

# Employment Search Process: Lead Pastor

August 29, 2023

## The Purpose of Our Search Team

The purpose of an employment search is not to simply fill a position alone with someone who appears to be a “good person” or someone from the congregation. The purpose of our search team is to hire a new Lead Pastor who confidently hits the ground running because of our strategic employment process and preparation.

## Responsibilities in the Search Process

The congregation carries the responsibility to approve a candidate for the role of Lead Pastor.

In the employment search process, the congregation recommends individuals to serve on a Search Team. The Elders invite individuals from this list who are qualified to serve onto the Team. The Search Team then formally reports to the Personnel Team who have been relegated by the Elder Board the responsibilities for staff relations and operations, employment, and dismissal. Therefore the Personnel Team and Search Team work closely throughout the employment process.

When the Search Team chooses a candidate for the position, they recommend the candidate to the Personnel Team who—with some deliberation with the Search Team—then recommends the candidate to the Elder Board. The Elder Board is responsible to nominate the candidate to the congregation.

Every candidate has thereby experienced several groups of people before being nominated to the congregation. This “vetting” is a crucial step to safeguard the process, as well as to add excitement from a larger group of people whenever the candidate comes to the congregation. In practical terms, Search Teams actively work to present a candidate, rather than representing the church to the candidate.

## Overview of a Search Process that Includes an Employment Professional

Major Step 1: Prepare for the employment search.

- Create the expectations, goals, job description, profile, boundaries, and process for the search so that everyone is clear about the search.
- Contract a professional employment professional.
- Create a search team.

Major Step 2: Create informational documents to communicate the search to candidates and the congregation so that everyone is clear about the expectations and responsibilities of the new role.

- The employment professional begins to network, recruit, and interview candidates.
- The Search Team prepares for their later work, including informational documents and interview questions.

Major Step 3: Post the position and contact potential candidates.

- The employment professional begins their work.
- The Search Team continues to encourage prayer and inform the congregation.

Major Step 4: Assess the fit of potential candidates who are provided to Calvary's Search Team.

- When the employment professional recommends specific candidates, the Search Team enters a fairly busy season of interviewing those possible candidates. The team previously determined what they will consider and prioritize. They now enter discussion together on each candidate according to the candidate's qualifications.
- Interview candidates whose qualifications appear to fit the profile of the church's position, focusing on the hard skills of the job description and soft skills of chemistry and culture.
- Confidentially visit the potential candidate on his "home turf."
- Assess a potential candidate in an "under-the-radar" visit at Calvary. Candidate may meet with several groups, all confidentially and not public.
- The Search Team discerns whether to recommend the candidate for a formal visit and presentation.

Major Step 5: Finalize decisions concerning a candidate.

- At this point the Search Team is now fully representing the candidate to the church. The Elder Board makes a formal nomination to the congregation, stating the date for an upcoming visit with the church.
- The candidate and his family officially visit the church. This is often a very busy visit, meeting many people and preaching in the worship service.
- At a formal congregational business meeting the congregation votes on the nominated candidate.

Major Step 6: Celebrate the addition of the new pastor and help his family quickly become a beloved part of the church.

- Help the new pastor and family move to St Charles County.
- Enjoy a welcome weekend for the candidate and his family.