

# Calling to Educational Ministry

---

Revised Edition (2016)



Copyright © 2016 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Your Per Capita Dollars at Work!

The development and distribution of this resource is made possible through the Per Capita budget of the Office of the General Assembly.

Calling to Educational Ministry Revised

July 2016

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronically, mechanically, photocopying, recording, or otherwise (brief quotations used in magazine or newspaper reviews excepted), without the prior permission of the publisher.

The councils and entities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may use sections of this publication without receiving prior written permission from the publisher.



# Calling to Educational Ministry - Revised

## Brief Contents of Parts One and Two

### *Part I of this manual is to help churches to:*

- ◆ Decide if calling a Christian educator to lead their educational ministry is something that would enhance the church and God's clear call to make disciples.
- ◆ Discover the tools to discern the needs of the church in education and the skills and knowledge needed to help the church fulfill their educational ministry.
- ◆ Use a process to produce a position description for the search and call of a Christian educator.
- ◆ Use the Church Leadership Connection (CLC), the PC(USA)'s web-based computer matching and referral service.
- ◆ Select, interview, and call an educator.

### *Part II of this manual is to help Christian educators to:*

- ◆ Discern a call to educational ministry.
- ◆ Prepare for a call.
- ◆ Assess gifts for ministry.
- ◆ Use the Church Leadership Connection, the PC(USA)'s web-based computer matching and referral service, for completing a Personal Information Form (PIF).
- ◆ Assess, interview, and accept a call.

### *Audience for this resource*

In addition to the congregation and the educator, this resource can assist the following in the call process:

- ◆ session
- ◆ presbytery (check with your own presbytery to know what its requirements may be)
- ◆ presbytery's committee on ministry (COM)
- ◆ pastor
- ◆ presbytery's committee on preparation for ministry (CPM)

# Contents

## Part One: On Calling a Christian Educator

Introduction . . . . .	2
Biblical and Theological Foundations for Calling a Christian Educator*	
What Is “Call”?	
A Calling to Teach	
The Ministry of Education and Educators	
Who Are Educators?	
Do You Need an Educator? . . . . .	5
Questions to Consider	
Selecting an Educator Search Committee . . . . .	6
Composition of the Educator Search Committee	
Organizing the Work of the Educator Search Committee	
Convening the Committee	
Key Committee Roles	
Other Key Participants in the Search Process	
The Work of the Educator Search Committee . . . . .	10
Developing a Position Description	
Writing and Submitting the Ministry Information Form (MIF)	
Collecting and Screening Personal Information Forms (PIFs)	

- Communicating with Prospective Educators
- Interviewing Potential Educators
- Choosing the Nominee
- Beyond the Initial Call
- Christian Educator Performance Review

**Part Two: On Seeking a Call as a Christian Educator**

Introduction . . . . .54

- Searching for Calls Using the Church Leadership Connection (CLC)
- Stages of Your Transition
- Theological Foundations for a Call Process
- Discerning Your Call

Communicating with Educator Search Committees . .59

- Contacting References
- Interviewing

The Call Is Extended . . . . .63

- Accepting the Call
- Negotiating the Terms of Call
- The Contract/Covenant
- Support and Care
- Finishing the Process
- Making It Known That You Are Leaving

## A List of Acronyms and Web Contact Information Used in this Resource

APCE	Association of Presbyterian Church Educators <a href="http://www.apcenet.org">www.apcenet.org</a>
CCE	Certified Christian Educator <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators">www.pcusa.org/christianeducators</a>
CEA	Christian Education Associate <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators">www.pcusa.org/christianeducators</a>
CLC	Church Leadership Connection <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/clc">www.pcusa.org/clc</a>
COM	Committee on Ministry <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/com">www.pcusa.org/ministers/com</a>
CPM	Committee on Preparation for Ministry <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/prep4min">www.pcusa.org/prep4min</a>
ECC	Educator Certification Committee <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators">www.pcusa.org/christianeducators</a>
EEA	Enrolled Educational Assistant <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators">www.pcusa.org/christianeducators</a>
MIF	Ministry Information Form <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/clc">www.pcusa.org/clc</a>
PDS	Presbyterian Distribution Services <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace">www.pcusa.org/marketplace</a> ; 1-800-524-2612
PIF	Personal Information Form <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/clc">www.pcusa.org/clc</a>

*Please Note: Several of the forms included in this resource are available in printable format at:  
[www.pcusa.org/christianeducators](http://www.pcusa.org/christianeducators)*

## Part One: On Calling a Christian Educator



*Immanuel Presbyterian Church - Tacoma, WA*

## Introduction

### Biblical and Theological Foundations for Calling a Christian Educator\*

#### *What Is “Call”?*

Call is the understanding and acceptance of one’s purpose in God’s plan.

As Presbyterians, we believe that educators and congregations are brought together through a call from God. It is a relationship established not primarily for the benefit of one or both parties but for the purpose of service in the ministry of Jesus Christ. God has endowed both the educator and the people with particular gifts and experiences that, when brought together, provide the resources for effective ministry. For the educator this relationship is confirmed as the session, the educator, and possibly the presbytery all say “yes” to the call.

#### *A Calling to Teach*

Jesus made visible the importance of teaching to his mission in the world both by what he did and what he said, His commandment to “Go ... make disciples ... teaching them . . .”(Matthew 28: 19-20). This mandate both shapes and informs the role of an educator. An educator stands with students and challenges them to look several ways: toward Christ’s teachings; biblical, faith traditions, and values of the Christian community; toward personal experiences of life; and toward the world in order to discern the commitments and actions they

take based on what they are called to do by the Holy Spirit.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) emphasizes the education of the people of God as a primary task of the church. Through dynamic interaction persons and communities are challenged to form a faith perspective through which they view the world and acknowledge the active presence of God. Intentional Christian education provides a variety of opportunities for people of all ages to explore the elements of the Christian story, reflect on their experiences in the light of Scripture, and respond through action in the world.



\* A portion of this material was included in the Final Report of the Workgroup on the Role and Status of Christian Educators in the PC(USA): GA Minutes, 2000



Through baptism all Christians are called to faith in Jesus Christ and to the service of God. “The church’s calling,” according to Dr. Jack Stotts, former president of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, “is that of divine initiative and human response. God calls. The people respond....The characteristics of the one who is called are: accountability (we are accountable to one another); exemplars of an alternative vision; the capacity to identify with the people. The leader can depend on the calling community to be their advocates and to create conditions of empowerment.”<sup>1</sup>

Many people respond to God’s call to uphold the ministry of education in the church. Some leaders have been called out from the people into an intentional, professional ministry in the life of the church as Christian educators. Those who discern this call as educators are persons of strong faith and dedicated discipleship who demonstrate in their manner of life their love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. They possess the necessary gifts and abilities to be effective educators in the church as demonstrated in their knowledge of the Bible and theology, their skills in communicating their knowledge to others, and their proficiency in equipping others to teach and to encourage the discipleship of others.

### *The Ministry of Education and Educators*

The Christian educator and teaching elders share an emphasis on the proclamation of the Word, but generally, the educator’s focus is on teaching as a form of proclamation. Education helps people discover and make the proclama-

tion themselves. Like teaching elders, educators help orient Christian faith and life around the font and table in the sacraments. Educators not only prepare people of all ages for community participation in Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but also engage them in conversation about the implications of the church’s life and witness found in these celebrations. In partnership with ministers, elders, and deacons, educators work toward equipping the community of faith – children, youth, and adults – for its life and mission to serve the needs of a hurting and broken world.

The ministry of education is not limited to but centered primarily in the function of teaching and equipping congregations and other bodies as learning communities. Educators serve as church educators, directors of Christian education, directors of children’s, youth, and/or adult ministries. They serve as associate pastors whose work is focused in Christian education, recreation leaders, resource center directors, cluster educators, seminary faculty, national staff members, church camp directors, presbytery associates for nurture, day school directors as well as in a wide variety of other educational positions. The ministry of education encompasses roles that help to shape an educational vision; establish goals; evaluate; plan and arrange programs; recruit leaders; define and select curriculum; set structures; and evaluate the effectiveness of intentional educational experiences.

<sup>1</sup> “A Theology of Vocation” by Jack L. Stotts (PCUSA PDS #232-91-016, December 1990)



## *Who Are Educators?*

Christian educators are called by God and, along with the session and pastor, share responsibility for the spiritual growth of the members.

Because of the importance of Christian education in the total ministry of the church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has set standards for the preparation and performance of educators as well as a process for professional development and support that results in several levels of professional leadership for churches seeking Christian educators. Certification is granted at the end of an intensive process of preparation, study, service, and examination administered by the Educator Certification Committee on behalf of the Office of the General Assembly. The two levels of certification that have been granted are Certified Christian Educator (CCE) and Certified Associate Christian Educator (CACE).

The reality is that church educators come to their calling in a variety of ways and with

various levels of educational preparation and experience. Some educators begin their journeys with college and/or graduate school educational preparation. Others come through the recognition of their gifts and commitment by members in congregations that have benefited from their lay leadership.

In recognition of the fact that many qualified persons entered the field in “non-traditional” ways, i.e., through volunteer service and part-time employment in the field, the church has made it possible for persons who do not hold a degree in Christian education to become certified.

The complexity of paths are illustrated in the following listings:

**Certified Christian Educator** is the person who holds a Bachelor’s and/or Master’s degree or an equivalent course of study who has completed the certification process.

**Certified Associate Christian Educator** is a person who holds a Bachelor’s degree or an equivalent course of study and who has completed the certification requirements for this level prior to 2014.

**Christian Education Associate or Enrolled Educational Assistant** is a person who does not hold a Bachelor’s degree but has completed the educational requirements as required by the Educator Certification Committee.

**Degreed Christian Educator** is a person who holds a Master of Christian Education or a Bachelor’s in Christian education but is not

certified. He or she may or may not be in the process of becoming certified.

**A Teaching Elder and Certified Christian Educator** is a person who holds a Master of Divinity degree that also includes additional course work in Christian education or a dual degree, or an additional Master's degree in Christian education, and has completed the ordination and certification processes.

**A Teaching Elder and Christian Educator** is a person who has completed the ordination process and not completed the certification process.

**A Teaching Elder** is a person who holds a Master of Divinity degree, has completed the ordination process, may or may not have had additional courses in Christian education that are not part of the ordinary seminary course work, and is not certified.

## Do You Need an Educator?

Congregations in the Presbyterian or Reformed tradition emphasize educational ministries. A session often considers the addition of a staff person for educational ministries for a variety of reasons. Moving from dreaming about an educator to calling an educator requires the exploration of a number of concerns by the congregation and the session.

