

Candidate Comparison and Prayerful Discernment

Full-size companion resource • Print additional copies as needed. Keep candidate-specific information in restricted, secure storage.

Purpose: Compare evidence consistently while keeping biblical eligibility separate from ministry competency and contextual readiness. Complete independent assessments before group discussion.

Church: _____ Deliberation date: _____

Current position-profile version: _____

Candidates: A _____ B _____ C _____

Step 1: Essential Qualification Gate

Use Meets / Unresolved / Does Not Meet. Do not average essential qualifications with other ratings.

Requirement	A	B	C
Biblical character requirements	—	—	—
Essential doctrinal agreement	—	—	—
Other approved pastoral eligibility	—	—	—
Required verification completed	—	—	—

Unresolved essential questions by candidate: _____

Step 2: Ministry Competency Evidence

Use Evidenced Strength / Adequate Evidence / Development Needed / Unknown. Ratings are prompts for discussion, not a final numerical ranking.

Competency	A	B	C
Preaching and teaching	—	—	—
Shepherding and pastoral care	—	—	—
Discipleship and equipping	—	—	—
Leadership and conflict judgment	—	—	—
Governance and community readiness	—	—	—

For each candidate, cite examples, interviews, sermons, and authorized references supporting the assessment.

Candidate A evidence / unanswered questions: _____

Candidate B evidence / unanswered questions: _____

Candidate C evidence / unanswered questions: _____

Step 3: Deliberation Questions

- ☐ Have we distinguished qualifications from our personal preferences?
- ☐ Have all members assessed the evidence independently first?
- ☐ What is the strongest evidence supporting our preferred candidate?
- ☐ What credible information challenges that preference?
- ☐ Are doctrinal, integrity, or safeguarding concerns truly resolved?
- ☐ Have we followed our agreed decision procedure and church's authority structure?
- ☐ Would we be willing to continue searching if the evidence is insufficient?

Step 4: Recorded Decision

Action selected: Advance / Verify Further / Continue Search / Recommend

Candidate ID (if applicable): _____

Evidence supporting action: _____

Material questions still open: _____

Minority concerns and how addressed: _____

Authorized decision-maker and vote/process: _____

Decision date: _____ Next owner: _____

A persuasive sermon, high interview rating, or personal familiarity cannot erase an unresolved essential qualification. No score should substitute for responsible biblical and pastoral judgment.