

Pastoral Selection Process

Review the following passages:

All pastors shall be selected in accordance with the United Pentecostal Church International Manual, as detailed in the sections concerning Pastor under Article III of the Local Church Government. (District Constitution, Article VI: Local Church Government, Section 2)

The pastor shall be chosen by the church board, whose decision must be endorsed by the church. (a) However, if there are less than three members on the church board, the District Superintendent and/or the District Presbyter, who may be authorized by the District Superintendent, shall call for the election of a pastor. In such case the method of election shall be the same as Article IV, Section 5, Paragraphs 1 through 4 of the General Constitution. (UPCI Manual, Local Church Government, Article III, Section 3, Paragraph 1).

In case of a resignation or dismissal of the pastor, the church board shall immediately notify the District Superintendent of such a vacancy, and under his direction, call a business meeting, over which the District Superintendent or the District Presbyter whom he may authorize, shall preside, to choose a Pastor or transact any other necessary business; however, be it understood that their decision for a Pastor must be endorsed by a majority vote of the members present, this by secret ballot. All other business must be endorsed by a majority vote of the members present. (UPCI Manual, Local Church Government, Article III, Section 5, Paragraph 3)

Review the following process:

1. *Guiding principles.*
 - a. The spiritual needs of the church and community must be our foremost consideration.
 - b. We must respect the church's right to choose its pastor, subject to biblical qualifications.
 - c. We must treat all qualified candidates with fairness.
 - d. We must not operate by favoritism, partiality, or prejudice. (See I Timothy 5:21.)
2. *Communicate with the outgoing pastor, if possible, or the church board to obtain:*
 - a. Name, phone number, fax, and email address of the contact person for the church. Often, a pastor who is retiring can serve in this capacity. Otherwise, it will be one or more of the board members or officers of the church.
 - b. Basic information about the church and community, such as attendance, finances, population of the area, and circumstances of pastor's resignation.
 - c. Approved list of voting members. This list cannot be changed until after the election.
3. *Communicate with the district superintendent and handle the process with his guidance, since he is charged with the ultimate responsibility in this matter.*
4. *Communicate with the church or church board.*
 - a. Explain the selection process, ask what they are looking for in a pastor, and ask if they have candidates in mind. Explain that all candidates must work through the presbyter and district superintendent.
 - b. A meeting with the church or church board is recommended, especially if there is confusion or potential conflict.

- c. If the church is not organized properly or if the church board has not adopted a compensation plan for the pastor, provide the church board with suitable resources. See “Organizing a Church Legally” in this manual.
5. *Seek out, interview, and evaluate candidates.*
 - a. Sources can include district superintendent, district secretary, posting on district website, email to ministers of the section, and personal contacts.
 - b. Give the candidates the necessary information about the church and community.
 - c. Ask about their past and present ministry, goals, family, and references.
 - d. Ask them to send you a resumé that includes this information along with any relevant work history and educational background.
 - e. For candidates that seem viable, contact their pastor (if any), their presbyter or district superintendent, and possibly another reference.
 - f. Ascertain the candidates’ strength in doctrine, holiness, revival, ministerial ethics, skills with people, and suitability for the present church.
6. In consultation with the district superintendent, *choose the candidates to present to the church board.*
7. After sharing résumés with the church board, and in consultation with them, *schedule three candidates to preach for the church.* (The number could be greater or smaller in special circumstances.)
8. *Schedule the election.* After the church has heard three preachers, ask if there seems to be a consensus in the church for one candidate.
 - a. If so, inform the district superintendent of the presumed choice.
 - b. Ask the church board to vote officially for one candidate as pastor, and schedule a church election on this one candidate.
 - c. If there is not a church board of three or more members, the election will be by secret ballot with no names presented officially. See Local Church Government, Article III, Section 1 (a) and General Constitution, Article IV, Section 5, Paragraphs 1-4.
 - d. Make sure the election is announced in three services, with the first announcement at least ten days in advance.
 - e. If there is no consensus after the church has heard three preachers, go back to step 5 to schedule additional preachers.
9. *Conduct the election* according to the attached “Instructions for Pastoral Election.”