## Questions to Consider

Below are some questions concerning common issues about education. If the majority of the answers to these questions is “yes,” then your congregation or middle governing body may be ready to consider calling an educator.

For a congregation:

1. Does your congregation have mission goals to strengthen the educational program?
2. Do you need an additional staff person with the time and experience to develop the education program?
3. Do you have just a few people doing all the work and experiencing burn out?
4. Do you have difficulty getting volunteers to serve on session committees?
5. Do you have church members who say they would be willing to take leadership positions or to teach but don't know how?
6. Do your teachers/leaders use many different curricula?
7. Do your teachers/leaders know where to go to find additional resources for their class/project?
8. Does your congregation need an understanding of the relationship between worship, mission, stewardship, and education?

9. Do you have parents who want their children and youth to be more active in the worship, mission, and educational ministry of the congregation?
10. Does your congregation have adequate resources or the potential to develop adequate resources to call an educator?

For a mid council body:

1. Does your mid council body include a majority of small churches?
2. Do your congregations request leadership training?
3. Do you have few, if any, opportunities for youth events in your area?
4. Do congregations ask for help in finding education staff?

This is not an exhaustive list of questions. But it may stimulate you to think of other questions about the educational life of your congregation that will further clarify your need for an educator.

## Selecting an Educator Search Committee

When your session has voted to seek an educator for the ministry of the congregation, work begins with forming an Educator Search Committee. If your congregation has not decided on whether to call an educator or teaching elder for education, please consult the companion manual for [On Calling A Pastor](#). It includes the steps required for the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee and a description of its work.

The Educator Search Committee is a committee of the session given the task to:

- assess educational needs,
- prepare a position description of the educator,
- prepare a Ministry Information Form,
- conduct the search for and interviews with prospective educators,
- make the recommendation to the session for the final decision.

## *Composition of the Educator Search Committee*

Because an Educator Search Committee should bring a strong unified recommendation of a candidate to the session, the composition of the committee is very important for its work. The session might ask one of its existing committees or a special task force to recommend a roster of persons for membership on the Educator Search Committee. The following are key considerations:

- A good working number for the committee is five to eight people.
- Committee members should be representative of the whole congregation, including youth, involved in the educational ministry of the church.
- They should be persons who have the respect and confidence of the congregation.
- They should be able to work with confidential information and to present a good picture of the congregation. They should be people who can work together well as a team in this journey of faith.

Calling an educator is not simply “hiring” someone. Many people who have served on an Educator Search Committee have found that the experience of participating in this process has deepened their faith and their spiritual lives. Serving on a search committee often reveals how God’s hand works through this process of calling an educator to minister with a congregation.

The session will elect the Educator Search Committee. The session may (or may not) appoint the moderator and clerk of the search committee. All those involved should prayerfully consider the persons God is calling to this important ministry.

## *Organizing the Work of the Educator Search Committee*

### *Convening the Committee*

After election of the search committee, someone (i.e., the clerk of session, moderator of Educational Ministries Committee, or an elder appointed for this reason) should convene the committee for its first meeting. Your presbytery may have a staff person in education or be able to recommend a Certified Christian Educator who would be able to consult or assist you in this process.

At this meeting, the convener would assist the search committee in the following ways:

1. Guiding in the establishing and writing its purpose and mission;
2. Informing of the reporting procedure to the session;
3. Enabling the election of a moderator and a clerk (if these persons were not elected by the session);

4. Informing of budget considerations established by the session. A budget line should be made available to the search committee for expenses incurred in the educator call process, such as bringing candidates in for interviews, phone calls, and copying expenses.

### *Key Committee Roles*

While there are many tasks for members of the search committee, the following leadership roles are key:

- **Moderator:** The person appointed by the session or elected by the Educator Search Committee to serve as leader. The moderator calls and moderates meetings, guides the work of the committee, and ultimately is the contact person with any finalist for the position. This person (or another) could handle any financial expenditure and work with the church's treasurer. The moderator also has the responsibility of stressing the importance of confidentiality throughout this process.
- **Clerk:** The person appointed by the session or elected by the Educator Search Committee to serve as recorder of the work of the committee. The clerk would probably notify members of the meetings, take minutes, and provide other support for the work of the committee. He or she would acknowledge receipt of self-referrals and express appreciation to all candidates for their interest. Since most of the search process takes place online and through email, it will be important for this person to be computer savvy as well.
- **Education Clerk:** This person keeps the session and the congregation informed about the process of the search. Such information enables the congregation to be in earnest prayer for the search and to be supportive of the work of the committee. Only information about the process should be shared, never information about individual educators who are being considered. The education clerk also keeps the following steps in front of the congregation:
  - a. Election and organization of the Educator Search Committee;
  - b. Writing and approval of the Ministry Information Form;
  - c. Receiving and reviewing of resumes;
  - d. Interviewing of educators;
  - e. Final report to the session;
  - f. Announcement of the educator being called.

## *Other Key Participants in the Search Process*

The search for an educator involves a number of different people and groups within the church, both locally and nationally. Here are some of the responsibilities and roles of these various entities.

### **Session**

In the Presbyterian system of polity, the session, not the congregation, is the body charged with extending a call. The session has the authority to appoint an Educator Search Committee and the search committee has the responsibility of reporting to the session for approval of decisions. After appointing the committee, the session should expect regular reports from the committee on its progress. The session must also give approval to the Ministry Information Form and any financial expenditure incurred by the committee. Session will receive the final report of the committee and through its actions extend the call to the educator.

### **Pastor**

Involvement of the pastor in this process is key. Decisions need to be made early in the process about the role of the pastor in the search. In many cases, the pastor is actively involved in the initial steps, working with the Educator Search Committee to develop the Ministry Information Form. Then the pastor reenters the process when the committee has narrowed the field to two or three final candidates. The pastor must be involved in interviews with final candidates and will probably want to have some

private interviews with the finalists as well. The pastor supports the committee's recommendation to the session.

### **Presbytery**

Since every presbytery functions differently, it is important early in the call process to contact the presbytery office to see what resources and services are available for the search. Some presbyteries require that certified educators receive the same minimum financial compensation as ordained ministers; other presbyteries will provide resource persons or liaisons to work with the search committee; still other presbyteries will suggest names of potential candidates or advertise the position. Check with your presbytery office for ways in which it can assist you in the search.

The stated clerk has the responsibility of maintaining rolls listing all Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery.

### **Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM)**

The committee on ministry (COM) or another created body within presbyteries supports Christian educators in the following ways:

The presbytery shall establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators and shall provide access to the area of presbytery that oversees ministry (G-3.0307). During their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, Certified Christian Educators are entitled



to the privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its meetings (G-2.11b).

### Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a number of resources available to assist in the search for a church educator. The Church Leadership Connection (CLC) connects calling organizations with call seekers. CLC is a tool that allows search committees to conduct a nationwide search of individuals who are matched with calling organizations based upon criteria set by the calling organization and church professionals gifts and skills for ministry. In addition your presbytery office can provide a list of names of prospective educators with skills similar to those you desire to your search committee. The Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) provides an opportunity to network with prospective educators through its annual meeting and other regional avenues. Other ways that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can assist include:

- Annual Face-to-Face events held at PC(USA) national and regional conferences to help educators and congregations to connect and to have opportunities for dialogue about available position openings
- Working on behalf of the Office of the General Assembly, the Educator Certification Council (ECC) establishes certification standards, evaluates certification exams, and administers the certification process for educators in the PC(USA).

As Presbyterians, we believe that God's Spirit works best through a number of people working together. The search for an educator is a living demonstration of that belief and theology as together we seek to discern God's will for a particular congregation.

## The Work of the Educator Search Committee

### Developing a Position Description

This section of the manual is most beneficial in beginning the call process of a Christian educator. It is important to work through these pages to develop a united position that will represent your congregation. The time and effort spent will allow the search committee to clearly present and interpret the needs and expectations of the congregation to prospective educators.

The following worksheets will enable the search committee to access, develop and construct a position description in preparation for completing the Ministry Information Form (MIF). Permission to photocopy these forms is granted for local church use.

#### A. Preliminary Expectations Worksheet (page 12 )

This worksheet is designed to help Educator Search Committee members begin to



individually think about and prioritize the kind of elements they want to include in this position.

B. Working Relationships Worksheets (pages 13-14)

B-1. Committee’s Response Worksheet

B-2. Pastor(s)’ Response Worksheet

These exercises for the committee and pastor(s) encourage agreement on educational priorities, appropriate working relationships among educator, pastor, and session; and the role of the educator in the educational ministry. These exercises will alert the committee to differences so that the committee can resolve them, making the interview time much more productive and effective.

C. Educational Skills, Responsibilities and Interests Worksheet (pages 15-18 )

This worksheet addresses specific areas of leadership skills and abilities that will further develop a position description.

D. Areas of Responsibility Requiring Immediate Attention Worksheet (page 19)

This worksheet is a consensus of the committee on most urgent needs that provides direction for the educator upon his or her arrival.

E. Position Description Worksheet (pages 20-22)

This is a working position description that is created based on decisions reached from the information gathered on previous worksheets. The committee should be in agreement as to the key elements essential to the position description. When a call is extended, this position description should be finalized in conversation with the educator.

F. Suggested Compensation Guidelines (pages 23-27)

This worksheet provides guidelines for compensation. Along with a working position description, the total compensation package should be written and approved by the Educator Search Committee before it goes to the session or governing board. The session or governing board should read, understand, approve and have their official members sign these two documents before extending a call.

G. Sample Salary and Benefits Contract (page 28)

Use this sample contract to develop the contract for the position you are describing.

H. Sample Christian Educator Position Description (pages 29-30)

Along with the information the committee compiles, use this sample as a guide in developing your position description.

## A. Preliminary Expectations Worksheet

This worksheet is the first step in clarifying a local church's expectations about the position of an educator. Each member of the search committee should receive, complete, and bring his/her copy of this worksheet to the first meeting of the committee.

After completing this worksheet individually, share responses with the entire search committee. Be sure to observe where responses are the same and where there are differences of opinion. Discuss the differences and come to a consensus. Use a blank copy of this form for group compilation.

Along with the information the committee compiles, use this sample as a guide in developing your position description.

<b>Do you expect that the educator will:</b>	Usually	Infrequently	Never
1. Spend a major portion of time in development of leaders?			
2. Be knowledgeable about current trends and resources in education?			
3. Attend stated meetings of the session?			
4. Serve as a resource person to session committees other than the committee on Christian education (or its equivalent)?			
5. Be personally responsible to enlist church school teachers and leaders?			
6. Be personally responsible for planning programs for youth ministry?			
7. Spend a major portion of time working with youth?			
8. Be available for conferences on an individual basis with persons seeking the educator's help and advice?			
9. Visit in homes of the congregation on a regular basis?			
10. Participate in regular staff meetings?			
11. Keep regular specified office hours at the church?			
12. Do his or her own secretarial work?			
13. Work on presbytery, synod, and General Assembly committees and projects when asked or appointed?			
14. Cooperate with community agencies/programs/schools?			

