



GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH NORTH GEORGIA

Preferred Timeline for the Appointive Process Effective January 1, 2027

Approved June 2026

Introduction

Over three centuries, the people called Methodist have used an appointive system to connect clergy with congregations. The Global Methodist Church has retained the appointive system for deploying clergy, yet we have made significant modifications to allow greater input from all parties involved. This document outlines the GMC of North Georgia's appointive process in accordance with the *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.

In the appointment-making process, the Bishop, Conference Superintendent, and the Presiding Elders seek to match clergy and congregations to fulfill our Gospel mandate by intentional discipleship, leadership development, and multiplication for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus Christ and spreading Scriptural holiness across the world.

Annual Timeline

The GMC appointive process is far more effective when pastoral changes are implemented across the conference within the same time frame. Coordinating moves across the conference increases the pastoral pool for churches and opportunities for pastors. The cabinet designed this process in keeping with the *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* to increase transparency around the appointive process and to maximize the voices of clergy and the SPRC/PPRC in consultation.

Clergy Evaluations – Submit by January 15

Annual clergy evaluations are an opportunity for the clergyperson and the church to discern how God is working and what God is leading toward in the future of the calls of the clergyperson and church. Three different evaluative tools are provided, and local churches and pastors may choose which form best suits their needs. Clergy evaluations may be done and submitted anytime during the calendar year, but please submit to the Conference office by January 15, of the following year.

Retirement Letters – Submit by January 15

Pastors seeking to retire should notify their presiding elder and the conference superintendent in writing by January 1. Our anticipated retirement date is at/or around June 30. Clergy may retire at any time during the year, but a June retirement enables increased pastoral candidates for the local church. If you plan to retire and want to be

included in the preferred timeline, please submit your letter to the Conference office by January 15.

Known Vacancy List – Posted January 31

A *Known Vacancy List* will be published for clergy on January 31. The *Known Vacancy List* will include those churches where a move is definite. Clergy may review the list and contact the assigned presiding elder for consideration. Please note that the *Known Vacancy List* will not reflect vacancies identified later in the move cycle. The Known vacancy list will be updated online throughout the year on the Conference website.

Discerning Change – Submit by February 28

By February 28 of each year, clergy and churches may request a change in appointment. Please note the following:

1. Clergy are considered appointed indefinitely to a church until either party requests a change. The normal time to request a change is February 28, and the normal window for changes to occur starts July 1, and will last for the next several months with appointments beginning on the first of the month.
 - a. Standard Cycle: The standard cycle to request a change in appointment is February 28th. An effective SPRC / PPRC will have already conducted an annual evaluation by January and will be engaged in regular meetings with the pastor and church leadership.
 - b. Non-Standard Cycle: A church and/or pastor can request a pastoral change at any time during the calendar year. A church that determines that their current appointment needs to end outside of the standard cycle must contact the Conference Superintendent (who will assign a Presiding Elder). An SPRC / PPRC that seeks to end a pastoral appointment abruptly may be required to provide up to 3 months of severance to the pastor, at the discretion of the conference superintendent. Note: An abrupt end to a pastoral appointment is an option of last resort. The presiding elder and/or conference superintendent will first explore the viability of reconciliation or a performance improvement plan.
2. Once it is discerned that a pastoral change will be requested, the SPRC / PPRC and the pastor contact the Conference Superintendent, who will assign a presiding elder. The presiding elder will provide all parties with access to the change request forms.

Discerning the Pastoral Needs of the Church – March & April

The SPRC / PPRC will need to evaluate their church's pastoral needs. The considerations listed below can be conducted with the assistance of the Presiding Elder.

1. Church Profile: The SPRC / PPRC completes a church profile. The profile provides valuable information about the church and its local community. Complete this profile with care as it will serve to guide the Cabinet and will be a first introduction to a potential new pastor.

