

# **Neches River Baptist Association**

## **Pastor Search Committee Workbook**

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## Pastor Search Committee Workbook

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page</b>
Now That Our Pastor Has Left, What Should We Do First?	3
Electing the Pastor Search Committee	4
Appendix 1: Election Ballot: Pastor Search Committee	5
Check list for the Pastor Search Committee's First Meeting	6
Who Will Preach For Us?	7
Appendix 2: Job Description Worksheet for Interim Pastor	8
Appendix 3: Church Questionnaire	9
Who Develops the Job Description and Compensation Package?	10
Appendix 4: Sample Job Description	11
Appendix 5: Compensation Worksheet	12
Putting Together a Church Information Packet	14
Critical Agreements and Considerations	15
Code of Ethics	16
Pastor Search Committee Expenses	17
The Process of Finding a Pastor: Search Etiquette	18
Making a Second Visit with the Candidate	22
Appendix 6: Personal Evaluation	24
Appendix 7: Letter to Candidate's References	27
Appendix 8: Personal Reference Information Form	28
Appendix 9: Prospective Minister's Sermon Evaluation Form	32
Appendix 10: Important Questions to Ask the Prospective Pastor	33
How to Present the Candidate to the Congregation	38
How to Make a Recommendation and Vote on the Pastoral Candidate	39
Appendix 11: Sample Covenant between Church and Pastor	40

## **Now That Our Pastor Has Left, What Should We Do First?**

Most churches view the time between the resignation of one pastor and the call of another as unproductive. Some feel it is wasted time. Others fear the congregation will lose members or dollars. Still others are in a rush to call a new pastor as quickly as possible so those things can return to normal.

Significant studies of hundreds of interim congregations over the past twenty years are now showing that the interim between pastors can be an important time in the congregational life. R. Neil Chafin, an experienced consultant to congregations, says, "The way a congregation chooses to use its interim time will shape congregational growth, identity, and health for years to come. We also know that what is done in the interim time really determines whether the new minister and congregation will form a solid ministry team."

Congregations that fail to make wise use of the interim time tend to repeat their history with the new minister. This can lead to pain and confusion for the minister and prevent the congregation from meeting its goals of spiritual growth for its members and ministry to its community.

Expectations of ministers and churches vary enormously. Membership in many churches is either plateaued or declining. Many congregations are unsure of their future. Each generation differs on expectations for the church. The interim is the best time to talk about and clarify these hopes and questions about church life.

A "Transitional Pastor" can help a congregation work through some discovery processes. Valuable information can be gained during the interim period that can greatly enhance the ability of the church to find the right pastor.

There are several conditions that often indicate the need for a *Transitional Pastor Ministry*:

- The pastor had been there over ten years;
- There are undercurrents in the church that have not been settled;
- The pastor left because of a moral failure;
- The pastor was forced to resign;
- There is significant conflict in the church.

When a church decides to do a *Transitional Pastor Ministry* then a search team of 3-5 persons is enlisted. (Many churches prefer to use the deacons and/or a combination of the deacons and staff to fill this group). A Transitional Pastor is called to serve as a consultant to the church leaders. The responsibilities/expectations/commitments of the Transitional Pastor and the church are defined in a written covenant that must be approved by the church.

## **Electing the Pastor Search Committee**

A Pastor Search Committee is usually elected by members of the congregation by using a secret ballot process, but review your Church Constitution for guidelines set forth by your church. You must follow them.

Here are some practical suggestions.

The congregation should announce the date when the election shall be held. In the meantime, the congregation should be encouraged to pray.

**Note** – It is a good practice to ask that children and youth sit with their parents. Clear instructions should be given for how to seek and determine God's will. Parents should be encouraged to discuss this important occasion with their children prior to the vote.

A ballot with blank lines should then given to each member of the congregation. Each member can write-in the names of those individuals whom he/she believes would serve well on the Pastor Search Committee. (See Appendix 1 for a sample ballot.)

A Pastor Search Committee is selected by the congregation and shall report to the congregation. It should work on behalf of the congregation to recommend a pastor to the congregation, but it does not have the power to obligate the church nor make the choice of the new pastor.

