



## Revised Proposal for the Formation of a UPC Pastor Search Committee (PSC)

### Committee Composition

The committee will consist of 9 members:

- 1 – Elder – Only one elder may serve on the committee
- 1 – Deacon – Only one deacon may serve on the committee
- 7 – At Large – including at least three women
- 2 – Alternates

- Only elders and deacons who are currently serving as church officers are eligible for nomination to the PSC.
- The Interim Pastor will serve as an advisor to the committee.
- The Interim Pastor will not be a candidate for UPC's Senior Pastor position.

### Committee Member Qualifications

Minimum qualifications for committee members:

- A UPC communing member in good standing.
- Willing to devote time for committee's work (2-4 hours/week as needed)

### Meetings

Two meetings of the congregation are planned. The first meeting will seek congregational approval for the structure and composition of the committee and the procedures to be used for nomination and election of committee members. The second meeting will be held to elect the PSC members. Both meetings will be held in compliance with the Book of Church Order (BCO).

### Meeting No. 1 – Nomination and Election Procedures

- Nominations will be done in writing by UPC members using the attached form that documents that the nominee is qualified and willing to serve. Self-nominations are acceptable.
- **All nominations must be submitted to the church office and received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 29, 2021.**
  - Nomination forms may be emailed to [nominations@upcorlando.org](mailto:nominations@upcorlando.org) or hand-delivered to the church office (Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.).
  - Late nominations will not be considered.
- All qualified candidates will be included on the ballot for the PSC election. However, a candidate may be precluded from the process for pastoral reasons. Such candidates will be counseled in advance of the election.

### Meeting No. 2-Election of PSC Members

At the second meeting, the committee membership will be elected by UPC members.

- Ballots will be available for review no later than two business days before the congregational meeting.

- A UPC member may vote for no more than one nominee for the elder and deacon categories and 7 nominees for the at large category.
- A space will be provided on the ballot for the UPC member to write their name. Ballots submitted without names will not be counted.
- Nominees will be introduced during the congregational meeting. Nominees who are providentially hindered from attending the meetings, may submit a video introducing themselves to the congregation.
- Collection of the ballots will be conducted by the deacons.
- Ballots will be counted by two deacons and two other witnesses.
- In the case of a tie, the names of the tied candidates will be placed into a hat. A deacon, in the presence of at least two witnesses, will draw a name from the hat to determine the elected candidate.
- Among the unelected candidates, the candidates who received the most votes will be offered the two alternate positions.
- If three women are not elected to the PSC, then the woman with the most votes among the unelected candidates will displace the elected man with the lowest number of votes. This process will be repeated as necessary to achieve the minimum number of women on the PSC.
- The congregation will be advised of the election results as soon as possible.
- The election results will be documented in the minutes of the congregational meeting.

#### **Schedule**

Oct 31	Meeting of the Congregation No. 1 – Approval of PSC Composition and Nomination/Election Process
Nov 7	Continuation of October 31 <sup>st</sup> meeting
Nov 8	Nominations are open
Nov 29	Nominations close (must be received in the church office by 5:00 p.m.)
Dec 12	Meeting of the Congregation No. 2 - Election of the PSC

You many have noticed a change in the current document from the proposal which—after amendments—the congregation approved at the called congregational meeting on November 10. This change does not affect the nomination or make-up of the Pastoral Search Committee we will elect, but only affects how the voting will take place for the election of the members of the committee.

The proposal handed out on Sunday included this language: *“A member who will not be attending the congregational meeting may email their ballot to the church office or they may deliver their ballot to the church office. All early ballots must be received in the church office by noon Friday, December 10, 2021. Late early ballots will not be counted.”* This allowed for early voting in addition to the voting at the December meeting itself; the Session had been discussing this practice as a means of being flexible given recent events affecting the attendance of some at worship and other meetings. The moderator and Session apologize for not clarifying fully the legitimacy of such voting before meeting. Our double-checking was completed only early this week, and we discovered that our commitments as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America and of Central Florida Presbytery allow voting only by communing members present physically at a congregational meeting.

Our Book of Church Order, received by all officers as the authoritative guide to our practices, is clear that whether at the local church, presbytery, or General Assembly level, only those members or commissioners present at a meeting may vote. No exceptions to this practice have been approved, and there are a number of good reasons for this being the case, including all voters in an election being equally informed on what has been presented and discussed before the vote itself takes place.

No need exists to call an additional congregational meeting to amend the completed proposal on this issue, because it would be improper to execute a plan (even one voted upon by the congregation) which goes against the Constitution of the church. Every communing member still has the opportunity to attend the December meeting and vote. The same practice will also apply when the day comes that the congregation gathers to vote on issuing a call to a new senior pastor, only members present at the meeting will be able to vote.

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