3. Determining Pastoral Support: The SPRC / PPRC should prayerfully discuss the qualities and special skills desired in a new pastor, the employment time, benefits, and housing.
- a. Spiritual Gifts: Spiritual gifts needed in a pastor (spiritual gifts are those listed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28).
 - b. Pastoral Skills: Specific skills needed in a new pastor, especially if there is a ministry area that needs particular attention. (An example would be a church undertaking a building project, launching a new small group ministry, or seeking to revive a contemporary worship service).
 - c. Part-Time or Full-Time: Pastors are appointed in quarter increments. ($\frac{1}{4}$ time = 10 hours a week, $\frac{1}{2}$ time = 20 hours a week, $\frac{3}{4}$ time = 30 hours a week, full-time is 40 hours). Please note that these are approximations.
 - d. Compensation: Determine the compensation level offered to a new minister. Compensation levels vary depending on part-time or full-time status, size of the congregation, and experience level desired. Currently, there is no minimum salary requirement for clergy. The presiding elder may offer feedback if a suggested salary is too low to be considered full-time.
 - e. Retirement Benefits: Clergy serving in $\frac{1}{2}$ time, $\frac{3}{4}$ time, or full-time appointments are entitled to receive retirement benefits. Retirement benefits are calculated as follows:
 - i. For churches with a parsonage: 5% of (salary + 25% of base salary)
 - ii. For churches with a housing allowance: 5% of (salary + housing)
 - iii. The church also matches the pastor's personal contribution up to an additional 5%. The maximum a church will contribute toward retirement is 10%.
 - f. Health Insurance: Clergy serving at full-time appointments are entitled to receive health insurance. The health insurance cost to the local church is determined by whether the pastor is single, married, or has a family. To view the costs to local churches, please click the link below and scroll down to "Health Flex Rates Download" . <https://www.globalmethodist.org/benefits---insurance-information>
 - g. Health Insurance Exemptions: There are four exemptions for churches to providing health insurance:
 - i. If the pastor is covered under their spouse's insurance.
 - ii. If the pastor is bi-vocational and receives coverage through another employer.
 - iii. If the pastor has military insurance (TriCare or VA).
 - iv. The pastor is on Medicare or Medicaid.
 - h. Housing: Full-time clergy must be provided with a parsonage or a housing allowance. If the church has a housing allowance, it is recommended that it be set at a level to cover 12 months of fair market rental value for a median home in the local area. If a church provides a parsonage and the pastor opts not to live in church provided housing, then the church is not

required to provide a housing allowance. However, churches may provide a housing allowance at their discretion.

- i. Accountable Reimbursement & Continuing Education: Determine your projected Accountable Reimbursement and Continuing Education levels for a new pastoral appointment.

Determining the Process – March & April

The SPRC / PPRC should meet with the presiding elder to review the pastoral needs and pastoral support discussed in the previous section. The Presiding Elder will help the SPRC / PPRC determine how they want to proceed in seeking a pastoral candidate. The GMC allows multiple avenues for pastoral candidates to be surfaced. Note: The SPRC / PPRC must determine with the Presiding Elder which of the following two options they will pursue prior to any additional action being taken.

Option 1: Cabinet-led process

- The Presiding Elders will prayerfully review the church profile and seek to surface up to 3 pastoral candidates. Note: the cabinet cannot guarantee 3 candidates but will seek to provide up to 3 where possible.
- The SPRC / PPRC may request specific GMC clergy by name for consideration. SPRC / PPRC may submit any specific names they would like to be considered to the Presiding Elder. SPRC / PPRC members are not to contact a pastor directly
- Pastors who submitted themselves for consideration will be provided to the Presiding Elders for consideration.

Option 2: SPRC / PPRC Takes the Lead in Process

- The Book of Doctrines and Disciplines allows a local church to conduct their own pastoral search, and the process may include hiring a national search firm at the discretion of the SPRC/PPRC.
- The Presiding Elder must be involved in the process, including any discussions with a search firm.
- Any candidates surfaced by a national search firm must first be submitted to the Board of Ministry for review and must be approved by the Conference Superintendent before any interviews or discussions occur between representatives of the local church and a pastoral candidate.
- Note: Most search firms are not experienced in surfacing theologically Wesleyan candidates. A local church will bear the full cost of contracting a search firm.

