you about your experience of ministry, your sense of call and will review your statement of faith. While they ask questions of you, it is very definitely an opportunity for you to ask questions of them, including their perceptions of the congregation, its potential for ministry and its life and character as a Presbyterian Church. It is the recommendation of this group that goes to your regional Commission on Ministry, so we encourage your good preparation.

As a part of the process, the COM liaison provides the Interview Team with copies of your PIF. Should you receive a call, or are entering the presbytery as a Continuing Member of presbytery, we ask you to bring material that will eventually appear in the Commission on Ministry' report to presbytery. Specifically, we ask for a one-page Work History, a one-page Statement of Faith, a photograph (preferably in digital format), and a signed copy of the "Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct and Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct" form. The Work History includes a brief outline of pastoral experiences, educational background, and ecclesiastical status, and may include additional information such as other experience and community service. Your Statement of Faith should be 575 words maximum. Both your Work History and Statement of Faith should be sent electronically to the appropriate regional presbytery office for distribution to the Interview Team.

Every call process is unique to that particular people of God; it is as different as the PNC, and the candidate they wish to nominate for the congregation's consideration. *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees* is a general reference and continues with this information:

15. PNC makes the final selection and reports this information to COM. The PNC requests session to call a congregational meeting on \_\_\_\_\_.
16. At this point, the PNC will do some planning and thinking: what is the best way to communicate information about the nominee with the congregation?
17. The COM liaison (and if necessary, the co-executive presbyter) will work with the PNC, session, and pastor-elect/associate pastor-elect in developing recommendations for the terms of the call (Step 18), installation and/or ordination.
18. The PNC Chair contacts their COM liaison for the official Call Forms and information regarding the congregational meeting and how it is to be conducted. All four copies of the forms are to be treated as originals with signatures.

You will find the COM liaison and the regional co-executive presbyter helpful in sorting out the questions you may have. Don't hesitate to make contact; we're happy to help!

### **The Congregational Action**

A sample of the official form for the Pastoral Call is found in the Appendix at the end of this booklet. Your COM liaison will supply four copies, each to be completed and signed with

original signatures when action is taken by the congregation to call their pastor. These four copies are to be given to the COM liaison in order to process the call.

### **Plans for Your Installation**

In the Presbytery of the Cascades, newly called pastors are expected to plan their own installation service. *Toward Calling Your Pastor: A Handbook for Pastor Nominating Committees* gives information regarding your installation service and the Administrative Commission that will conduct the service.

An Administrative Commission will be established by the presbytery through your regional COM to conduct the Service of Installation (see the *Book of Order* W-4.4006). This is a Service of the presbytery. The commission membership must include at least five persons divided as equally as possible between teaching elders and ruling elders with the ruling elders from different congregations including one from your congregation. Your regional Vice Moderator or his/her designee is always a member of the commission and presides at the service as an officer of presbytery by asking the Constitutional Questions.

You also may have additional persons take part in your installation service who are not part of this presbytery, and who are not counted as part of the Commission.

Please give this information to your regional office and your COM liaison so it may be included in the actions approved by your regional COM and presented to presbytery.

### **The Service for Installation**

A suggested format for the installation service can be found in the *Book of Occasional Services* [Geneva Press © 1999, Presbyterian Church (USA)]. The structure of the Installation portion of the worship service should look something like this:

#### Litany for Ministry

- L: There are different gifts.  
P: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.  
L: There are different ways of serving God.  
P: But it is the same Lord who is served.  
L: God works through different people in different ways.  
P: But it is the same God whose purposes are achieved through them all.  
L: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit.  
P: To use it for the common good.

- L: Together we are the body of Christ.
- P: And individually members of Him.
- L: Though we have different gifts, together we are a ministry of reconciliation led by the risen Christ.
- P: We work and pray to make the church useful in the world, and we call women and men to faith, so that in the end, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God.
- L: Within our common ministry, some members are called for particular work as teaching elder. Here we recognize this special ministry, remembering that our Lord Jesus said: “whoever among you want to be great must become the servant of all, and who want to be first among you, must be the slave of all.”
- P: Just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life to set others free.

Presentation of the Candidate

The Constitutional Questions

The Installation Prayer

The Declaration of Installation and Welcome

The Charge to the Pastor

The Charge to the Congregation

The participants in the service should be named with their congregation’s listed.

An offering is taken with the following announcement in the bulletin: “The offering will be given to the Presbytery of the Cascades’ Ministerial Assistance Fund.”

### **Your Introduction to the Presbytery**

The Presbytery of the Cascades meets three times a year: in March, June or July, and November. When the meeting begins, usually on Friday at 1:30 p.m., the chairs of the four regional COMs introduce those who have been received by COM action since the last meeting of presbytery.

Your regional COM chair will ask you to come forward and will direct the presbytery to your work history and statement of faith. While questions may be asked, this is usually not the case since this has been delegated to the regional COM. It is a time of welcome into the presbytery.

It is important that you be present when you are asked to come forward, be recognized and welcomed in your new presbytery.