Other particular expectations of this congregation:

15.			
16.			
17.			

## B-1. Working Relationships: Committee’s Response Worksheet

Complete the following worksheet individually and share responses with the entire committee. Be sure to observe where responses are the same and where there is difference of opinion. Discuss the differences and come to a consensus. Use a blank copy of this form to create a group compilation.

<b>Check the appropriate column(s) to show which individual or group will fulfill each function listed below</b>	Session	Pastor	Education Committee	Educator	Other
1. Interprets educator’s responsibilities to staff and congregation					
2. Orients educator to work in church					
3. Serves as major partner with educator in planning educational ministry					
4. Serves as major partner with educator in developing and interpreting budget for educational ministry					
5. Serves as main channel for new ideas and resources for educational ministry proposed by educator					
6. Helps educator plan work					
7. Serves as final decision maker with educator about her or his work					
8. Has major responsibility to coordinate the educator’s work with the work of others in the church					
9. Has major responsibility to intervene with problems or criticisms about the educator’s work					
10. Does the annual review and makes recommendations for the educator’s salary					
11. Recruits teachers and leaders for the educational program					
12. Designs, schedules, and conducts the training for teachers					

Optional: Add areas unique to your particular congregation here:

13.					
14.					

## B-2. Working Relationships – Pastor(s)’ Response Worksheet

The pastor is the key person in determining how a church staff works together. Although the actual working relationship between any pastor and educator is finally the product of the particular skills and personalities of the individuals, an educator is greatly helped by having a general relationship to a church staff.

Each pastor on the staff should complete this checklist as a preliminary and partial statement of the committee’s understanding of the church staff’s team ministry. The pastoral staff should reach consensus on this form. Once consensus is reached, a copy of this form should be given to the Educator Search Committee.

<b>As member of the church staff, does your approach to team ministry include the following:</b>	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never
1. Scheduling regular church staff meetings to develop and coordinate the total program?				
2. Familiarity with and support of the educational ministry of the educator?				
3. Scheduling meetings with the educator to coordinate and strengthen leadership efforts?				
4. Informing and seeking to be informed by the educator of ill and/or bereaved members in the congregation?				
5. Sharing with the educator the problems of families with whom he/she is particularly involved in work activities?				
6. Coordinating with the educator plans for staff vacations and continuing education?				
7. Working out differences with the educator prior to deciding on issues with groups in the congregation or with the session?				
8. Asking for ideas and/or participation of the educator in worship?				

Other aspects of team ministry unique to your staff with this congregation:

9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
Name of staff member completing form:				

## C. Educational Leadership Competencies Worksheet

In this section the committee will consider and direct the educator’s involvement in various programs and ministry areas of the congregation. As a result of the work done here, a foundation for the educational responsibilities section of the position description will be created.

Each member of the committee and pastor should complete this form separately; as a group they should chart and prioritize findings. Be sure to observe where responses are the same and where there is difference of opinion. Discuss the differences and come to a consensus. Use a blank copy of this form for group compilation.

Additional skills, choices, and definitions are available on the Ministry Information Form at [www.pcusa.org/clc](http://www.pcusa.org/clc).

### Church Leadership Connection Leadership Competencies Definitions

<b>THEOLOGICAL/SPIRITUAL INTERPRETER</b>	
<b>Compassionate</b> – having the ability to suffer with others; being motivated by others pain and is called into action as advocate; is motivated by caring for others while concurrently keeping the organizational goals clearly in focus.	<b>Hopeful</b> – maintains stability in the moment and hope for the future; provides direction, guidance, and faith when describing basic needs; and helps followers to see a way through chaos and complexity.
<b>Preaching and Worship Leadership</b> – is a consistently effective preacher and worship leader; is able to inspire from the pulpit; communicates a clear and consistent message through sermons that are carefully prepared and artfully delivered; projects the identity and character of the congregation through worship leadership presence.	<b>Spiritual Maturity</b> - shows strong personal depth and spiritual grounding; demonstrates integrity by walking the talk and by responding with faithfulness of purpose; is seen by others as trustworthy and authentic; nurtures a rich spiritual life; seeks the wisdom and guidance of appropriate mentors; is able to articulate a clear and consistent theology.
<b>Lifelong Learner</b> – individuals who use every experience in life as a potential tool for growth; one who pursues continuing education; and those who build on strengths and seek assistance to improve weaknesses.	<b>Teacher</b> – creates learning environments where students are active participants as individuals and as members of collaborative groups; designs lesson plans that teach concepts, facts, and theology; effectively uses multiple learning tools to reach a wide variety of learners; revises instructional strategies based upon ministry/ organization context.

<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	
<b>Communicator</b> - advances the abilities of individuals and the organizations through active listening supported with meaningful oral and written presentation of information.	<b>Bilingual</b> – having the ability to use two languages, especially with equal or nearly equal fluency; able to use multiple languages in communication.
<b>Public Communicator</b> - demonstrates a comfortable ease when speaking in a variety of settings (both small and large groups); is effective at addressing a variety of topics; can get messages across with the desired effect.	<b>Media Communicator</b> - has experience developing materials for a variety of written or multimedia forms of communications (print, Internet-based, social media, etc.)
<b>Technologically Savvy</b> - the ability to navigate successfully the world of technology using software, blogging, multimedia, and websites as tools for ministry.	
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP</b>	
<b>Advisor</b> – an individual others turn to for counsel and guidance; provides coaching; expertise for congregations or other organizations.	<b>Change Agent</b> – having the ability to lead the change process successfully; anchoring the change in the congregation’s/organization’s vision and mission.
<b>Contextualization</b> – the ability to assess accurately the context, environment, history, relationships, and uniqueness of a congregation or organization.	<b>Culturally Proficient</b> – having solid understanding of the norms, values, and common behaviors of various peoples, including direct experience working in multiple cultural and cross-cultural settings.
<b>Externally Aware</b> - identifies and keeps informed of the polity of the church and/or the organization; maintains current with laws, regulations, policies, procedures, trends, and developments both internally and in the larger society.	<b>Entrepreneurial</b> - leaders that are creative in using resources; identifies opportunities to develop; is willing to take risks; initiates actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.

<p><b>Risk Taker</b> – persons with the ability to take appropriate risk to accomplish needed goals; one who thinks outside the box and who is not afraid of challenging the status-quo.</p>	<p><b>Task Manager</b> - assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization; holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities; can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget; and monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Willingness to Engage Conflict</b> - steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities; reads situations quickly; good at focused listening; can identify common ground and elicit cooperation from others in crafting mutual solutions.</p>	<p><b>Decision Making</b> - makes effective decisions, balancing analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment; is aware of the long-term implications of choices made; is generally regarded as offering solutions and suggestions that are correct and effective.</p>
<p><b>Organizational Agility</b> - is astute about how congregations and/or organizations work; knows how to get things done through formal and informal channels; understands the importance of supporting good policy, practice, and procedure; appreciates the power in the culture of a congregation; is politically savvy.</p>	<p><b>Strategy and Vision</b> - sees ahead clearly, keeping focused on the larger picture; can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately; is future oriented; casts a compelling and inspired vision for a preferred future; sees possibility; crafts breakthrough strategies.</p>
<p><b>Financial Manager</b> – deliver results by maximizing organizational effectiveness and sustainability through the best use of available financial resources; allocates and manages finances transparently; implements strategies to achieve operational efficiencies and value for money; puts in place rigorous and comprehensive financial accountability systems.</p>	<p><b>Funds Developer</b> – maintains the ability to solicit donations used to fund the budget of the organization; effectively expresses the needs for funds to potential donors; responsible for adding new potential donors to the organization’s contact list; prepares statement of planned activities and enlists support for mission initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b> - has a natural orientation toward getting people to work together; shares wins and successes; fosters open dialogue; lets people finish and be responsible for their work; creates strong feelings of belonging among group members; is a good judge of talent and can accurately assess the strengths and limitations of others.</p>	

<b>INTERPERSONAL ENGAGEMENT</b>	
<p><b>Interpersonal Engagement</b> - displays a consistent ability to build solid relationships of trust and respect inside and outside of the organization; engage people, organizations, and partners in developing goals, executing plans, and delivering results; use negotiation skills and adaptability to encourage recognition of joint concerns and collaboration, and to influence the success of outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Bridge Builder</b> – possessing a certain responsibility for the unity of the congregation and or organization; works to connect people of different cultures, worldviews, and theological positions.</p>
<p><b>Motivator</b> - creates and sustains an organizational culture that permits others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well; and influences others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions to mission accomplishment.</p>	<p><b>Personal Resilience:</b> learns from adversity and failure; picks up on the need to change personal, interpersonal, and leadership behaviors; deals well with ambiguity; copes effectively with change; can decide and act without having the total picture; comfortably handles risk and uncertainty; seeks feedback; expresses personal regret when appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Initiative</b> - demonstrates ambition; is highly motivated; is action oriented and full of energy for things seen as challenging; seizes opportunity; pushes self and others to achieve desired results.</p>	<p><b>Flexibility</b> - adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, unexpected obstacles, or ambiguity; remains open to new ideas and approaches; and works concurrently on related and conflicting priorities without losing focus or attention.</p>
<p><b>Self Differentiation</b> - demonstrates strong and appropriate personal boundaries in relationships; has a healthy appreciation of self, without being egotistical; is emotionally mature; can maintain a less anxious presence in the midst of turmoil; is not overly dependent upon outside affirmation; works to build a strong personal support system.</p>	



## D. Areas of Responsibility Requiring Immediate Attention Worksheet

After the committee has listed the educational priorities of the congregation and decided what skills and interests it desires the educator to possess, the areas of responsibility requiring immediate attention should be identified. This section should be completed by the committee and pastor(s).

The committee and pastor(s) should list three priority concerns or activities to which the educator will devote major time and effort during the first twelve months of his or her ministry. Describe each concern or activity, indicate goals the educator will strive toward to address each, and suggest who in the congregation/church staff would be resources for the goal to be accomplished in the twelve-month period.

Each member of the committee and pastor should complete this form separately; then as a group, chart and prioritize findings. Be sure to observe where responses are the same and where there is difference of opinion. Discuss the differences and come to a consensus. Use a blank copy of this form for group compilation.