**Appendix 1**  
**Election Ballot**  
**Pastor Search Committee**

As an active member of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, I prayerfully offer these names for election to our Pastor Search Committee. I understand that the seven names receiving the largest number of votes will be asked to serve on the committee with the following exceptions: no two members from the same household may serve on the committee; at least two deacons must serve on the committee; and the staff will serve as ex officio members of the committee. If anyone declines the opportunity to serve, the person receiving the next highest number of votes will be asked. This process will be followed until seven currently active, spiritually-mature members of the congregation agree to serve. The committee member receiving the greatest number of votes will be asked to serve as chairperson. Duties and responsibilities of the search committee are outlined on the reverse of this ballot.

With prayer, I offer these names:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Search Committee Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. Serve until the church approves a new pastor.
2. Secure pulpit supplies and/or an interim pastor to serve during the time the church is without the pastor (If this duty is given to the pastor-search committee).
3. Refer to the Church Council any matters necessary to the well-being of the congregation during the interim period.
4. Lead the congregation to determine its expectations of the new pastor and provisions for the support of the pastor and family.
5. Prayerfully and confidentially conduct the search for God's choice of our next pastor in a progressive, orderly, and timely manner with periodic reports to the church.
6. Prepare the candidate and the church to choose the next pastor in accordance with the policies of the church.
7. Recommend the pastoral candidate to the church in "view of a call."
8. Upon calling the pastor, support the ministry of the church and lead the congregation to follow our new pastor's leadership.

## Checklist for Pastor Search Committee's First Meeting

1. \_\_\_ Review the duties and responsibilities of the committee..
2. \_\_\_ Determine the process of selecting someone to preach during the interim time (if this duty is assigned to the pastor-search committee).
3. \_\_\_ Determine committee officers: chairperson, vice-chairperson, and recording secretary, (a correspondence secretary might also be needed). Take good minutes at every meeting!
4. \_\_\_ Discuss the considerations listed in "Getting Organized as a Search Committee", and review the "Code of Ethics" with the entire committee.
5. \_\_\_ Determine the place and time for weekly committee meetings. The importance of attendance at meetings should be stressed.
6. \_\_\_ Determine how often you will report to the congregation.
7. \_\_\_ If at all possible, schedule a committee retreat (one or two days) away from the church in a relaxed setting. Such a retreat would provide the committee a significant advantage for praying and developing personal and working relationships.
8. \_\_\_ Pray for one another. A specific covenant of prayer should be adopted:
  - Enlist the Holy Spirit to guide in the process.
  - Pray for each member to be able to function in their secular responsibilities; in family matters; and pray that God will protect the committee from distractions.
  - Pray that committee members will communicate with honesty and with love in all matters.
9. \_\_\_ Determine when to conduct the Church Questionnaire (see Appendix 3 – Church Questionnaire).
  - Develop, distribute, review, and report the congregation **questionnaire** that seeks to determine the expectations of the congregation regarding the next pastor.
  - The questionnaire would include both personal factors (age, education, experience, etc.) and pastoral tasks (visitation, preaching, teaching, administration, etc.)

### First Report to the Congregation

**Announcement:** "Thank you for your confidence in us. Please pray for us as we seek to serve the church in this capacity."

- Confirm the preaching arrangements for the interim period and call the congregation to special commitment during this time.
- Distribute the **Pastor Search Questionnaire** to the congregation.  
("This questionnaire will help us determine your expectations for our next pastor.")
- Your Search Committee will use the profile we gain from this questionnaire to help narrow the list of potential pastoral candidates.

## Who Will Preach for Us?

The period in which the congregation is without its pastor is called the "interim period." This refers to "the time between the former pastor leaves and the new one comes." Providing someone to preach in each worship service during the interim is referred to as "filling" or "supplying the pulpit."

When the pastor leaves, at least four attitudes are evident in the congregation: 1) Grief (sad); 2) Joy (glad); 3) Anger (mad); and 4) Confusion. One of the primary goals of the interim period is to bring the people with different attitudes back together again.

One duty of the Pastor Search Committee is to provide some one who will preach in the worship services (This duty is sometimes assigned to another group of members such as the deacons or to another staff member and the chairman of the Deacons by your Church Constitution).

