# Suggestions for Exploring a New Call

A due diligence checklist of considerations

## The Church

- [ ] **Read the job description thoroughly.**
  Consider if the amount of work expected to accomplish the listed duties matches your own capabilities and passion, as well as the offered salary.
- [ ] **If the church regularly livestreams, watch past services to get a sense of its worship and liturgical style.**
- [ ] **Explore the church's website and social media presence thoroughly.**
  Look beyond the "Music" page to get a sense of its core values and priorities.

## The Job

- [ ] **Consult Musicians Called to Serve: A Handbook for the Selection, Employment, and Ministry of Church Musicians**
  This resource provides a wealth of information to consider when applying for a job (and negotiating the terms of employment upon a job offer).
  - [ ] **Beyond the salary, what other benefits are offered? (p. 18)**
    Consider time off for vacation, resources for professional development, different forms of insurance, pension contributions, availability of instruments for private teaching, right of first refusal for weddings and funerals, etc.
  - [ ] **Refer to sample Letters of Agreement and Employment Contracts. (pp. 37–46)**
- [ ] **Read the Episcopal Musicians Compensation Report**
  While this report does not provide official guidelines, it gives a good sense of different percentiles of salaries according to location, experience, church size, and more.
- [ ] **Consider the potential change in cost of living using an online resource like payscale.com.**
  The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics provides a Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator to adjust outdated figures to their current, adjusted-for-inflation equivalents.
- [ ] **As AAM members, we are privy to an expansive network of compassionate and like-minded colleagues.**
  Use this network to learn more about the advertised position and its history.

## The Interview

- [ ] **Does the church have an Employee Handbook?**
  This can be hugely informative as to the institution's ethos and practices.
- [ ] **Is the position in an "at will" employment state?**
  How, if at all, is this reflected in the church's lay employment practice? What are the terms for giving/receiving notice of employment termination? Do the church's practices abide by the Baptismal Covenant (beyond state requirements)?
- [ ] **Where does this position fit in the grand scheme of the church's employment structure?**
  Who would manage you, and whom would you manage? Are regular performance reviews part of your written contract?
- [ ] **What is the history of the music program?**
  Does the rector hope to maintain the status quo or take the program into a new direction?