



Welcome to Blackhawk Presbytery

A Guide for those who are
Considering a Call and/or
Entering Blackhawk Presbytery

Welcome to God's Call in Blackhawk Presbytery

This booklet has been created for you. Every presbytery has its own set of procedures for bringing Ministers of Word and Sacrament onto its membership rolls. You could be coming as the result of a call from a congregation, retirement within the presbytery, a non-parish-based ministry, or some other reason that brings you to request membership. We have created this guide as an introduction to the process used by our presbytery.

The booklet, out of necessity, will tend to focus on those who are considering or have received a call. During the pastor nominating process, the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) has used a resource titled *On Calling a Pastor*, offered by the PC(USA). It has served as their guidebook for the process and is available to view at: <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/calling-pastor/>. This booklet is not a substitute for the advice of the COM liaison or presbytery staff who work with the Commission on Ministry (COM) and new minister members of the presbytery.

In the following pages we cover a variety of topics:

- your meeting with the COM Interview Team and the material you need to prepare and send before this meeting;
- the Congregational Action and the Call Forms (if pastor).
- the Administrative Commission and plans for your installation service (if pastor).
- your introduction to the Presbytery of Blackhawk.
- information on your participation in our New Pastor Orientation which is specifically for pastors new our presbytery.
- Blackhawk Professional Ethics and our Boundary Training policies.

The Pastor Nominating Committee has been guided by prayer and the seeking of God's Holy Spirit in the discernment process. You and they have come to this place. There is a prayer in our *Book of Common Worship* that is helpful:

Eternal God: you called us to be a special people, to preach the gospel and show mercy. Keep your Spirit with us as we meet together, so that in everything, we may do your will. Guide us lest we stumble or be misguided by our own desires. May all we do be done for the reconciling of the world, for the up building of the church, and for the greater glory of Jesus Christ our confidence, guide, and friend. Amen.

Meeting with the COM

For the Candidate:

Congratulations! If you are meeting with a PNC, this means that you are a top candidate and, as such, you must also be interviewed and receive approval from the Commission on Ministry. Your assigned COM liaison will coordinate a time for this interview which may take place either in person or on Zoom, and should be done in advance of, or as part of, the neutral

pulpit preaching experience. Following this interview, COM will either give approval to the PNC to proceed in the process or advise the committee as to potential obstacles surrounding your possible call.

The Interview Team typically consists of two COM members and functions independently of the Pastor Nominating Committee. In your meeting, they will ask you about your experience of ministry, your sense of call and will review your statement of faith. While they ask questions of you, it is also an opportunity for you to ask questions of them, including their perceptions of the congregation, its potential for ministry and its life and character as a Presbyterian Church. It is the recommendation of this group that goes to the Commission on Ministry as a whole so we encourage your good preparation.

As a part of the process, the COM liaison provides the Interview Team with copies of your PIF. Should you receive a call, or are entering the presbytery as a member at large, we ask you to bring material that will eventually appear in the Commission on Ministry's report to presbytery. Specifically, we ask for a one-page Work and Educational History, a one-page Statement of Faith, and a *signed copy of the "Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct and Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct" form*. The Work History includes a brief outline of pastoral experiences, educational background, and ecclesiastical status, and may include additional information such as other experience and community service. Both your Work History and Statement of Faith should be sent via email to the presbytery office (office@blackhawkpresbytery.org) for distribution to the Interview Team.

For all those seeking membership or Transfer of membership to Blackhawk Presbytery:

As part of the examination for membership, a representative of the assembly, following G3.0306 of the *Book of Order*, will ask if you have had a departure from ordination standards as described in G-2.0105. The departure may be a manner of doctrine, discipline, or governance. In the event that a candidate which COM as otherwise deemed suitable for membership declares a departure, the authority of the COM to act as a commission of the presbytery shall end and the remainder of the examination of the person seeking admission shall be done at the next stated meeting of the presbytery. The presbytery shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the departure is from an essential tenet or not and whether to approve membership in the presbytery. If the person is a candidate for a pastoral position, the PNC/APNC of the church seeking pastoral staff will be notified that action on the candidate's reception must be deferred until the next stated meeting of the presbytery and provided information as to why the COM cannot take action to receive the candidate into membership. The PNC/APNC may then seek another candidate for examination by COM or wait until the presbytery assembly has had opportunity to examine the candidate and has voted whether or not the candidate may be received as a member of Blackhawk Presbytery.

