

Calling a New Pastor

English District Guidelines and Procedures

Introduction

Choosing a new shepherd for your congregation is a significant spiritual milestone. Your congregation can choose between two paths: **Calling from a Seminary** or **Calling from the Field**. Both processes require close cooperation with the District President's Administrative Assistant (DPAA).

Path A: Calling From a Seminary

Best for congregations seeking a new graduate. This process follows a strict national timeline.

Important Dates

- **Application Window:** November 1 – January 31.
- **Firm Deadline: January 31** (No exceptions).
- **Placement Results:** Announced at the end of April.

Steps for Completion

1. **Voters' Action:** Hold a constitutionally established voters' meeting to:
 - Vote to extend a call to a seminarian.
 - Establish and approve a full salary and benefits package.
2. **Request Paperwork:** Contact the DPAA for the link, username and password to access call document online; and physical documents, including the *Congregational Self-Study* and *Checklist*.
3. **Drafting the Call:** Complete the **Ordained Call Document**.
 - **Note:** Every line must be filled. "To Be Determined" or blank spaces are not permitted.
4. **Review Process:** Email completed drafts to the DPAA for a preliminary accuracy review.
5. **Official Filing:** After the DPAA approves the draft:
 - Print the original and obtain necessary signatures.
 - "DO NOT sign Diploma of Vocation"
 - Mail the **original** via **overnight mail** to the DPAA.
 - Retain a copy for church records.
6. **The Wait:** The congregation enters a period of prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

[IMPORTANT]

If a candidate is assigned, **Ordination and Installation** dates must be authorized by the **Bishop's Office** before they are considered official.

Path B: Calling From the Field

Best for congregations seeking an experienced pastor currently serving in ministry.

Expected Timeline

- **Initial List:** 6 to 8 weeks to receive the first list of names.
- **Average Vacancy:** Approximately 18 months.

Phase 1: Preparation & Assessment

1. **Form a Committee:** The Voters' Assembly elects a Call Committee and Chair according to your Constitution and Bylaws.
2. **Request Documents:** During the second week of the CADDs process, contact the DPAA for the *Self-Study, Checklist, and Nomination Forms*.

Phase 2: CADDs Assessment

NOTE: If the call is for a second Ordained Pastor on staff or for an already existing multi-pastoral team, a CADDs Assessment is not required but can be requested

1. **CADDs Assessment:** Contact the District Mission Executive to begin the **Congregational Assessment of Development or Decline (CADDs)**. This is a 3-week evaluation.

Phase 3: Nominations & Filing

1. **Congregational Input:** Provide **Nomination Forms** to the congregation so members can recommend specific Pastors for consideration.
 - Nominations are received only *prior* to the creation of a new call list.
2. **Submission:** Return the completed *Self-Study, Checklist, and all member Nomination Forms* to the DPAA via email.

Phase 4: Reviewing the Call List

1. **Verification:** The District President (DP) coordinates with other DPs to clear the nominated names. This takes approximately **2–3 weeks**.
2. **Confidentiality:** Every committee member **must sign a confidentiality agreement**. No member may review a candidate's file (PIF/SET/ECS) until this form is signed.
3. **Review:** The Circuit Visitor will deliver the candidate files to the committee for prayerful consideration and interviews.

Guidance for the Vacancy

The transition between pastors can be a season of uncertainty. We encourage the congregation to:

- **Remain Patient:** The 18-month average is normal.
- **Stay Prayerful:** Trust that God has a specific plan for His church.
- **Seek Support:** Your Circuit Visitor and District office are available for guidance throughout this journey.