<b>Priority Activity or Concern</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Goal:</b>	<b>Resource People:</b>
1. The most important concern or activity is:			
2. The second most important priority or concern is:			
3. The third most important priority or concern is:			

## **E. Position Description Worksheet**

*NOTE: This form is completed based on decisions reached from the previous worksheets. After the committee has completed the exercises and discussed the results, it is ready to prepare a preliminary position description. The committee should be in agreement as to the key elements essential to the position description, but should be flexible in order to include ideas generated during the call process.*

### **1. Responsibilities**

Specific tasks, assignments and program area for which this person has responsibility:  
(Summary of information in “Educational Leadership Competencies,” page 15)

### **2. Working Relationships**

List persons by position, board, or committee with whom the educator will work closely. Describe any special relationships to community and presbytery structures.  
(Summary of information in “Working Relationships” from page 14)

### 3. Qualifications

Specify whether experience as an educator is “Required” or “Desired” for the specified position.

**R=Required      D=Desired**

#### Employment

Full-Time       Part-Time       Open to Either

#### Certification Level

Certified Christian Educator  
 Certified Associate Christian Educator  
 Enrolled Educational Assistant  
 In process of certification

#### Experience Desired

No experience       First Call       up to 2 years  
 2-5 years       5-10 years       above 10 years

#### Language Requirements

<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> French
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> Armenian	<input type="checkbox"/> Creole	<input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese
<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Swahili	<input type="checkbox"/> Burmese
<input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian	<input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian	<input type="checkbox"/> Laotian	<input type="checkbox"/> Thai
<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Taiwanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese	<input type="checkbox"/> Twi
<input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

### 4. Office Arrangements and Support

Describe the office arrangements planned for the educator:

**Office space** (enables a staff person to work effectively and efficiently. Provision for office space indicates the level of commitment for the newly created position):

**Office location** (depending on your building plant, locate your educator's office for maximum interoffice communication and availability):

**Equipment** (provide appropriate equipment, including a desk, phone, computer, printer, file space, bookcases, and storage):

**Staff support** (identify whether the educator will be expected to do his or her own office work or if there will be administrative support. A part-time secretary is a way to enable educators to focus on priority matters):

**Budget support** (the congregation's annual budget should provide funding for programming, i.e. curricula, resources, workshops, mileage, expenses, equipment, furnishings, and so forth):

**NOTE:** *It is recommended that reviews be conducted annually. It is helpful and beneficial to conduct performance reviews and benefit reviews at separate times.*

## F. Suggested Compensation Guidelines

Find out about any presbytery minimum requirements concerning salary and benefit packages for educators or clergy. Sometimes these requirements are the same and sometimes they are different. Finances are figured differently for an ordained person than for a non-ordained person.

This worksheet will assist in determining an appropriate salary range for a church educator. The committee may find it helpful to work through this form before the search using the minimum requirements for the minimum of the range and the top figure the church can pay for the maximum of the range. When the committee has decided whom it wishes to call, this may be helpful in determining the salary offered. It may also be used during the annual salary reviews to take into account any new factors, years of experience, or progress toward certification.

The salary should be determined on the basis of the duties performed and the skills of the person called to accomplish them. In keeping with the Suggested Compensation Guidelines for Establishing an Educator's Salary, it is also appropriate to study the salary in relation to other staff and clergy compensation packages. For that reason this format is based on the figure determined locally by the presbytery to be the minimum compensation for clergy. The committee's presbytery office can supply the most recent minimum salary figures. If the presbytery breaks the minimum figures into cash salary and housing allowance, add these two together to find the base figure for an educator.

**Presbytery's minimum salary (cash and housing)**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the letter of the qualification that applies to the position being considered in groupings 1 through 4 below. Multiply the presbytery minimum above by the appropriate percentage. Finally, do the addition or subtraction to or from the base figure.

**1. Academic Qualifications (only one of the following applies)**

- a. If the educator has not earned a BA/BS (undergraduate degree)

subtract 15% (.15 x minimum) Subtract \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- b. If the educator has BA but has not earned a MA in Christian Education (MACE) or MA in a related field

subtract 5% (.05 x minimum) Subtract \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- c. If the educator has MACE or MA (above) add nothing

- d. If educator has earned a doctorate in a related field

add 20% (.20 x minimum) Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Certification (only one status applies)**

- a. If educator is an Enrolled Educational Assistant

add 5% Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- b. If educator is a Certified Associate Christian Educator

add 10% Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- c. If educator is a Certified Christian Educator

add 15% Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- d. If educator is not in the certification process, add nothing

**3. Complexity (circle all that apply)**

Various characteristics of a position make it more complex and thus worth more to the church. Typical salary factoring includes such ingredients. It is recommended that the base salary be increased by 1% for each of the following that applies to the position:

- a. Has staff responsibility for more than one session committee.
- b. Supervises day care or weekday program in addition to education program.
- c. Congregation is bilingual, multiracial.
- d. Church is under Administrative Commission or other conflict situation.

Count the number above that apply and multiply by 1% of base salary

(.01 x number of factors above x minimum)      Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Experience**

Add 1% per year of full-time experience as a church educator

(.01 x number of years x minimum)      Add \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Calculate Salary**

Presbytery minimum salary	\$ _____
Add/subtract for academic qualifications	\$ _____
Add/subtract for certification level	\$ _____
Add for factors of complexity	\$ _____
Add for years of experience	\$ _____
<b>Total salary:</b>	\$ _____

**Other Compensation** (benefits and payments to which an educator is entitled) include:

- **Social Security (FICA):** Unlike clergy, educators are not self-employed and therefore must receive Social Security.
- **Health insurance:** Educators may be enrolled in the PC(USA) Board of Pensions health plan. For eligibility and guidance, contact the Board of Pensions for their brochure on lay employees. Visit [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org) for more information.
- **Retirement plan:** See note about health insurance above.
- **Vacation and sick leave:** Four weeks of vacation, including at least two weekends, is recommended; and ten days of sick leave.
- **Continuing education time and expenses:** Two weeks' paid continuing education is recommended.
- **Other professional expenses:** These expenses may be reimbursed by voucher: including such items as mileage, books, professional magazine subscriptions, and memberships in professional organizations.

**Compensation Package (based on full-time employment):**

- Cash Salary
- FICA
- Annuity
- Health Insurance



**Total Package (Compensation Package plus the following)****Annual Expenses:**

- Car Allowance
- Book Allowance
- Continuing Education Allowance

**Funds:**

- Activity Fee Allowance
- Petty Cash Account

**Vacation, Continuing Education, Service to the Larger Church**

- Four weeks vacation.
- Two weeks annual continuing education with up to four weeks which may be saved over a two-year period for participation in one class.
- One week for service to the larger church, such as serving as camp leader, conference planning team, program director for a project or other activity that is not directly related to your local congregation.

**Moving Expenses:**

- Professional movers' expense.
- Set-up fee allowance to defray the other costs of moving such as deposits or hook-up fees for water, natural gas, electricity, rent deposits, telephone, new driver's licenses, state license plates, city tags, and other "hidden" costs that need to be paid when moving into a new position.

**Annual Review:**

- An annual review of the position performance and position description, and an annual session review of the total compensation and benefits package should be built in.

## G. Sample Salary and Benefits Contract

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

### Compensation Package:

Cash Salary	\$ _____
FICA (Social Security)	\$ _____
Annuity (Retirement)	\$ _____
Health Insurance	\$ _____

### Total Package:

Car Allowance	\$ _____
Book Allowance	\$ _____
Continuing Education Allowance	\$ _____
Activity Fee Allowance	\$ _____
Petty Cash Account	\$ _____

### Additional Package Items:

- Four weeks vacation.
- Two weeks annual continuing education with up to four weeks that may be saved over a two-year period.
- One week for other service to the larger church.
- Professional movers' expenses.
- Set-up fees.
- Annual reviews – Performance Review, Salary and Benefits Review.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Educator Search Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

Educator Search Committee Moderator \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Governing Board or Session on \_\_\_\_\_

Moderator \_\_\_\_\_

Christian educator \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Approval \_\_\_\_\_

## H. Sample Christian Educator Position Description

**Title: Christian Educator**

### **Full-time position**

#### **Purpose:**

To plan, create, develop, supervise, lead, and direct the ministry of education of the church in accordance with the policies and directions of the session, in relationship with the head of staff, staff session, Christian education committee, teachers, leaders, and congregation

#### **Accountability:**

Accountable to the session, under the supervision of the pastor as head of staff.

#### **Responsibilities:**

##### *Curriculum Building:*

- Develop a program of educational experiences that serves as a basis for the theological and biblical development of the members of the church/ organization.
- Adapt/plan/write curriculum for various age groups and various church committees, ie. stewardship, mission, etc.
- Develop and implement curricula for preschool through high school levels.

##### *Teaching:*

- Provide instruction and/or educational experiences that increase theological and biblical awareness, skill, and motivation to continue learning.

##### *Equip Volunteers:*

- Deliver specialized training that suits the skills and knowledge needs, constraints, and sensitivities of nonpaid (volunteer) teachers and leaders in the church/ organization.
- Serve as advisor to youth fellowship committee, adult education program, and to the church school superintendent.

*Adult Ministry:*

- Provide specialized knowledge of resources and programming that meets the needs of adults.

*Children's Ministry:*

- Provide specialized knowledge of resources and programming that meets the needs of children and their families.

*Youth Ministry:*

- Provide specialized knowledge of resources and programming that meets the needs of youth and their families.

*Other*

- Participate in presbytery educational ministry programs.
- Serve as ex-officio member of session and designated session committees.

**Relationships:**

Accountable to session, supervised by pastor as head of staff, and working in conjunction with the education committee in direction of responsibilities. Relate to presbytery education and resource center staff (as available by the presbytery).

**Evaluation:**

A performance review will be conducted annually. It may include:

- The educator – person being evaluated;
- The Christian education committee – the persons who know best the work of the educator;
- Representative(s) of the personnel committee;
- Representative of any committee staffed by the educator;
- And the head of staff/pastor.

The session personnel committee will conduct compensation and benefit reviews at separate times.

**NOTE:** *This sample position description is a guide. The description should be adapted to the needs and gifts of the congregation and the person called into the ministry of education.*

## Writing and Submitting the Ministry Information Form (MIF)

Now that you have completed your position description, you are ready to begin to write your Ministry Information Form (MIF).

### MIF Tips for Christian Educator Positions

Churches seeking a Christian educator should complete a Ministry Information Form (MIF) following “Instructions for entering a MIF” while integrating the instructions/tips below.

#### *Important Tips*

**Church School Attendance and Curriculum:** These are important items to complete if you are seeking a Christian Educator. Church School Attendance includes all ages. Curriculum entry is limited to 150 characters. If you have additional or more detailed information you wish to share along these lines, please include in the narrative sections.

