

## EPC Presbytery of the Pacific

### Ministerial Committee Suggestions for Nominating Committees

#### G 10-10: **The Calling of Ruling Elders and Deacons by a local church**

When a local church desires to call Ruling Elders and Deacons, the following procedures shall ordinarily be followed:

1. The congregation may nominate and elect its Ruling Elders and Deacons by any procedure it desires to establish.
2. Should a Nominating Committee be used, the congregation will include among those elected to the committee at least two active Elders, one of whom shall be appointed by the Session as chairman. The Session shall call congregational meetings as needed for this purpose.

When a Nominating Committee has been selected, great care should be taken that the members of the committee understand the very sacred trust and responsibility that has been given to them. The Pacific Northwest Ministerial Committee offers the following suggestions to Nominating Committees in carrying out this sacred trust.

1. First of all, before anything else, the Committee should bathe itself in prayer. Prayers should be made for the Holy Spirit to reveal those whom God has been working to call to leadership in Christ's Church. (See Acts 6).
2. Members of the Committee should review Chapters 12—14 of the Leadership Guide. These chapters highlight the following:
  - Form of Government and Documents of the Church. (ch. 12)
  - Rights Reserved to a Particular (Local) Church.
  - Review and Control
  - Power of the Church
  - Who do the Elders represent?
  - Scriptural Qualifications for Office (ch. 13)
  - Other qualifications/attributes of the Officer (ch. 14)
  - Solid Commitments
3. Guiding Principles:
  - Members should nominate only those active members who have demonstrated maturity in both their walk with Christ and their relationships to others.
  - Nominees should demonstrate active participation in the life of the church, understand the vision and be in agreement with the mission of the church, as well as demonstrate the ability to work well with others.
  - Nominees should hold to Presbyterian polity, Westminster, basic understanding of Reformed Theology, and subscribe to Covenant (Infant) Baptism. ("The Essentials" are the basis for church membership, Westminster is the basis for church *office*.)
  - Nominations should not be based upon "filling slots." Better to leave a position open than to place a person in a position of responsibility who does not meet the above criteria.
  - Pastor (Lead Pastor) should be ex officio member of the committee.

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(continued)

4. Some things to avoid:

- Selecting individuals for the purpose of increasing their participation.
- Selecting individuals for the purpose of helping them feel more connected to the church.
- Selecting individuals that believe (and communicate) that they should be in a position to make decisions for the church.
- Selecting individuals who (or have spouses that) do not respect confidentiality.

5. A Process Suggestion

For those churches that allow additional nominations to be received from the floor at the congregational meeting, consider asking the congregation to submit suggested names to the Nominating Committee in writing and early in the Committee's deliberation process. These submittals should include a short statement of justification for that suggestion and the signature of the submitting member. That way members have an opportunity to submit names, but without the sometimes difficult or embarrassing need to deal with these suggestions on the floor, and still gives the elected Nominating Committee the final decision on the nominations to be voted on by the congregation.