

Pastor Search Process*



Piedmont Okefenokee Baptist Association

The pastor search process is a spiritual process. As such, it is essential that both the search team and the congregation prioritize their personal relationship with God. Prayer and time with God in the Word of God are critical throughout the pastor search process. The pastor selection process is a spiritually discerned identification and acknowledgment of the man God orchestrates to lead the church that will impact the future of the church.

The pastor search process will incorporate the following steps...

- Pray. Challenge the church to pray.
- Contact Greg Benfield, Associational Missions Strategist, at greg.poba@gmail.com and set an appointment for Pastor Search Team training.
- Attend Pastor Search Team training.
- Establish Pastor Search Team covenant and guidelines.
- The ultimate question for the Pastor Search Team: **Do you believe God has called this man to preach and that God is leading THIS man to be the pastor here?**
- Administer a church survey seeking input from the congregation regarding the needs of the church and the desired skills, characteristics, and qualifications of the next pastor.
- Summarize the results of the congregational survey and create a candidate profile based on the survey results and your Annual Church Report (ACR). Create a candidate questionnaire.
- Request and gather resumes. Prayerfully evaluate resumes received. Compare the candidate profile to each of the resumes. Check social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- Allow God time to work. Individually, identify up to 3 candidates that best match the established profile. Then, as a team, identify the top 3 candidates to pursue further.
- Conduct initial interviews with the top 3 candidates – phone or in person.
- Listen and discuss at least two sermons from each of the 3 candidates as a team.
- Secure written consent to contact references and the pastor's current Associational Missions Strategist. Contact references and additional references from primary references.
- When the Pastor Search Team has unanimously settled on one candidate, set a time, date, and place to conduct an in-person interview with the candidate and his wife. At this interview, let him know of your intent to hear him preach live.



- If the Pastor Search Team continues to be led to pursue the selected candidate, contact him and let him know that the Pastor Search Team is dealing only with him and that you would like to meet with him to discuss future possibilities.
- Pursue only one candidate from this point forward. Notify the other candidates that you are dealing with one candidate and are no longer pursuing them at this time.
- He should agree in writing for the church to conduct background checks that include criminal, credit/financial, and driving records.

Leave no stone unturned in the background search, investigative step.

CAUTION: Do not move forward when a Pastor Search Team member has a check in his/her spirit about a candidate.

- If after that visit, you believe clearly that he continues to be God's choice for our church, then invite him and his family to your church for a tour of the church and community.
- If all on the Pastor Search Team are convinced that this man is to be our next pastor, begin to negotiate the logistics of him/wife coming to your church to discuss salary, housing, benefits, moving costs, etc.
- Have the candidate meet with the staff, deacons, and personnel team.
- Inquire of the candidate his required minimum approval vote percentage. Make the candidate aware of the church's required minimum approval vote percentage.
- Confirm with the candidate he will become the next pastor if elected by the church by the required minimum approval vote percentage.
- If all are agreed that the candidate is to be the next pastor, then set up a "Meet the Church Weekend" that would include the following...
 - The family arrives on Saturday with the Pastor Search Team meeting them for a meal and fellowship. The Pastor Search Team will secure comfortable accommodations for the candidate and his family.
 - Saturday lunch or evening have a church-wide fellowship where church members can meet the family and have a "Q and A" time with the prospective pastor.
 - The prospective pastor would then preach on Sunday morning with the church voting at the close of the service.
 - The ultimate question for the church: **Do you believe God has called this man to preach and that God is leading THIS man to be the pastor here?**
- The Pastor Search Team serves for a minimum of six months with onboarding the pastor and his family.