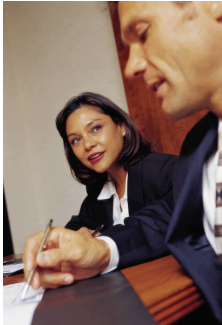


PASTORAL ASSESSMENT CENTER AND CONFERENCE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

You and your wife will be required to attend a multi-day Pastoral Assessment Center (PAC) as you begin your relationship with the E.C. Church. During these days you, individually and as a couple, will meet many different people and be placed in a variety of situations. These exercises have been devised to help us assess your leadership skills, the character of your relationship to the God-head, and your interpersonal relationship. You will be asked to preach an evangelistic message and to submit to an intensive interview. Your wife will be required to affirm her Christian experience and express her attitudes regarding your call and all that is involved in the pastoral ministry. While each marriage is different, her willingness to serve is vital.



All that transpired during these days will be evaluated, and we hope you will better envision how you will function in pastoral ministry. A positive evaluation and affirmation of your call to pastoral ministry are needed for you to continue to progress through the “Steps

of Ministry”. The PAC’s recommendation is forwarded to the CRC, which will then continue to guide and encourage you through the years of your formal education (university and seminary where applicable), and your initial years in pastoral ministry. The CRC mentorship concludes at the time of your ordination.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

If you are faithful to the Lord’s calling and continue to serve the Lord through the E.C. Church, you will stand before the sessions of the National Conference three times as each of three affirmations of the CRC is read. Each time, your brothers in the ministry will act upon a recommendation. Their favorable votes will result in your first becoming an “Approved Candidate” for ministry (indicating the validity of your call to ministry and that you are officially “on the track” which leads to full ordination), a “Licentiate” (indicating you are authorized to perform all the needed functions of an active pastor), and finally, an “Elder”. While the National Conference grants the title “Elder”, we have moved the actual ordination ceremony back to the local churches to allow more individual time and personal involvement in this special day.

This is an exciting journey with the highest of all possible opportunities awaiting those who complete it. Please know that the Evangelical Congregational Church encourages all men and women everywhere to use their spiritual gifts to the fullest extent of God’s gifting. We believe this goal can only be met under the shepherding of God’s overseer. That is why we challenge and oversee the preparation of godly men who are sensitive to the calling of God to pastoral ministry. We pray that you, and others like you, will pay close attention to the still, quiet, calling voice of Almighty God. In effectively working together as a team, we pray you may come to know the blessedness of impacting the Church of the Living God and advancing His kingdom. To God by the glory!



Steps to Ministry



So You’ve Decided

Evangelical Congregational Church
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
www.eccenter.com
1-800-866-7581

If God is calling you into the sacred office of the ministry, “rejoice!” and know how very special that calling is. The work of God’s grace that stirs a man’s heart is a deeply personal matter that must be prayed through, wrestled with, and responded to. It will require a totally committed and holy life in which God builds an exemplary leader. Sacrifice and obedience will be your fellow travelers. In return, God promises daily kingdom-building opportunities and the thrill of birthing new lives.

If you have concluded that God is calling you into the ministry or are contemplating whether or not God is calling you, we would like the opportunity to walk with you through the exciting process that may eventually unite you with those whom you will serve. Along the way, godly men and women from your local congregation and those specifically chosen from throughout our denomination and seminary stand ready to offer their love, encouragement and wisdom. Their characters, forged in these same fires of service you will enjoy, will be a lamp unto your feet.

PASTOR



Begin your journey by sharing your sense of calling with your local pastor and other selected pastors. Glean what wisdom you can from their years of working in the harvest fields. Examine hearts, seek counsel, and allow them to open your eyes to the blessed work of the ministry. Listen as they share how God called them into the ministry. Covet their help in developing your spiritual gifts.

Form a trusted group of intercessors who will implore God to show you how He sees you. Ask God to affirm that your call is genuine and is not the result of yours or some other’s personal aspiration for your life. Let God solidify that what is happening in your life was initiated by Him and is being guided by the Holy Spirit. Your life should be increasingly conformed to the standards contained in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Spend time studying the Discipline of the Evangelical Congregation (EC) Church. Pay close attention to the 25 Articles of Faith and the rest of Part One, “The Creed”. Read Part Five on “The Ministry” devotionally. Compare what is contained therein with what you are experiencing in your daily walk.

Contact the Church Center Office in Myerstown, PA, and obtain a Pastoral Assessment form. You may also obtain this directly from our website: www.eccenter.com. Begin the process of completing this form, especially the parts concerning your conversion experience and your calling. Then you are ready for the next step.

CONFERENCE MINISTER

Make an appointment with the Conference Minister for the Region in which you live. Ministers and lay leaders have elected him to this position because he has demonstrated an aptitude for “pasturing pastors.” He will listen as you share your story – your history, your education, and your calling. He will help you sort through your strengths and weaknesses, ascertain your present life situations, and inform you of the steps that lie ahead.

He will confirm whether or not you have obtained the correct form appropriate to the process that lies before you. Complete the form with whatever help you need, give it to your pastor to read and sign, make any adjustments that are necessary, and return it to your Conference Minister before the deadline. Copies of the form will be forwarded to the appropriate members of the Conference Relations Committee (CRC) and the E.C. Pastoral Assessment Center (PAC).



These two distinct groups perform different functions, but both have been chosen because of their gifts and graces. You will form an on-going relationship with the Conference Relations Committee while you will meet with the members of the Pastoral Assessment Center only once. The Pastoral Assessment Center will give a report of their work to the Conference Relations Committee. The CRC will give their reports to the National Conference.