**Position to Be Filled:** Use “Christian educator (non-ordained)” as the position type.

**Employment Status:** Select whether the position is “full-time” or “part-time.” If you are willing to consider candidates who are interested in part-time employment as well as those who are interested in full-time employment, mark “Open to Both.”

**Specify Title:** Enter the specific title for the position, if there is one. For example: Director of Children’s Ministry, Director of Adult Education. Leave blank if you do not have a more specific title than Christian educator.

**Experience Desired:** Select the lowest level of experience your committee is willing to consider by clicking on the appropriate item. Your MIF will be matched with PIFs with that level of experience and more.

**Brief Church Mission Statement:** This section must be completed for Christian Educator MIFs.

**Other Narrative Questions:** Use these narrative questions to describe your church in greater detail, focusing in on areas of interest to Christian educator candidates. Answers to these questions provide you with an opportunity to raise interest in your position.

**References:** List three persons who know your congregation well, especially in relation to the education ministry of the congregation. Names may include another Christian educator, a presbytery staff person, or the education committee chair that is familiar with the education ministry of your congregation.

**Leadership Competencies:** You may select up to a total of ten (10) leadership competencies you would like to see in your Christian educator candidates. See Leadership Competencies at <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/leadership-competencies/>.

**Compensation and Housing:** Enter both the minimum and maximum salary for this position. Be sure to check with your presbytery before completing to see if there is any presbytery minimum salary expectation for Certified Christian Educators. Remember that only the minimum salary will be displayed on the “Opportunity Search.”

**Equal Employment Opportunity:** All MIFs, including those for Christian educators, must answer both questions in the affirmative for the MIF to be posted with CLC. Although the statement refers to instructions from the COM, the statements are intended to indicate a willingness to comply with PC(USA) EEO policies.

**Search Committee Chairperson Details:** Enter the complete name, address, phone numbers, fax, and email of the chairperson of the Christian Educator Search committee. If the chairperson does not have an email, enter the email address of the person who will be taking care of email and internet communications for the committee.



## Collecting and Screening Personal Information Forms (PIFs)

By using the Opportunities Search on CLC, prospective educators will be able to read your MIF, link to your web page if you have one, and may send you their PIF directly. These are called “self-referrals.” Some search committees choose to advertise in Presbyterian publications such as *Presbyterians Today* to generate other self-referrals. Remember to keep your COM liaison informed (if applicable) of PIFs you receive as self-referrals since the Committee on Ministry may not have received copies.

The CLC-matching database has PIFs that contain answers to narrative questions, details about skills, preferences, work experience, and financial considerations, as well as a list of references. Use this information in your initial screening.

The CLC matching system selects names of persons who appear to be appropriate on the basis of information submitted in your MIF. The first list of PIFs will automatically be sent to you. Additional lists of PIFs will be sent only on your specific request.

1. Receive all PIFs and provide copies for all Educator Search Committee members.
2. Read all information and have each member of the committee rank them from (1), those most likely to be interviewed, to (3), those whom committee members feel should not be considered further. Use these questions as you compare the PIF with your MIF:

Does this person have the years of experience you are seeking?

Does he or she exhibit skills that you need?

Has he or she lived and worked in a setting like yours?

Do the educational activities ratings match yours closely?

What understanding of the Presbyterian and Reformed faith is exhibited?

Does the educator convey a sense of enthusiasm and commitment to the ministry of education?

What theological training is indicated and where was it obtained PC(USA) institution or other?

What does the past work record indicate with regard to longevity?

Is there evidence of creativity?

Are there indications of good self-esteem and a sense of humor?

Keep in mind that PIFs referred through computer matching are selected based on the compatibility of the information your committee has submitted in the MIF and the statement of preferences, experience, skills, and financial needs of each person as submitted in their PIF.

3. After all committee members have had a chance to react to each PIF, as a committee carefully review and evaluate each PIF, starting with those ranked (1) and continuing with those ranked (2). Set aside those rated (3).



Self-referrals may be sent by candidates in response to information from Opportunities Search.

- **If your committee receives a second copy of a PIF**, take a close look at this person because these come to you from two different processes - educator self-referral and computer matching. This means that from both the points of view of computer matching and the educator, the skills and experience of the educator match the requirements of your church.
- **All PIFs coming through the Church Leadership Connection will have the sexual misconduct sign-off section.** When a self-referred PIF does not contain this sign-off section, it may be because the educator printed the PIF without the sexual misconduct statement. Don't rule out a PIF without getting further clarification from the educator.
- **What do you do when an educator is not able to sign the sexual misconduct statement in the affirmative?** If this person interests your committee and meets your other criteria, turn this matter over to your executive presbyter or COM chair and trust their advice.

## *Communicating with Prospective Educators*

The Ministry Information Form (MIF) and Personal Information Form (PIF) are designed to introduce educators and search committees and to help them begin to get acquainted. Most educators whom you are considering will be able to print a copy of your MIF from the internet. Begin by setting a date when the committee will telephone the educator or will expect communication from him or her. In order for a search committee to evaluate a person fully, it is necessary to meet the person face-to-face and engage in conversation. At some point during the process a formal interview is scheduled. This will require travel on the part of the educator that should be paid for by the budget of the committee.





### First Contact with Prospective Educators

Those persons referred by computer matching may be open to considering your position. Although CLC removes persons from the database as soon as notification comes that a call is pending, some referrals will have accepted a call. It is important to act quickly on receipt of PIFs to contact persons to discover whether they are available and interested and to communicate your interest in them. This first contact may be made by the moderator or an individual member of the search committee.

#### Things you need to know and to consider:

- Persons whose PIF you request from CLC may or may not be aware you have their PIF.
- Those persons who self refer will expect some response.
- Identify yourself and indicate that the contact is initiated based on the committee's reading of the PIF at an early stage in the process.
- Be ready to describe briefly the church and the position opening; have a copy of the MIF for reference.
- Ask if the person is interested in receiving further information about the position.
- Make notes about the phone call.
- If the person is interested, make arrangements regarding the next steps.

### Exploratory or Telephone Interview

Before you interview any educator, decide what information you want and need in order to evaluate this person as your future leader. What questions will be asked and who will ask them? What information will the educator want to know about your church and community?

Set up a telephone interview. Use a speaker-phone, a phone with several extensions, or a conference phone call so that several people can be involved in the conversation. Some search committees may even use web conferencing technology for interviewing such as Skype. Make notes on what has been decided and record any arrangements made.

Whatever method you use be sure to:

- Allow plenty of time.
- Allow the educator to ask questions that the MIF may have raised.
- Ask the educator to clarify or expand on information in the PIF.
- Keep careful notes.
- Take time to debrief and evaluate as a committee following the phone call.

## Updating Educators

Promptly let all prospective educators with whom you have had a direct contact know their status in your process. Send a thoughtful letter to those educators the committee has decided not to consider further. Set aside those whom you might consider later. Let them know promptly that they are still being considered.

## Contacting References

After the committee has determined that the educator is interested in the position, contact the references listed in the PIF. You may also wish to contact secondary references.

- Prepare your questions in advance.
- Ask the reference if this time is convenient. If not, offer to call at a better time.
- Be sure of the identity and role of the reference and note it. Make notes about the date, time, and content of your conversation.

## Questions to ask of references

It is usually helpful to tell the reference a bit about the congregation, community, and position for which the educator is being considered, then ask the reference to give an assessment of how the prospective educator might serve in your setting.

It is appropriate and important to ask questions related to the educator's skills and experience that relate to the position being filled. Such questions might be "Tell me about John Doe's educational leadership skills" or "How does Jane deal with conflict?"

Many Presbyterians who serve on Educator Search Committees are familiar with secular employment practices where it is illegal to ask certain questions about a prospective employee. Because of the separation of church and state, the rules are different for search committees considering church professionals. Neither civil nor church law prohibits particular questions. However, questions should focus on the ability of the person to be effective in ministry and not be unnecessarily intrusive.

A good final question is "Is there anything else we should know?"



## Secondary references

Secondary references are persons who are not listed by the educator but are suggested by others or contacted because they are thought to have knowledge of the educator. Secondary references should only be contacted when the educator has given permission. Under no circumstances should a search committee contact members of an educator's present congregation without her or his permission to do so.

Executive presbyters, stated clerks, and COM moderators do not fall into this category. They are automatically used as references because of their roles and no authorization is needed from the educator to consult with them.

## Background check

Background checks are assessments of an educator's character and fitness for employment. They may include checks of employment, credit, criminal, and motor vehicle records. If this position will involve work with children and youth, your state may require you or your presbytery to do a background check on the person you call. These are important steps even if not mandated by state law and should be strongly considered. Confirm with your presbytery what background check requirements are necessary to meet the employment standards in your presbytery.

## Using reference material

Make notes of your conversation for use when comparing those being considered. Be sure you get reliable information and ask references to respond only on the basis of firsthand knowledge. Do not share rumors or impressions that cannot be substantiated, and be sure you have specific information to back up negative references. When negative references are received, they should be carefully checked.

# Interviewing Potential Educators

## Preparing for Interviews

Before you meet with any educator:

- Decide what information you want and need in order to evaluate this person as your future leader. What questions will be asked and who will ask them? What information will the educator want to know about your church and community? Gather this information before the interview.
- Review other materials the candidate may send you, such as lesson plans, designs for creative educational events, materials for training volunteers, and so forth.

- Come to consensus as a committee so that you convey clarity and harmony. Be clear about the job you are asking your new educator to do and the type of person you are seeking. Interviews are not the time for the committee to sort out their differences in the presence of an unsuspecting educator! Be clear about your process for decision making. What are the steps you will go through? What is your approximate timeline?
- Arrange for a tour that gives a good picture of your church and community when an educator visits your community, but be careful to protect confidentiality. Do not plan to include non-search committee members in the visit or introduce the educator around town. This is a small world, and word may get back to the educator's current congregation that he or she is seeking a new call.

### Interview Questions You Might Ask

The following are questions you might ask during an interview of any potential educator:

- Tell us about your faith journey.
- What are the things you feel best about in your present ministry?
- What have been the challenges there?
- What makes you think you may be called to leave there now?
- What interests you about this position?
- What would bring to our ministry?
- What are your greatest strengths in ministry? ... your greatest weaknesses?
- One of our goals is to strengthen our \_\_\_\_\_. How would you do that?
- Describe a typical week in your ministry.
- Share your perspective on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- One of the issues our session has debated in the past few years is \_\_\_\_\_. Tell us how you might address that topic.
- If we selected you as our educator, when could you start and what would be your start up plan?