### **Discovery Retreat**

Part of our mission as a presbytery is to provide pastoral care and support for clergy and congregations. The fact that Cascades is a large and diverse presbytery makes this an especially important goal to pursue. In a presbytery our size it is easy for clergy and congregations to feel isolated and marginalized.

Presbytery has approved several programs that will help clergy and congregations find inclusion and participation in our presbytery. One such program is the Discovery Retreat. The Discovery Retreat is an opportunity to orient and assimilate new clergy into the presbytery. The retreats are scheduled twice a year, generally during the last full week in February and the first full week in October at a location central to the Presbytery. They are a two day/one night event, Tuesday early afternoon through Wednesday lunch.

The purpose of the Discovery Retreat is to introduce new clergy to the Cascades family and our way of doing things. Because attendance is required by all members, presbytery covers the cost of the retreat; congregations or individuals cover travel.

### **NOPS - A Program for Newly Ordained Clergy**

Newly Ordained Pastors' Support (NOPS) is a special program for pastors and associate pastors, created by the Presbytery of the Cascades for clergy support during their first three years of ministry following ordination.

Studies have shown that such a program for those newly ordained promotes effective ministry within congregations and has a positive impact on tenure and satisfaction in the congregation. For each person, it is a three-year program of growth, retreats, discussions, mentoring groups led by experienced pastors, and support for ministry in the church.

Please let us know of your interest in this innovative program by calling the South Region Office, 800-701-7313.

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy**

The Presbytery of the Cascades has developed a sexual misconduct prevention policy with two components.

The first component of our program is your required sign-off on the Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy of Cascades Presbytery. The policy and sign-off form will be given to you in preparation for your meeting with COM. The policy applies to all in the presbytery who are ordained to the office of teaching elder. It is essential that all who are subject to the policy and its procedures read and understand the policy, acknowledge that they have done so, and formally consent to being bound by the presbytery's discipline in the matter.

The second component of the Cascades' program is attendance at a presbytery sponsored and conducted workshop aimed at preventing sexual misconduct in the church. Undoubtedly, under other presbyteries or church entities you have already attended a workshop similar to this; we would hope that is the case, since this is such a crucial topic in the church. However, presbytery policy and our insurance provisions require that you attend a Presbytery of the Cascades' workshop. Moreover, your attendance is part of your permanent record in this presbytery. Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training is part of the Discovery Retreat. As you consider becoming a continuing member of this presbytery as a teaching elder, please understand this requirement to attend a workshop sponsored by the Presbytery of the Cascades as binding and non-negotiable. Cascades also requires all active pastors to take a mandatory refresher training in misconduct prevention once every four years with a training session to be offered each year and rotated among the four regions.

### **Once Again – Welcome!!**

Finally, to you, as a continuing member of presbytery, we wish for you a strong start in your ministry in this new place. Please feel free to contact your COM liaison or regional co-executive presbyter if other questions or concerns arise.

*The Presbyterian Church (USA)*  
*Pastoral Call*

(For Pastor or Associate Pastor)

The \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church (USA)  
(Name of church)

of \_\_\_\_\_  
(City and State)

belonging to the Presbytery of the Cascades (PIN \_\_\_\_\_) well satisfied with your qualifications for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls you,

\_\_\_\_\_  
to undertake the office of

\_\_\_\_\_

of this congregation, beginning \_\_\_\_\_, promising you in the discharge of your duties all proper support, encouragement and allegiance to the Lord.

That you may be free to devote yourself full-time (part-time of \_\_\_\_\_%) to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you the following: (stated in annual amounts)

Salary		Housing	
Utilities		Social Security Allowance	
Professional expense		Vacation	Four Weeks
Continuing education		Study Leave	Two Weeks
Other		Other	
Full pension, medical, disability and death coverage under the Board of Pensions.			
Attendance at the _____ Spring _____ Fall Presbytery Discovery Retreat (G.3-0307)			
Three months sabbatical at full pay after each seven years of service.			

We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation. In addition, we promise to provide: \_\_\_\_\_

*In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A.D. \_\_\_\_\_*

Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended a call to \_\_\_\_\_ for ministerial services, I certify that the call has been made in all respects according to the rules laid down in the Form of Government, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church (USA)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

# *Certification of Call*

## *By The Presbytery of the Cascades*

This call has been approved by the Commission on Ministry of Cascades Presbytery.

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ COM Chair

The approval of this call was reviewed by the Stated Clerk of The Presbytery of the Cascades and has been approved as the action of the presbytery as authorized under the provisions of G-3.0307.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Stated Clerk

## *By Minister/Candidate*

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of Acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Useful web links:**

Presbyterian Church (USA):

[www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)

PCUSA – *On Calling A Pastor* booklet:

[www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/clc/doc/callingpastor.doc](http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/clc/doc/callingpastor.doc)

PCUSA – Church Leadership Connection:

[www.gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/clc/](http://www.gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/clc/)

Presbytery of the Cascades

[www.cascadespresbytery.org](http://www.cascadespresbytery.org)

Presbytery of the Cascades: Commission on Ministry Resources:

<http://www.cascadespresbytery.org/resources/committee-resources/commission-on-ministry/>

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