

Frequent Asked Questions

regarding the transition process of getting a new pastor

What is the process in the Presbyterian Church (USA) to hire a new pastor?

1. *Session, the governing body of our church, creates a job description, interviews potential candidates, and hires a transitional pastor to a one year (renewable if necessary) contract.*
2. *The transitional pastor assumes pastoral responsibilities as head of staff at our church.*
3. *Session (or a session appointed team) conducts a mission study that looks at church and community demographics, needs, and programs to help assess the skills and experience desired in a permanent pastor as we move forward.*
4. *The transitional pastor determines when the church is ready to begin the process to call a new pastor.*
5. *A Pastoral Nominating Committee is formed by the GSPC Nominating Team and approved by the congregation.*
6. *The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) uses the mission study to fill out a church information form (CIF) that becomes available on the PC(USA) website for pastors seeking a new call.*
7. *The PNC has access to the searchable data base of potential pastors and evaluates candidates that match our criteria or seek us out. Through mutual investigation, examination, and much prayer and discernment, a new pastor is identified and called to service.*

Remember that prayer is an important part of this entire process. Please continue to pray for the congregation, church leaders, and all those involved in the process.

What if I need pastoral care before we have a transitional pastor? *Contact the church office and arrangements will be made for pastoral care.*

What if my family needs pastoral services for a wedding or funeral before we have a transitional pastor? *Contact the church office and arrangements will be made for pastoral service.*

Who moderates the session and any congregational meetings before there is a transitional or permanent pastor in place? *Presbytery provides a moderator when required for meetings until a transitional pastor is hired. The transitional pastor is the moderator until the new pastor is hired.*

How long does the process to call a new pastor take? *There is no fixed time frame. The transitional pastor is hired on a one year contract that can be renewed if necessary.*

Who preaches before a transitional or permanent pastor is hired? *The Worship Team schedules pastors, usually from the area, to preach, lead worship, and serve communion as needed until a transitional pastor is hired.*

Is communion served while there is no transitional or permanent pastor? *Yes. It is anticipated that there will be an ordained minister to preach on the Sundays when communion is scheduled, If an ordained minister is not available, we can have a ruling elder do communion with special dispensation from the Commission on Ministry at Presbytery, or we can change the date to have communion (second week of the month versus first week of the month) if needed. Home communion will continue to be available during the week following the celebration of communion in the Sunday worship services.*

Does anything change about the church and its programs before there is a permanent pastor?

It is anticipated that session will continue the existing programs without major changes in the interim. Lay volunteers will be used to cover Bible study, youth activities and other aspects of programs that RJ led.

Can the transitional pastor become the permanent pastor? *No, transitional pastors have different training and skills*

Are current staff openings likely to be filled before we have a permanent pastor? *Initially, session's efforts are focused on hiring a transitional pastor. After a transitional pastor is in place, Session will work to fill the Music Director position.*