- How do you balance your personal and family life with your ministry?
- What will you need from the members of this church in order to be effective as our educator?
- What questions or concerns do you have?

Also develop questions related to the specific person being interviewed. These will come out of information you read in the PIF and information you hear from references.

### **Conducting the Interview**

Decide which committee member should begin the interview. Your committee may want to start by giving a statement regarding the nature of your church and the position to be filled, followed by questions the committee has framed in advance. Each member should take notes and be prepared to ask questions that arise from the initial conversation.

- Allow adequate opportunity for the candidate to ask questions. These questions may sometimes be difficult and penetrating, but they indicate interest on the part of the educator. Present the problems and weaknesses as well as the strengths and opportunities of your situation directly and openly.

- Take notes, not only of the information shared but also of impressions gained in the course of the interview.
- Thank the educator for meeting with you. Let him or her know that the interview is not a commitment on the part of the search committee or educator, and indicate a specific date by which you will contact him or her.
- Ask the educator to let you know within a given period of time if he or she wishes to be considered further, allowing adequate time for him or her to check information and impressions gained in the interview.

### **After the Interview**

A full committee review should be held as soon after the interview as possible.

- Remember that your committee has given each educator a week or two to consider your position. If at this point the committee decides it should not consider a particular person any further, a letter clearly stating the reasons must be sent.

- After the interviews, rank the individuals in the order of your preference, just as you did the PIFs. It is wise not to limit your selection to one person too soon, because he or she may turn you down.
- Remember that the educator also has needs and concerns and should be kept informed. Assign someone to follow up on each interview within the time frame you have discussed, and be certain that you contact the educator by the specific date you set, even if it is only to tell him or her that the committee has not yet reached a decision.
- If your committee cannot come to a consensus, it may be necessary to request more PIFs and continue the process. If an educator should decline your committee's invitation, the experience is not wasted; it will help the committee to move forward more quickly the next time.

### If You Get Stalled

Occasionally committees become discouraged when things do not move along as smoothly as the members had hoped or when the person they choose decides not to accept their call. If this should happen, consider prayerfully the cause of your discouragement and deal with it realistically. The following suggestions might be helpful as you analyze and develop a strategy to deal with the problem.

### Reconsider the qualifications required

- Are they realistic?
- What is implied by the amount of experience and specific skills the search committee is seeking?
- Which are truly necessary and which would be desirable to have?
- Is the committee operating with hidden expectations about qualifications not reflected here? If so, bring these out in the open and examine them.
- If necessary, rewrite parts of the MIF.

### Reconsider minimum and maximum salary

- Is the salary range realistic enough to encourage applications?
- Has your committee considered the salary figure at which it will begin negotiations? It is not fair to your church or to educators to set the minimum salary lower than this figure.
- Is the salary commensurate with the experience and skills being sought?
- Are there other benefits that would make the opening more attractive?

### Reconsider Personal Information Forms

- In light of your experience, some of the PIFs discarded earlier may now be worthy of new consideration.
- Reconsider other candidates with whom you have talked, and negotiate any minor problems.

### Reconsider Your Ministry Information Form

- Does the MIF accurately portray your church? Does it show all the potential of your church?
- Does it clearly communicate the congregation's vision and mission?
- Are there supplemental materials that you can add to your MIF that includes photos, bulletins, and other materials to be sent to those whom the committee is considering.



## Choosing the Nominee

The Educator Search Committee should strive to make its decision both unanimous and enthusiastic. Experience has shown that where there is a serious division in a committee regarding an educator, the same division may appear in the congregation. Bear in mind that each member's integrity and individuality is to be respected and that any reservations he or she has about the educator selected should be brought to the committee's attention and discussed with candor. If the committee is not unanimous and enthusiastic regarding the selection, your COM representative, if applicable, should be consulted as to the advisability of presenting the educator to the session.

### Extending the Call

When the committee has reached a final decision and has conferred with its COM representative about its choice, the chairperson or other committee member should telephone the selected educator to convey that the committee is recommending that the session extend a call. Although you will be eager to get an affirmative response from your chosen candidate, she or he may want some time to consider a response. If that is the case, ask, "How soon can you let us know?" or suggest a date in which the committee would like to receive an answer from the candidate.



When the educator accepts the invitation to call with your congregation and the session has approved the terms of call, , notify your COM and follow your presbytery's process for next steps in the call process. (if applicable) and the Church Leadership Connection (888 728-7228, #8550).

### Negotiating the Final Position and Terms of Call

A subcommittee might be named to work out the final position description and terms of call with the educator. In preparation for that meeting, the entire search committee will want to look again at the position information and the financial information of the MIF to set the parameters for the discussion. The committee is not authorized to negotiate beyond the total financial amount allocated by the session. If there is a need to do so, session approval must be obtained. Educators have different needs for the allocation of compensation. Unlike ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament, educators are not allowed to write off their housing expenses as an income deduction on their federal taxes. If you have questions about compensation, your COM will be able to advise you and your new educator.

### Contract/Covenant

An annual covenant between the educator and the session is necessary. Such a covenant states the expectations of the session and congregation as well as those of the educator. Congregation and session support should include spiritual support through prayer and personal care for the educator; annual compensation support, and physical support through facilities and resources. In turn, the educator covenants concerning his or her ministry to the congregation, detailing responsibilities and tasks for the next year. New responsibilities, new projects, and the regular workload should be outlined in the covenant. An annual performance review and assessment of both the educator and the session/congregation provides for a continuing dynamic relationship and a vital working environment.

### Beyond the Initial Call

The members of the Educator Search Committee have moved through a careful process of discerning and extending a call to a new staff member. Now is the time to put in place some elements that will help your new educator to feel supported, cared for and a part of your church's ministry team.



## Support and Care

1. **A Service of Commissioning or Installation** is an important celebration of receiving a call. It brings closure to the search and call process, and announces to the congregation that the new ministry has begun. Such a service can take place during the regular Sunday service of worship, or can be a special service of worship. For teaching elders called to educational ministry follow your presbytery's guidelines for installation/ordination. It is always appropriate to include any of the following in the service: covenantal questions, charge to the educator, charge to the congregation, and prayer of commissioning. Hymns and Scripture readings appropriate to the occasion are also in order. See the PC(USA) *Book of Occasional Services for a Service of Commissioning and Installation*.
  2. **Continuing education** recognizes that we are on a lifelong journey of learning. The standard for a full-time position is two weeks a year for educational experiences, as well as a budget that realistically allows the educator to attend events. It is good to balance experiences that will benefit the church's present ministry with those experiences that will help the educator grow in his or her personal faith journey. Additional website contact information is available in the Table of Contents of this book.
- **APCE** – The Association of Presbyterian Church Educators is a professional organization for anyone involved in educational ministry. This organization provides a subscription to *The Advocate*, a periodical of information and articles related to education, and an annual conference. The annual event provides an opportunity for inspiration, reflection, fellowship, learning, and sharing. Regional APCE gatherings are also available in some parts of the country.
  - **PC(USA) Conference Centers** – Many of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) camp and conference centers provide retreats, seminars, and conferences for educators. More information on many of these centers is available from the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association at [www.pccca.net](http://www.pccca.net).
  - **Seminaries** – Denominational seminaries provide continuing education events of interest to educators. Visit [www.pcusa.org/seminaries](http://www.pcusa.org/seminaries) for information on each seminary related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
  - **Local Resources** – Many regions have local conference centers, colleges and universities, ecumenical institutions, and presbytery or synod resource centers.

- **Educator Groups** – Many presbyteries and regions have groups that give educators a chance to share ideas, resources, and fellowship with colleagues in a supportive atmosphere.
  - **Educator Certification Process** – This process affords the Christian educator a way to organize and gain the most from continuing education time and dollars, and assures high standards for bringing competence to the ministry of Christian education.
3. **Educator Search Committee Support Group** – It is helpful to have members of the search committee function informally as a support group for the educator during his or her first year. The committee may meet monthly with the educator during the first six months to keep in touch and to assist in the adjustment period. During the next six months, the group could meet every other month.
  4. **Performance Review and Salary/Benefit Review** – This is a time for reflection and planning on the part of the educator, the session, the personnel committee, and anyone else involved in the educational ministry in the congregation. Persons to be involved in the performance review process include the educator, the Christian education committee, representative(s) of the personnel committee or session, and the supervising pastor. As indicated on the position description form, the first periodic review should take place after an educator has been a part of the staff for twelve to eighteen months. It would be helpful for

the search committee to provide to the personnel committee forms, sample contracts, and suggestions found in the final pages of this section.

### *Christian Educator Performance Review*

The purpose of a performance review is to nurture and care for the educator through a two-way process of analyzing the educator's ministry in connection with the support provided for that ministry by the session and congregation.

A written review shall be prepared by the educator, representative(s) of the personnel committee, the Christian education committee, any other committee staffed by the educator, the session, and the head of staff /pastor. The current position description and goals should be attached to each review form for reference.

After completing the written evaluations, a meeting of the persons named above shall take place to discuss the evaluations and concur on the assessment, highlighting the accomplishments and noting areas for improvement. A narrative report of the review shall be prepared by the chair of the Christian education committee, signed by the educator with an acknowledgement that it has been read, and submitted to the personnel committee.

The representative of the personnel committee or session shall chair the meeting. After the pastor has had opportunity to give input, the pastor will be excused.

The final signed report of the evaluation shall be transmitted to the session.



## Performance Review Worksheet

Name of Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Educator's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Call \_\_\_\_\_ Period under Review \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Performance Review \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Each section should be completed by the educator and by members of the review committee.

### Part I: Position Description

Review different aspects of the educator's position and professional performance. In each category, give an overall rating and then, under "Comments," offer specific suggestions. The educator should provide descriptions and examples of abilities and work as they relate to the criteria listed. Be as specific and concrete as possible.

### Part II: Current Goals

Review the educator's performance in relation to the particular goals that he/she set for the previous year. Be specific and give examples. The educator should address the following questions: What did you do to accomplish each goal? What worked well? What didn't work as well and what factors contributed?

### Part III: Session and Congregational Support

Review the care and support being given to the educator and consider areas that need attention and updating.

**Part IV: General Assessment**

Review overall rating of areas covered in the performance and performance trends.

**Part V: Future Goals**

This part should be completed by the educator and a copy given to each member of the performance review committee at the time of review. The educator should indicate his or her goals for the coming year related to the position and professional performance areas.

Ratings:

1. Superior    Performance often exceeds the normal level of expectation for position
2. Normal     Performance is fully adequate and acceptable; meets the standard requirement for the position.
3. Marginal    Performance is consistently below a satisfactory level. Significant improvement should be demonstrated by the next review.

**Part I: Position Description****A. Present Position Description Elements:** (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Include various elements listed in Position Description.

