



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 –Pastoral Search.

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 online.

When the search committee is formed, you will need to select a search committee chairperson and or recording secretary who is comfortable using a computer to enter information about your church on the electronic CIF online. That individual should click on this link <https://www.naccc.org/account-request/> to request an account. Upon approval of account, instructions will be emailed. After the CIF is completed and reviewed by the Church Services Coordinator or Director of Programs the vacancy will be posted on the NACCC website under Open Pulpits page.

In addition to the NACCC website, we will then have it listed in *The Congregationalist* magazine under the Pastorates & Pulpits page until the position is filled.

If you wish to purchase a separate display ad, check the latest issue of the magazine for rates and contact information of the editor or call 800-262-1620 Ext 1624.

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 the committee and candidates to determine a good fit.

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 the [Center for Congregational Leadership](#). 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. 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 the Church Services Coordinator, Laura Wright by email at lwright@naccc.org or 1-800-262-1620 x1614. From the documents on our website, to telephone or Zoom meetings, or in-person visits, we are ready to help you in what ever ways we are able.

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To nurture fellowship among Congregational Christian Churches and to support ministries of the local church in its community and to the world, all in the name of Christ.