

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**to Call a Pastor,**  
**Associate in Ministry, Diaconal Minister, or Deaconess**

The constitution of the congregation should be consulted well in advance to ensure that the procedures that are followed are correct. In general these are the steps for election:

1. The Call Committee should recommend to the Church Council only one candidate; the Church Council should vote to recommend that candidate to the congregation.
2. The date, time, and purpose of the meeting ("...to vote on extending a letter of call to \_\_\_\_\_") should be set by the Church Council and announced to the congregation in accordance with the provisions in the congregation's constitution.
3. A representative of the bishop's office (appointed by the bishop) must attend the meeting as an observer.
4. The congregational meeting is chaired by the chief lay officer. After opening prayer and announcement of the procedure for election, it should be determined that a quorum is present (consult the constitution). The chair of the Call Committee should then present the candidate and offer the motion to call the candidate. No substitute motion is in order since that would violate the stated purpose of the meeting.
5. Voting on the motion must be done by secret ballot (yes or no) with a 2/3 majority of the votes cast needed for issuing the letter of call.
6. In the event that the vote does not achieve the 2/3 majority, the meeting is adjourned. The chief lay officer and the chair of the Call Committee should contact the bishop's office to determine the next step in the process.
7. If a 2/3 majority is achieved and election has taken place, the congregation may then consider the compensation package. Care should be taken that the discussion about calling a pastor is separated from discussion concerning compensation; these are two separate discussions and actions. Adoption of a motion regarding compensation requires a simple majority of votes cast.
8. The letter of call form should be completed, signed by the chief lay officer and secretary, sealed with the congregation's seal (if available), and forwarded to the bishop's office as soon as possible. The bishop will forward the letter of call to the candidate, after attesting the validity of the call with his signature.