

STEP 7 | MAKING THE CHOICE

It is time to choose your top candidate. A unanimous vote would be a reason to celebrate, but it is not essential. A simple majority is all that is required, but admittedly, it is not ideal. Strive for unity of mind and spirit.

Take the time necessary to pray and discuss. It may be helpful to decide on how many “yes” votes are needed before you ever meet with a candidate. For instance you may decide that 75% of your team must be in favor of a candidate. This number does not need to be recorded or provided to anyone outside the PNC. Each PNC member needs to agree to be of one mind once the candidate is selected, even if the member did not vote in favor of the candidate.

Once a decision has been made, offer the position to your top candidate. Be sure to tell that candidate the reasons why you would like him or her to be your pastor. Encourage and pray with them. Then present the details of the call and give the candidate a timeframe in which you expect their answer.

At this point it is vitally important that you allow the candidate time to discern his or her call. Up to this point, the candidate has been through an arduous process and deserves the opportunity to pray, research, and deeply consider the position. It is also appropriate for the candidate to negotiate the terms of call during this time. The PNC might be given the authority to do this on behalf of the church, but it might be better to create a task force from session that will handle the negotiations. Whatever you do, please do not make promises to the candidate that you don't explicitly know that the church can keep.

If/when you reach an agreement and the candidate accepts, stop what you are doing and praise God for his faithfulness! Pray with and for your nominee.

At this point it would be appropriate to let any remaining candidates know that you have offered the position to someone else and they have accepted. Thank them profusely, and even consider sending them a hand-written note of appreciation.

If the candidate does not accept the call, then you will need to decide if you want to circle back to your other finalists or launch another search.