Is familiar with elements of this particular area of ministry

Is able, to understand and conceptualize her or his role in this position

Has a clear and positive professional identity in the position

Comments:

**B. Professional Performance**

## 1. Leadership: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Provides vision and strategy for the performance of the position's elements

Regularly evaluates the performance of subordinates and facilitates their growth

Sets reasonable goals and consolidates gains

Comments:

2. Communication: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Communicates in a supportive and assertive manner

Uses a variety of communication means (written, email, phone, committees)

Listens to others with empathy and understanding

Comments:

3. Judgment: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Is able to analyze a situation objectively

Seeks consultation from appropriate sources

Makes decisions in a timely manner

Comments:

4. Productivity: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Plans the workload so as to facilitate accomplishment

Works at a steady and productive rate

Evaluates performance and takes appropriate corrective action

Gets the job done on time; within budget

Comments:

5. Teamwork: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Works collaboratively with others to accomplish objectives

Shares information with others to facilitate team cohesiveness and productivity

Puts the success of the “team” above own interests and recognition

Comments:

**Part II: Current Goals**

The educator will indicate in each of the following areas her or his goals that were set for the year under the previous review or set in her or his job description.

**A. Present Position Description Goals**

List goals and rate each. (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Comments:

**B. Professional Goals:**

1. Leadership: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Goal:

Comments:

2. Communication: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Goal:

Comments:

3. Professional Growth: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Goal:

Comments:

4. Productivity: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Goal:

Comments:

5. Teamwork: (circle rating number) 1 2 3

Goal:

Comments:

### **Part III: Session and Congregational Support**

Respect for educator's personal and family time

[Circle rating number] 1 2 3

Support for educational ministry in the budget

[Circle rating number] 1 2 3

Access to and support of staff members

[Circle rating number] 1 2 3

Encouragement and support for continuing  
education and professional development

[Circle rating number] 1 2 3

Comments:

### **Part IV: General Assessment**

[circle rating number] 1 2 3

Overall Rating of Performance:

1. Superior

2. Competent

3. Marginal

Performance Trend:

1. Consistent

2. Improving

3. Declining

4. First Review

If you chose #3, describe specific corrections, assistance, or suggested continuing education to help the educator and congregation to reverse this trend.

Comments:



## Part V: Future Goals

In each of the following areas, the educator will indicate her or his goals to be pursued during the next year or before the next review.

Present Position Goals:

Professional Goals:

Leadership:

Communication:

Professional Growth:

Productivity:

Teamwork:

This Performance Review was discussed in an individual conference on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Signatures of members of the Performance Review Committee:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Pastor/Head of Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

The signature of the educator indicates that he or she has read and discussed this evaluation. The employee may, within ten (10) working days from receipt of evaluation, make any written signed comments that will be attached to this document and filed in the educator's personnel file.

Educator: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part Two: On Seeking a Call as a Christian Educator



*First Presbyterian Church - Shelbyville, KY*

## Introduction

Church educators are called to both ordained and non-ordained positions. For those applying for teaching elder educator positions, you should follow the process for completing a regular PIF noting your ecclesial status as either a teaching elder or a candidate for ministry. For those who are applying for calls as certified or non-certified educators, use the PIF Tips for Christian educators below.

## Searching for Calls Using the Church Leadership Connection (CLC)

CLC is the PC(USA)'s web-based computer matching and referral system that is used by pastors, educators, church professionals, congregations, presbyteries, synods, and other theological institutions in the search process.

Personal Information Forms (PIFs) may be submitted by:

- PC(USA) teaching elders;
- PC(USA) candidates for ordination, and
- Educators and other church professionals who are members of a PC(USA) congregation.

To search for calls using CLC, go to <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/clc/call-seekers/>, the menu provides options for downloading forms, instructions, and entering an online form.

### PIF Tips for Christian Educators

Christian educators (non-ordained) should complete a Personal Information Form (PIF) following these instructions below:

**Ecclesiastical Status.** Select “Christian Educator.”

**Church Membership.** Indicate the name of the PC(USA) congregation where you are a member, including city, state, and church PIN. If you do not know the church's PIN number, use the “look up” feature in PIF Part I to obtain the information needed. You must be a member of a PC(USA) congregation to use the Church Leadership Connection (CLC).

**Position Type.** Select “Christian Educator (non-ordained).” If you are looking for your first professional position as a Christian educator, select “No Experience.”

**Training/Certification.** Indicate if you are a Certified Christian Educator.

**Narrative Section.** In writing your narrative questions, emphasize those characteristics and skills especially pertinent to serving as a Christian educator.

**Opportunity Search.** To search the CLC system for available positions: Select Opportunity Search from the menu and choose the position title in which you have interest. To narrow your search, you can sort MIFs according to a variety of parameters including: position type(s), salary, and region. To view the MIFs “click” the MIF ID number in the left-hand column. You can also copy and save the MIF to your computer, or print a hard copy.

### How to Self-Referral

1. On the menu list move to “PIF,” drop-down and click “PIF Self-Referral.”
2. Select the appropriate version of your PIF you wish to refer and click “Submit.”
3. Enter the Ministry Information Form ID# (i.e. 12345.ab) and “Submit Self-Referral.”

## Stages of Your Transition

As you work through the call process, use these stages as a checklist for your progress.

- **Assess your gifts for leadership.**
- **Consult with mentors.** Consult confidentially with presbytery staff, Committee on Ministry (COM) members, and experienced educators in the presbytery.
- **Complete the Personal Information Form (PIF).** Request comments on the first draft from the mentors listed above.
- **Submit the PIF to the Church Leadership Connection (CLC).** Research positions available in the CLC Opportunity List, Presbyterian publications, and presbytery newsletters and/or websites.
- **Self-refer PIFs** to positions that interest you.
- **Respond to phone calls** for interviewing.
- **Prepare for interviewing.**
- **Check references** on the head of staff and congregation with presbytery staff or COM before accepting a call.
- **Accept the call** and negotiate final position description and the terms of call.
- **Notify CLC** that a call has been accepted.
- **Notify any other search committees** with whom you have been in conversation.
- **Discern a call.** Pray and use journaling to describe what you feel God is calling you to be and to do in the near future.
- **Prepare to consider a new call.** Read and study the Bible, pray and reflect.

**Notify your session or governing body** and congregation that you are terminating your call.

**Plan the installation/commissioning** with the group issuing the call. Include, if possible, an educator in the presbytery as part of the installation/commissioning service.

## Theological Foundations for a Call Process

The call process is not something experienced only by an individual. It is a journey within the community of faith in which many persons help to shape the call. As Presbyterians, we believe that God uses committees, papers, procedures, and our polity to call persons to positions of leadership. You will fill out forms, use technology in an internet-based matching system, and perhaps prospective churches will meet you via web or phone call and then in person.

All of these are ways to help you be introduced to church situations that match your gifts and interests. That is just the starting point for a call process. No paper or electronic method can replace the discernment process in which an educator considers a wide variety of ministry opportunities and prays for God's guidance. As you begin the call process, you come with all of your gifts, experiences, hopes, dreams, skills, and weaknesses. If you allow yourself to be open to the leading of God's Spirit, you may be in for some wonderful surprises. Many who

who have gone before you in a call process have discovered that God called them to places and situations very different from that which they envisioned when they began the search. Their lives have been transformed and they have delighted in the fulfillment of God's purpose (which always seems much clearer from the end of the process than it does along the way). Welcome to the journey!



## *Discerning Your Call*

God calls people to and from all kinds of positions and places. Abram was called away from his kindred to a new place and a new way of being in relation to God (Genesis 12:1-9). Moses was in the middle of everyday life as a shepherd when God called him to do a great and mighty task (Exodus 3:1-12). Ruth heard a call to follow her mother-in-law to a new land, a new people, and a new tradition (Ruth 1:6-14). The disciples heard the call of Jesus and literally dropped everything to follow him (Matthew 4:18-22).

As you begin to seek a call, remember that this is more a process of prayerful discernment than a job search. If this is your first call to the ministry of education, reflect on whether you are open to new ways of being in relation to God and God's people that you may not have considered. If you are already in ministry, it is important to ask yourself if God is truly calling you from your present ministry to another ministry. Have you accomplished the things God has called you to do where you are now? Is God calling you to new possibilities?

In the present circumstances where there are more churches seeking educators than educators available for new calls, it is likely that you will receive many contacts from congregations. It is important to be truly open to the working of the Holy Spirit in this process. You may prefer one type of church situation, only to be surprised by God and find a very satisfying ministry in another. Many leaders report such powerful surprises, saying, "I never would have imagined myself serving here, but I felt deeply called and have never regretted accepting." On the other hand, it is important to do some careful and prayerful sorting of opportunities so that you can give serious consideration to a few situations rather than being in conversation with many churches hoping to find "the best deal." That is not fair to the churches you reject along the way. Consider the costs in time, energy, and dollars when a search committee pays for transportation for an interview.

If you feel God is calling you, it is time to consider how to prepare yourself to live out that call. It is important to spend time in prayer and Bible study as you discern God's call to you. The following passages may be helpful in your process of discernment:

Isaiah 6: 1-13 Isaiah's vision

Acts 9:1-22 Paul's conversion and call

Luke 1:26 -38 The angel's visit to Mary



### **Link with Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)**

For guidance and counsel you may want to contact the presbytery of the church of which you are a member. Many CPM's are taking individuals under their care for the inquiry phase of preparation and extending to them an opportunity for discernment. This is important whether the person is seeking clarification of a call to Word and Sacrament or another form of service to the church.

### **Assessing Your Gifts**

In preparing to consider a call it is important to evaluate your role in your current position. You have probably been through an annual review process, and this should help you to know your areas of strength and weakness. It is always helpful to talk confidentially with a friend in your current community, colleagues in ministry, or presbytery staff so that you may have an idea of how well your interests and skills have matched your present situation. These colleagues and friends can ask probing questions that help in your discernment process. It is also appropriate at this time to think about where your growing edges are, where you are ready and willing to try new adventures. Scripture affirms this kind of reflection: "Rekindle the gift of God that is within you" [2 Timothy 1:6].

Career Development Counseling is a resource you can use to assess your gifts while you are in the call process or at any other time you may think it helpful. Visit [www.ministrydevelopment.org](http://www.ministrydevelopment.org) for information on current accredited centers that provide vocational and pastoral counseling for church professionals.

When you have completed an assessment and come to the conclusion that you have gifts for educational ministries, you are ready to go through the process of seeking a call. Whether this will be seeking an initial call or a change from your present position, you are ready to begin writing your Personal Information Form (PIF).





