

Proposed Bylaws Revision, to be considered at the Annual Meeting, June 9, 2019

Rationale for revising our current Bylaws

Based upon a review of the governance system as part of the work of the Interim Minister, the Deacons recommend the following Bylaws revisions to paragraphs in section VIII, Church Staff, which accomplish several things:

- It is common practice to have a different process for selecting ministers who are called from those who are not called, such as transitional or interim ministers. Currently, our Bylaws do not distinguish between these different types of ministers. The revisions allow the Deacons to determine a process for selecting transitional or interim ministers that expedites the process and also provides that these ministers have a defined maximum length of service of 24 months, beyond which they must be approved by the congregation.
- If it is determined by a search committee that the best candidate is already on staff at the church, they will have the authority to recommend that candidate to the congregation. Adding the capacity to hire from within gives Plymouth maximal flexibility and a wide range of options when hiring and developing staff that fits its needs.
- Changes “Associate Ministers” to “all other Ministers” in section 3.
- Changes to clean up punctuation.

Current:

2. Selection or Removal of the called Ministers. All Ministers shall be called. When any position of a called minister is to be vacant, the Deacons shall appoint a Ministerial Search Committee from among the members of the Congregation to be elected by the Congregation. As to the Senior Minister, the Ministerial Search Committee shall consult with the Deacons as to compensation and other contractual terms of hiring, and then submit the candidate to the members of the Congregation for their approval. As to all other called ministers, the committee shall recommend its candidate to the Deacons and the Senior Minister and upon approval by the Deacons and the Senior Minister, the Deacons shall recommend the candidate to the members of the Congregation for their approval. The selection or removal of a called Minister shall require the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members in attendance at a meeting of the Congregation called for that purpose.

3. Employment Agreement of the called Ministers. The Deacons shall establish the employment agreement with the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister shall present an employment agreement for Associate Ministers to the Deacons for their approval. The Deacons shall review each Minister’s agreement with him or her annually. Any amendments to the employment agreements must be in writing and signed by the Moderator and the Minister.

Suggested changes, in *italics*:

2. Selection or Removal of Ministers. All ministers shall be called by the Congregation, *except for interim and transitional ministers (all ministers are referred to in these Bylaws as “Ministers”).* When any position of a called Minister is vacant, *or when there is a determination to add a new ministerial position,* the Deacons shall appoint a Ministerial Search Committee from among the members of the Congregation to be elected by the Congregation. As to the Senior Minister, the Ministerial Search Committee shall consult with the Deacons as to compensation and other contractual terms of hiring, and then submit the candidate to the members of the Congregation for their approval. As to all other called Ministers, the committee shall recommend its candidate to the Deacons and the Senior Minister, and, upon approval by the Deacons and the Senior Minister, the Deacons shall recommend the candidate to the members of the Congregation for their approval. *The search committee may find their candidate through a search process beyond the Congregation or may recommend a current staff member or Minister for the open or new position.* The selection or removal of a called Minister shall require the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members in attendance at a meeting of the Congregation called for that purpose. *The Deacons may select interim or transitional Ministers without a Congregational vote, using any process for making the selection the Deacons determine. The term of employment of an interim or transitional Minister shall not exceed 24 months without a vote of the Congregation.*

3. Employment Agreement of the called Ministers. The Deacons shall establish the employment agreement with the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister shall present an employment agreement for *all other* Ministers to the Deacons for their approval. The Deacons shall review each Minister’s agreement with him or her annually. Any amendments to the employment agreements must be in writing and signed by the Moderator and the Minister.