For the Candidate - after approval:

Every call process is unique to that particular people of God. It is as different as the PNC,

and the candidate they wish to nominate for the congregation's consideration. Below is a general summation of process that will take place after approval.

- PNC makes the final selection and reports this information to COM. The PNC requests session to call a congregational meeting on _____
- At this point, the PNC will do some planning and thinking: what is the best way to communicate information about the nominee with the congregation?
- The COM liaison will work with the PNC, session, and pastor-elect/associate pastor-elect in developing recommendations for the terms of the call
- The PNC Chair contacts their COM liaison for the official Call Form and information regarding the congregational meeting and how it is to be conducted

You will find your COM liaison helpful in sorting out the questions you may have. Don't hesitate to make contact; we're happy to help!

The Congregational Action

A sample of the official form for the Pastoral Call is found in the Appendix at the end of this guide. These will be signed at the time of the congregational meeting and sent to the Commission on Ministry area to be finalized.

Plans for Your Installation

In Blackhawk Presbytery, newly called pastors are invited to design their own installation service. Ideally, this service will occur within three-months of the new pastor's start date and be on a day and time which is both sensible in the worshipping life of the calling church and accessible to other members of the presbytery.

For the service, an Administrative Commission (AC) needs to be established by the Presbytery to conduct the installation. An Administrative Commission for Ordination / Installation shall be composed of at least seven members (G-3.0109b). Membership should be divided as equally as possible between clergy and laity (elders). Care should be taken regarding gender representation among the clergy as well as the laity. Minority representation is desirable. There should be no more than one elder from any given congregation. It is strongly recommended that there be an ecumenical representative. Generally, the Moderator of Presbytery is invited to chair the commission. If the Moderator is not available, it is permissible for the Vice Moderator or a previous moderator of the Assembly to act as chair.

Minister members from outside the bounds of the Presbytery of Blackhawk must be seated as a corresponding member of the commission. All or most members of the Commission participate in the service of ordination / installation. The Commission must be approved by vote

of the Presbytery of Blackhawk preferably at the time the candidate is examined / received by the Presbytery. The Commission on Ministry may approve an Administrative Commission on behalf of the presbytery.

The newly called pastor is responsible for inviting members to serve on the AC and will receive assistance from COM liaison to the PNC. The names, titles, and home churches of each member of the commission should be submitted to COM a minimum 30 days prior to the service so that the COM can officially commission the group. Additional people of significance to the pastor or congregation may also be invited to take part in the installation service and are not required to be members of this presbytery or the PC(USA) denomination.

The service itself should be a full worship service in the Reformed tradition but should also be expressive of the worshipping life of the calling church and the new pastor. An order of worship for the service of installation can be found on the Blackhawk Presbytery website under Commission on Ministry. <http://blackhawkpresbytery.org/COM> (Installation / Ordination Service Guidelines)

An offering is received during the service. The gifts help to support the work of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The following line should appear in the Order for Worship:

The offering received is used to support the work of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Checks should be mailed to:

Blackhawk Presbytery
1922 N. IL Rte. 2
P.O. Box 476
Oregon, IL 61061

Your Introduction to the Presbytery

Blackhawk Presbytery meets five times a year: in February, April, June, September, and November, always on the second Tuesday of the month. When the meeting begins, we like to introduce new members of the presbytery. We hope you will be able to join us and offer a brief greeting to the presbytery. Your Statement of Faith and Work History are included as part of the background papers.

New Member Orientation

At least once each year, the Transformational General Presbyter will host a gathering of pastors new to Blackhawk. The goal of this approximately 3-hour meeting is to introduce new pastors to other colleagues in ministry, provide helpful information on the background of Blackhawk, introduce opportunities to serve and ways to be connected to the presbytery, and provided a time

for any questions about the presbytery. The plan is to hold these gatherings in person at the presbytery office and include time to share a meal.

Professional Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Policies

Blackhawk Presbytery has developed a professional ethics statement and sexual misconduct prevention policy which has two components.

The first component of our program is your required sign-off on the *Clergy Statement of Professional Ethics*. The policy applies to all in the presbytery who are ordained to the office of Ministry of Word and Sacrament or Commissioned Pastor. It is essential that all who are subject to the policy and its procedures, read and understand the policy, acknowledge that they have done so, and formally consent to being bound by the presbytery's discipline in the matter.