## Communicating with Educator Search Committees

As you begin searching for a congregation or position to which God may be calling you, review the listings on the CLC web site under “Opportunities Search” and send your PIF. This is called a self-referral. A search committee may also receive your PIF through the matching system of CLC.

Once a committee has received your PIF, they will consider it and may contact you. After you have reviewed their MIF, communicate with them and let them know of your interest in continuing the conversation. If you are not interested, be honest and thank them. At whatever point in the process you determine that this position is not the call for you, communicate that to the Educator Search Committee as soon as possible.

### *Contacting References*

After you have determined that you are interested in a position, contact the references listed in the MIF. It is helpful to prepare your questions in advance.

#### **What are secondary references?**

Secondary references include the presbytery staff, former educators, or pastors who are not listed on a church’s MIF, but are people you

know who might have knowledge about this church or position.

### *Interviewing*

#### **Preparing for an Interview**

Because search committees recognize that much about the call process is experiential (“the chemistry between people”; “the movement of the Holy Spirit”), they often move quickly to meet with potential educators. This is a good time to remember the Presbyterian balance between “ardor and order” or “heart and head.” Many first interviews are by video conference so it is recommended that you become aware of the many components of these types of interviews.

Before you interview with any Educator Search Committee, either by phone or in person, compare your PIF with the MIF.

- Do your experience, skills, and interests match what they are seeking?
- What understanding of educational ministry is portrayed in the MIF and any additional materials provided such as bulletins, newsletters, annual reports, and budgets?
- What do you see in regard to theological compatibility?
- How fully are the responsibilities and expectations stated and how realistic are they?

- What indications are given regarding wider church relationships?
- What evidence is there of an understanding of call as opposed to hiring to fill a staff position?
- What indications are given that nurture and support will be given to you?

Consider what additional information you want and need in order to evaluate this opportunity as a call for you. For example, it is helpful to know the search committee's process for decision making and their approximate timeline. Also consider reviewing the search committee's process for creating the position description as described in Part I. This may give you insight into the expectations, working relationships, and responsibilities of the position.

### Exploratory or Telephone Interview

Preliminary interviews are frequently conducted by phone. Before any interview, decide what information you want and need. Consider what questions you will ask and prepare for questions that you may be asked. What information will you want to know about the church and community? It is very important to protect confidentiality and to ask that the Educator Search Committee do the same.

### Some Questions You Might Want to Consider Asking:

What do you understand the ministry of education to be and to encompass?

What do you believe the role of the educator to be in that ministry?

What is the past history regarding church educators in this situation?

How will the staff assist in empowering the educator to carry out his or her ministry?

How will the specific responsibilities and expectations of the educator be communicated to the session, committees, and congregation or mid council body as a whole?

How will having an educator on staff impact the church's current and future budgets?

What is the current pattern for working together as a staff?

How is program and budget planning done?

What can be expected with regard to secretarial support and assistance?

What are the arrangements for office space, furnishings, and equipment?

Will the educator have full access to the session and be included in session meetings?

Will the educator be encouraged to participate in boards and councils of the larger church?

What kind of support and resources are available from the presbytery for educators?

What is the level of the church's participation in programs, events, and activities planned by presbytery, synod, and General Assembly?

What role and level of participation will the educator have in worship services?

What are the church's or governing body's feelings about office hours and dress codes?

What are the expectations about the role and participation of spouse or other family members?

What does the committee see as the major role of the educator; is it more planning, designing, training, and administration or more direct teaching and leading?

To whom will the educator be accountable and how do you plan to let the congregation know?

### Some Questions You Might Be Asked:

Tell us about your faith journey.

What are the things you feel best about in your present ministry?

What have been the challenges there?

What makes you think you may be called to leave there now?

What interests you about this position?

What do you bring to our ministry?

What are your greatest strengths in ministry? . . . your greatest weaknesses?

One of our goals is to strengthen our \_\_\_\_\_. How would you envision doing that?

Describe a typical week in your ministry.

Share your perspective on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

One of the issues our session has debated in the past few years is \_\_\_\_\_. Tell us how you might address that topic.

If we selected you as our educator (or other role), when could you start and what would be your start-up plan?

How do you balance your personal/family life with your ministry?

What will you need from us, the members of this church, in order to be effective as our educator?

What questions or concerns do you have?

### In Person Interviews

If there is interest on the part of both the search committee and the educator, arrange an on-site visit. It is important to be prepared to both answer and ask questions so a good discernment process can take place (see questions above).

#### *What questions cannot be asked in an interview?*

There are a variety of federal and state laws that prohibit most employers from asking certain questions of job applicants, such as their race, national origin, or disability status. However, the U.S. Supreme Court has carved out a “ministerial exception” for religious institutions, including churches, presbyteries, and synods. Typically, hiring and employment decisions made by church councils that relate to employees who perform ministerial or ecclesiastical functions are not subject to review or interference by the courts. This would include employees such as teaching elders, music directors, Christian educators, and others who routinely

perform worship, pastoral, and mission duties. With this said, questions asked during interviews should aid the committee in their discernment of a person’s fitness for office.

### What are background checks?

Background checks are assessments of a person’s character and fitness for employment. They may include checks of employment, credit, criminal, and motor vehicle records. If this position will involve work with children or youth, the state may require a criminal background check.



## The Call Is Extended

### *Accepting the Call*

Once you have received a call, it is appropriate for you to be given sufficient time to consider the call, except for unusual circumstances. Provide a date to the committee in which you will respond.

### *Negotiating the Terms of Call*

Terms of Call are usually negotiable. The *Book of Order* requires presbyteries to establish compensation and benefits guidelines (terms of call) for certified educators. Most presbyteries list these guidelines on their websites. The call offer is complete once the terms of call are agreed upon and signed by authorizing persons. For non-certified educator positions, the terms of call are established by the session without minimum guidelines from the presbytery.

### *The Contract/Covenant*

An annual covenant between the educator and the session is necessary. Such a covenant should state the expectations of the session and congregation as well as those of the educator. Congregation and session support could include spiritual support through prayer and

personal care for the educator; annual compensation support; and physical support through facilities and resources. Likewise, the educator should detail responsibilities and tasks for the next year. New responsibilities, new projects, and regular workload should be outlined in the covenant. An annual performance review and an assessment of both the educator and the session or congregation provides for a continuing dynamic relationship and a vital working environment.

Other things to consider:

- How does the cost of living in your present location compare with your new location? Go to <http://www.bankrate.com/brm/movecalc.asp> to find out.
- Do you know ways to get more benefit for both the church and the church professional by careful arrangement of compensation items? Contact your tax consultant for guidance. or refer to the information on the website listed above.
- Does the church have a good accounting system set up for accountable reimbursable ministry expenses (this is an important tax consideration for you)?
- Will your call be subsidized in any way by funding sources other than the local congregation? If so, how long will this funding be available and what are the expectations?

- What moving expenses will be paid?
- Are there any significant costs related to registering your vehicle in the new state?

### *Support and Care*

1. A Service of Commissioning or Installation is an important celebration of receiving a call. It brings closure to the search and call process, and announces to the congregation that the new ministry has begun. see the PC(USA) *Book of Occasional Services for a Service of Commissioning and Installation*.
2. Continuing Education recognizes that we are on a lifelong journey of learning. The standard for a full-time position is two weeks a year for educational experiences, as well as a budget that realistically allows you to attend events. It is good to balance this time with experiences that will benefit the church's present ministry and those experiences that will help you grow in your personal faith journey. The following provide opportunities for continuing education.
  - **APCE** – The Association of Presbyterian Church Educators is a professional organization for anyone involved in educational ministry. This organization provides a subscription to *The Advocate*, a periodical of information and articles related to education, and an annual conference. The annual event provides an opportunity for inspiration, reflection, fellowship, learning, and sharing. Regional APCE gatherings are also available in some parts of the country.
  - **PC(USA) Conference Centers** – Many of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) camp and conference centers provide retreats, seminars, and conferences for educators. More information on many of these centers is available from the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association at [www.pccca.net](http://www.pccca.net).
  - **Seminaries** – Denominational seminaries provide continuing education events of interest to educators. Visit [www.pcusa.org/seminaries](http://www.pcusa.org/seminaries) for information on each seminary related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
  - **Local Resources** – Many regions have local conference centers, colleges and universities, ecumenical institutions, and presbytery or synod resource centers.
  - **Educator Groups** – Many presbyteries and regions have groups that give educators a chance to share ideas, resources, and fellowship with colleagues in a supportive atmosphere.
  - **Educator Certification Process** – This process affords the Christian educator a way to organize and gain the most from continuing education time and dollars and assures high standards for bringing competence to the ministry of Christian education.

3. **Educator Search Committee Support Group** – It is helpful to have members of the committee function informally as a support group for you during your first year. Together, you may want to meet monthly during the first six months to keep in touch and assist in the adjustment period. During the last six months, the group could meet every other month.
4. **Access to Presbytery and Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry** – The presbytery shall establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian Educators and Christian Education Associates and shall provide access to the area of presbytery that oversees ministry (G-3.0307). During their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, Certified Christian Educators are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its meetings. (G-2.1103b)
5. **Performance Review** – Become familiar with the information about performance reviews. You may need to initiate the use of this process. This is a time for reflection and planning on the part of the educator, the session, the personnel committee, and anyone else involved in the educational ministry in the congregation.

## Finishing the Process

### *Making It Known That You Are Leaving*

Once your new call is confirmed, there are a number of groups and individuals that need to be notified.

- If you have submitted a PIF into the CLC process, call 1-888-728-7228, ext. 8550, or send an e-mail to [clcstaff@pcusa.org](mailto:clcstaff@pcusa.org) to inform CLC that you have accepted a call. Upon receipt of your notification, your PIF will be placed in the inactive status on the CLC system.
- Tell the head of staff and the session or governing body of the position you are leaving before you inform the congregation.
- Any other congregations or governing bodies with whom you have been in communication concerning possible calls also need to be notified and thanked for their consideration.



- It is also good to notify the presbytery you are leaving as well as to introduce yourself to the appropriate staff person in the presbytery within whose bounds you will be serving. If you are a certified educator, it will be important to make this connection as you will need to be removed from the roll maintained by the stated clerk of the presbytery and placed on the roll in the new presbytery.
- Leaving a ministry always involves a mix of emotions for you and the community you are leaving. Although your attention has naturally been on the new call, it is important to have an opportunity to say your goodbyes in a way that benefits everyone and celebrates your ministry together.
- Even in difficult partings, express your appreciation to the staff, session, and congregation for the opportunity to have served.
- It is helpful to request an exit interview. It offers the opportunity to reflect on the shared ministry, its strengths and weaknesses, and to determine some of the things to consider for the future.