During the absence of a pastor, everyone wonders who might be preaching in his place. Here are two methods that are used by congregations to "fill the pulpit:"

- a. A recognized and experienced minister is asked to preach on a variety of different occasions. This is often referred to as "supplying the pulpit" and the one who preaches is said to be the "pulpit supply."
- b. A recognized and experienced pastor is asked to serve as temporary pastor. This does not mean he will become the new pastor. It merely means he will be the primary person preaching in all services of the congregation and serving in ways common to a pastor (sometimes making hospital visits, counseling needs, etc.) This is often referred to as an "interim pastorate" and the one who serves is said to be the "interim pastor." His work is completed when the congregation secures its new pastor. The church is well advised to call an interim pastor to help the church move through the transition from pastor to pastor. During a time when the members are anxious about the future of the church, the interim pastor strives to be a *Anon-anxious@ presence* for the congregation. **It should be understood that when a person agrees to serve as interim pastor, he also agrees not to allow himself to be considered as a candidate for the pastor position.**

## Appendix 2

### Job Description Worksheet for Interim Pastor

**Principle Function:** The Interim Pastor is responsible to the Chairman of Deacons and the Chairman of the Personnel Committee and shall provide pastoral and administrative leadership for the church and shall use his skills in proclamation and pastoral care to minister to the needs of persons in the church and community as negotiated in a covenant agreement.

#### Responsibilities to be Negotiated between the Interim Pastor and the Church:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Prepare for and preach at worship services on Sunday morning and Sunday evening — (3 units)  
{Note: 1 unit = 4 hours}.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Prepare for and lead mid-week prayer/Bible study service — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Administer office responsibilities, including the preparation of bulletins, newsletters, financial reports, etc.) — ( $\frac{3}{4}$  units).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Supervise the church staff and other church employees — (2 units).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Minister to the sick in the hospitals and nursing homes — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Participate in church outreach and visit prospective members — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Visit the homebound — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Counsel with members in crisis — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Meet with the Deacons in their regular meetings — ( $\frac{1}{2}$  unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Meet with other church committees (e.g., church council, trustees, personnel committee, budget/finance committee, and search committee) — ( $\frac{1}{2}$  unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Conduct training for deacons and committees — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Prepare for and conduct funerals and weddings — (1 unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Prepare for and serve as moderator for church business meetings — ( $\frac{1}{4}$  unit).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Attend other church functions (e.g. class socials, anniversaries, prayer breakfasts, denominational meetings, etc.) — (1 unit).

#### Remuneration

- Based upon the full-time pastor working 15 units per week (60 hours), the Interim Pastor shall be compensated based upon the following formula:  
Pay = (# of units/15) X [Full-time Pastor's salary and housing (or equivalent for church with parsonage)].
- In addition, the Interim Pastor will be reimbursed for mileage (40.5 cents per mile in 2005 – see the latest IRS approved mileage reimbursement rate) and other expenses incurred as indicated by receipts.

## Appendix 3 Church Questionnaire

Our new pastor will best serve our congregation's needs if he were: (Please help us by checking your opinions)

**Age:**  Younger than 30yrs.  30-40yrs.  
 40-50yrs.  50yrs.+  Age doesn't matter

**Pastoral experience:**  None previous  1-3 yrs.  
 3-6yrs.  6yrs.+  Doesn't matter

**Marital status:**  Single  Married  Divorced  
 Married with children  Married status doesn't matter

**Education background:**  
 High School grad  Some college  College Grad  
 Seminary Graduate (Master Degree)

**Pastor Search Committee Reporting Procedures:**  
Please check all that applies:

Kind of Reports:  written articles  announcements

Frequency of Reports:  weekly  monthly  
 as the Committee determines

**Prayer Support:**  
 I commit to pray often for our Pastor Search Committee.

### Pastoral Ministry Priorities:

I know a pastor can't do everything, but I think these are the **three** most important ways our pastor should spend his time (**check only three**):

- visit the sick
- visit the lost
- visit members
- spend time with the youth
- spend time with senior adults
- preparing to preach and teach
- private family time
- supervising volunteers
- church committee meetings
- counseling church members
- praying
- visiting prospective members and community residents
- administrating church program, building, office responsibilities
- other (please explain)\_\_\_\_\_

### My Personal Suggestion for a Pastoral Candidate:

Minister's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Church: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

The primary reason for suggesting this person as a possible candidate for our pastor is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In case you might need more information regarding my suggestion, you can contact me:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Who Develops the Job Description and Compensation Package?

These matters must be clearly outlined and agreed upon by the congregation prior to searching for a new pastor. With regard to the duties (job description), be sure to involve the committee or body that will supervise the pastor (to whom he is responsible). See Appendix 4 – Sample: Pastor’s Job Description. Also, use the information received from the Church Questionnaire to make sure that the job description addresses the concerns and expectations of the congregation.

