<u>Overview of the Pastoral Search Process</u>

From the very beginning of the search for a new pastor, our congregation has a direct influence and a role in the process. In the initial steps the congregation votes in the Leadership Team, Nominating Committee, and the Pastoral Search Committee. Once a candidate is selected by the committee and presented to the church, the congregation then votes to accept or decline the pastoral candidate. As members of Grace Covenant Church, we thank you for your involvement, your contributions to the process and most especially for your prayers.

Below is an in-depth overview of the pastoral search process:

1. The Leadership Team elects a Nominating Committee that is then voted in by the congregation.
2. Nominating Committee meets and decides which congregants to approach for the pastoral search based on their understanding of Scripture, GCC, and the people they are choosing.
3. If the people nominated by the Nominating Committee agree to be part of the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC), they are voted on by the congregation
4. PSC meets to edit and publish the church profile (the profile that pastoral candidates view to learn about our church; it's in a database called CovConnect that allows ECC-ordained candidates to search churches).
5. PSC meets with Tammy Swanson-Draheim (Superintendent of the Midwest Conference for the ECC). Tammy goes over the process of the search, important pointers, and how she recruits candidates for us.
6. PSC meets to determine in-depth criteria and outline the way they want to conduct the search (within ECC guidelines, there is wiggle room to adapt to each PSC's needs).
7. Tammy meets back with the PSC and releases a list of candidates she has gathered from the ECC. NOTE: She doesn't filter candidates for us. She does actively recruit some, but any candidates who are active in the database are allowed to apply directly to our church. She gives as much information as she can on the candidates, including:
   a. The profile the pastor makes (also on CovConnect; these are very thorough and include personal information, family information, denominational background, education, credentials, ordination, ministry history, denominational and community involvement, baptism, testimony, theological perspectives, pastoral ministry perspectives, preferences of church type they feel called to pastor, and style of ministry)
   b. Resume, cover letter, and any other attachments the pastoral candidate wants to send (e.g. thesis papers, social media links)
   c. Links to sermon samples
   d. Any background information Tammy can get from other superintendents, pastors, churches, mentors, etc.
8. All candidates get an email introducing GCC and telling them the profiles they submitted will be reviewed.
9. PSC prayerfully starts reviewing candidate profiles and materials given.

10. PSC sends out an email questionnaire with any immediate questions. This gives the candidates notice that we are considering them but also gives us time to thoroughly review profiles before an interview.
11. In-depth evaluation of profiles based on pastor criteria rubric the team created in step 6.
12. Review of websites, articles, resumes, cover letters, social media
13. Get email questionnaires back and review
14. Based on email questionnaires, criteria, and links/attachments, decide if any are a no-go.
15. Review 3 sermons of candidates still in search based on criteria determined in step 6.
16. Team reviews sermon scores together; let go of any others that are a no-go. Create questions for interviews of remaining candidates.
17. Initial Zoom interviews with each candidate
18. Review/pray about round #1 of Zoom interviews; refer back to criteria determined by team; decide which to move forward with
19. Create questions for Zoom interview #2, which includes both the pastoral candidate and the spouse (if relevant) of the pastoral candidate
20. Review Zoom interview #2 of each candidate; decide if any candidates should be let go
21. Ask any remaining questions of candidates that would need to be clarified before in-person interviews; ask candidates if they are interested in coming out for an in-person interview
22. Create in-person interview questions, agenda, and any needed reservations/plane tickets
23. In-person interview with the candidate and the spouse (if applicable)
24. Review, pray, and meet with team to discuss the in-person interview(s)
25. Check references
26. Decide on a candidate; let go of the others.
27. Work with the Leadership Team on the salary and benefits that can be offered. Create a Letter of Call (a conditional offer letter contingent on background check and congregational vote) that is approved by the Leadership Team.
28. Offer a Letter of Call. The Letter of Call includes a theological explanation of the call and duties of the pastor, a breakdown of the salary and benefits, and a description of the contingency of the background check and congregational vote.
29. Answer any questions the candidate may have.
30. Receive signed Letter of Call from the candidate; at this point the candidate is committed to the church, but the church is not committed to the candidate until after a congregational vote. The candidate and PSC together choose a start date at this point.
31. Pastor completes a background check
32. Announce the selected pastor to the congregation; give information on the pastor so the congregation can learn about the candidate; also announce the day the candidate will give a sermon and the congregants will vote
33. Pastor gives sermon; GCC votes. We need a ⅔ majority vote (members only) to elect the pastor.
34. The candidate is told of the results of the vote. If it's a "no," the search starts over. If "yes," the candidate will begin on the agreed upon start date.
35. Welcome our new pastor!