Pastoral Candidate Evaluation

On Sunday, December 6th, when it's time to cast your vote for the candidate, rather than evaluating whether you have had adequate time to vet the candidate, ask yourself: is there any reason, based on what I know so far about the vetting process, the church leadership, and the candidate, why I couldn't vote to affirm the nomination? If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to an Elder or a member of the Search Committee as soon as possible to discuss those with them.

Process of Evaluation

Congregations evaluate pastoral candidates through a multi-stage process, typically led by a search committee, which involves resume screening, background checks, structured interviews, and opportunities for teaching and small group discussions. Evaluation focuses on doctrinal alignment, character, ministry philosophy, and interpersonal skills. Final selection involves congregational feedback before a final vote.

Key Stages and Methods of Evaluation

- *Initial Screening:* Search committees review resumes, questionnaires, and interviews to narrow down applicants.
- *Detailed Assessment:* Committees conduct in-depth interviews, check references, and may review social media or listen to multiple recorded sermons/talks.
- *Candidating Weekends:* The top candidate is invited first to an incognito weekend with the search committee and elders. Then a formal weekend is established to provide an opportunity for the church to assess the candidate's teaching style, personality, and fit at Midland Free.

Key Evaluation Areas

- *Doctrinal and Theological Alignment:* Ensuring the candidate's beliefs match the Evangelical Free Church of America Statement of Faith. https://www.efca.org/sof
- *Character and Integrity:* Validating pastoral attributes and calling to ministry.
- *Leadership and Vision:* Evaluating their approach to leading a ministry team and future planning of a ministry.
- *Communication Skills:* Assessing teaching/communication ability to all audiences.
- *Interpersonal Skills:* Assessing their ability to connect with diverse groups within the congregation: youth, parents, adults,

Teaching Evaluation

- *Contextual:* The teaching should exposit the biblical text faithful to the author's intent.
- *Convictional:* The teaching should express who God is, what God has done, and what that means for us. Hard or difficult truths should not be ignored or minimized but

should be shared with love and compassion. Teaching should be applicable to life and encourage one's pursuit of Jesus.

- *Clear:* Teaching should have a good introduction, a clear structure, and teaching points that are easy to follow. Illustrations should be clear, relevant, and helpful. The teaching should be well-delivered and engaging.
- *Compassionate:* Teaching should be delivered from a posture of love and compassion towards the audience/congregation and for lost souls. The pastor's love for Christ should be obvious and compelling.
- *Christ-Centered:* Christ's redemptive work on our behalf should be at the heart