The second component of the Blackhawk's program is attendance at a presbytery sponsored and conducted workshop on *Boundaries Training*. Undoubtedly, under other presbyteries or church entities you have already attended a workshop similar to this; we would hope that is the case, since this is such a crucial topic in the church. However, presbytery policy require that you attend our presbytery's training session, even if you have recently completed training with another presbytery. Moreover, your attendance is part of your permanent record in this presbytery. As you consider becoming a continuing member of this presbytery as a Ministry of Word and Sacrament, please understand this requirement to attend a workshop sponsored by Blackhawk Presbytery is binding and non-negotiable. We also require all active pastors to take a mandatory refresher training once every three years.

Once Again – Welcome!!

Finally, to you, as a new member of presbytery, we wish for you a strong start in your ministry in this new place. Please feel free to contact your COM liaison or the presbytery office if other questions or concerns arise.

APPENDIX (Provided as a sample only)
BLACKHAWK PRESBYTERY PASTORAL CALL FORM

For Pastor, Co-Pastor, Associate Pastor

The First Presbyterian Church of _____ belonging to Blackhawk Presbytery, being well satisfied with your qualification for ministry and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose service will be profitable to the spiritual interests of our church and fruitful for the Kingdom of our Lord, earnestly and solemnly calls you,

Name

to undertake the office of

Solo Pastor

of this congregation, beginning January 1, 2021, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support encouragement and allegiance in the Lord.

That you may be free to devote full-time to the ministry of Word and Sacrament among us, we promise and obligate ourselves to pay you in regular monthly payments the following effective salary and following vouchered expenses (fill in those which are agreed to).

Effective Salary		Reimbursable Expenses (by voucher)	
Cash Salary	\$20,000	Automobile expense (___per mile)	\$_____
Housing Allowance	\$18,502	Business/professional expenses	\$3,900
Effective Salary	\$38,502	Continuing Education	\$1,500
SECA Supplement (7.65%)	\$2,945	Medical Reimbursement (6% of salary)	\$2,310
Deferred Compensation	\$_____	Other Allowances	\$_____
Other allowances	\$_____	Moving Costs (up to) in 2020	\$_____
Reimbursable Expenses	\$7,710	Total Reimbursable Expenses:	\$7,710
Medical Coverage	\$11,000		
Pension, Death & Disability	\$4,620		
TOTAL TERMS OF CALL	\$64,777		

Full medical, pension, disability, and death benefit coverage under the Board of Pensions.

Paid Vacation 4 weeks. Continuing Education 2 weeks

We further promise and obligate ourselves to review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.

In the seventh year of service, the congregation will provide for a three-month Clergy Renewal Leave, continuing the salary and benefits for that period, and providing for pulpit supply in the pastor's absence.

We also promise to abide by all policies approved by Blackhawk Presbytery including Family Leave Policy, Sabbatical Leave Policy, and COM Minimum Terms of Call.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this ___ day of ____, 2020__.

Having moderated the congregational meeting which extended this call for ministerial services, I do certify that the call has been made in all respect according to the presbytery policy and the Form of Government, and that the persons who signed the foregoing call were authorized to do so by vote of the congregation.

Vote of the congregation at the meeting was _____ in favor of the candidate and _____opposed.
_____ moderator of the meeting

Certification of Call

A. Action by Presbytery of Call

1. The Presbytery of _____ has reviewed and approved this call.

Date of action_____ (Signed) _____ Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

B. Action by the Minister's/Candidate's Presbytery

1. The Presbytery of _____ finds it expedient (not expedient) to release _____ to accept this call.

Date of action_____ (Signed) _____ Stated Clerk or Authorized Signer

C. Acceptance of the Call

This is to certify that I have received and accepted the call.

Date of action_____ (Signed) _____ Minister

*Complete and sign four original copies. When all parties have signed, an original copy goes to
1)the minister, 2) the calling church, 3) the presbytery of call and 4) the minister s presbytery of membership/care.*

Useful web links:

Presbyterian Church (USA):

www.pcusa.org

PCUSA – *On Calling A Pastor* booklet:

www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/clc/doc/callingpastor.doc

PCUSA – Church Leadership Connection:

www.gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/clc/

Blackhawk Presbytery

www.blackhawkpresbytery.org

Blackhawk Presbytery - Commission Ministry Resources;

www.blackhawkpresbytery.org/CommissionsCommittees/

Blackhawk Presbytery Office

Blackhawk Presbytery

1922 N. IL Rte. 2

P.O. Box 476

Oregon, IL 61061

779.771.2088 (general inquires)

779.771.1896 (Transformational General Presbyter / Stated Clerk)

office@blackhawkpresbytery.org

www.blackhawkpresbytery.org