Pastoral Consultations – Target April and May

The Presiding Elder will coordinate consultations with pastoral candidates. The SPRC / PPRC will be required to offer a consultation to each pastoral candidate. Please note the following consultation guidelines:

- Introduction: The Presiding Elder will arrange an introductory meeting where the SPRC / PPRC and projected pastors are introduced. Pastoral and church profiles will be provided to both parties in advance of this meeting.
- Projected Pastor Protocol: The appointive process is confidential and must be treated with respect by all members of the SPRC / PPRC. The following protocols will be strictly observed:
 - Sermons: SPRC / PPRC members are welcome to review a projected pastor's sermons on their current church website. Do **not** share the name of the projected pastor, sermon files, or other identifying information beyond the SPRC / PPRC. It is **not** acceptable for projected pastors to visit your church to preach or lead worship in the "projected" phase unless approved by the assigned Presiding Elder.
 - Public Appearance: Churches should be aware that pastors will be visiting their websites, social media, etc., as well as your church facility for an introductory visit. Please make sure social media is accurate and updated, and all physical spaces are well maintained.
 - Compensation and Benefits: Compensation and benefits will have already been determined before the projection. The consultative meeting is not to be considered a time to negotiate salary, accountable reimbursements, or other benefits.
- The Pastoral Match
 - The SPRC / PPRC will prayerfully discern the projected pastors, either indicating a preference or ranking the pastoral options.
 - The pastoral candidates will prayerfully discern the projected appointment. It is possible that some pastoral candidates may be exploring multiple consultations simultaneously.
 - A match occurs when both the SPRC / PPRC and the projected pastor agree to the match. Once both parties agree, the match is submitted to the Bishop for the appointment to be "fixed."
- Announcement Date: Once the appointment is set, the Presiding Elder will work with the pastor and church to decide on a starting date as well as an announcement date to share the appointment more broadly.

Appointment Start Date – July 1st & August 1st

Appointments may only start on the first of each month for *Benefits* purposes. The appointment start window for the standard cycle will be in the July – August time frame, though in some instances an appointment may start outside this window.

Additional Notes

- Effective & Fruitful Process: The SPRC /PPRC plays a significant role in the Global Methodist Church. An effective SPRC / PPRC will have regularly scheduled meetings, will be led by a chair who ensures that timely communication is provided with effective record-keeping and a meeting agenda, and that annual evaluations are properly conducted for all clergy and lay staff.
- Pastors Communicating Consultations: If a pastor under appointment (senior pastor or associate) receives a consultation at another church, then he or she must notify their SPRC / PPRC chair at the time of consultation (an associate

pastor will also notify his or her senior pastor at this time). A consultation is not a guarantee that the pastor will receive a new appointment, but in the spirit of transparency we will inform the chair of the pastor's current church. The chair (and senior pastor) should practice prayerful discernment as they determine how to communicate with the SPRC / PPRC. The chair may consult with the Presiding Elder.

- Non-Standard Cycle Changes: Pastoral appointment changes may occur at any time during the calendar year, and for a variety of reasons. We strongly encourage pastors and churches to seek pastoral changes during the Standard Cycle Timeline highlighted above. Some instances where a change may occur outside this timeline include:
 - A pastor chooses to end his or her appointment. This will be arranged with the Presiding Elder.
 - The SPRC / PPRC chooses to end the appointment abruptly. The Presiding Elder and Conference Superintendent will be involved in any conversations related to the concluding of an appointment by an SPRC / PPRC.
 - The pastor goes on medical or family leave.
 - The pastor enters senior status (retirement).
 - The pastor is placed on involuntary leave (by the Conference Superintendent).
- Questions: Please contact your Connectional Elder with questions about the appointive process.