The Finance Committee, in cooperation with the Personnel Committee, should be responsible for determining the compensation package of the pastor. The Search Committee should be prepared to help negotiate between the Finance Committee and the pastoral candidate the specific appropriation of the total compensation package. It is often a difficult task to represent both the pastoral candidate’s needs and the financial ability of the church (See Appendix 5 – Compensation Worksheet). Make sure you research the subject thoroughly from both the pastor’s perspective and the reality of your church budget.

After negotiating both the job description and the compensation package, provide a **written recommendation** to the congregation for an official vote to avoid any misunderstanding. It should include:

- Duties of the pastor;
- Specific tasks expected by the congregation;
- Salary and benefits for pastoral support.

## ***Appendix 4***

### **Sample: Pastor's Job Description**

#### **Principle Function**

The pastor is responsible to the church to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, to teach the biblical revelation, to engage in pastoral care ministries, to provide administrative leadership in all areas of church life, and to act as the chief administrator of the paid staff.

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Plan and conduct the worship services; prepare and deliver sermons; lead in observance of ordinances.
2. Lead the church in an effective program of witnessing and in a caring ministry for persons in the church and community.
3. Visit members and prospects.
4. Conduct counseling sessions; perform wedding ceremonies; conduct funerals.
5. Serve as chairman of the Church Council to lead in planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and evaluating the total church program.
6. Work with deacons, church officers, and committees as they perform their assigned responsibilities; train and lead the deacons in their ministry.
7. Act as moderator of church business meetings.
8. Cooperate with association, state, and denominational leaders in matters of mutual interest and concern; keep the church informed of denominational development; represent the church in civic matters.
9. Serve as chief administrator of the paid church staff; supervise the work of the staff.

*APPENDIX 5 (Part 1)*  
**COMPENSATION  
WORKSHEET  
FOR  
PERSONNEL COSTS**

**ANNUAL BUDGET FIGURES**

**A. Church Ministry Related Expenses**

- 1. Automobile Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Convention Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Book/Tapes/Periodicals Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Continuing Education Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Hospitality Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL EXPENSES** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Protective Coverage**

- 1. Insurance
  - A. Term Life \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Comprehensive Medical \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Disability \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Retirement \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Social Security Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL BENEFITS** \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Personal Income**

- 1. Cash Salary \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Utilities Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Personal Income** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PERSONNEL COST** \_\_\_\_\_

(Appendix 5 – Part 2)

## Worksheet for Financial Support

### A. Church Ministry Related Expenses

#### 1. Automobile reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_

The Internal Revenue Service sets a standard mileage rate for business miles each year (40.5 cents / mile in 2005). Check with local businessmen or call your city officials. This item should reflect the total number of miles necessary to visit in members homes, in the homes and offices of prospective members, in the regular ministry of visitation to hospitals, business concerns, and other such ministry travel as pastor of our church.

#### 2. Convention reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_

This provision allows our congregation to be represented by our pastor in attendance to the State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention annually. This includes the costs of travel, lodging, meals, and any material or event fees.

#### 3. Books/Tapes reimbursement. \_\_\_\_\_

Our Pastor is encouraged to stay at pace with developments in social, community, and convention ministries as well as personal preparation for proclamation of the gospel. This allows for periodic updates to such material.

#### 4. Continuing Education reimbursement. \_\_\_\_\_

As with all professional fields, continuing education opportunities such as seminars, workshops, skills enhancement, and briefings are necessary to stay at pace with developments.

#### 5. Hospitality reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_

It is a regular occurrence for pastors, as representative of the congregation, to be required to attend meals or banquets on behalf of the church or to be provided a meal while discussing matters of church business. This allows a partial reimbursement.

### B. Protection Coverage

#### 1. Insurance (Life, Medical, Disability) \_\_\_\_\_

The church provides the standard health care, comprehensive medical, term life and disability protection for our pastor and comprehensive medical for his family. We view this as a protection to the integrity and reputation of care of the church body to one of its primary ministering families.

### 2. Retirement \_\_\_\_\_

The true compensation to a minister is his salary cash pay, housing allowance, utilities allowance, and social security equivalent. These items constitute true personal or family income. Retirement provisions are assessed from these items at 10% or higher, based upon the age and margin of years prior to retirement. (10% of Salary, Housing & Utilities, and S.S. Equivalent)

### 3. Social Security Equivalent \_\_\_\_\_

Ordained ministers are treated as self-employed and not employees for social security purposes. Non-ordained employee wages are subject to a matching payment of social security tax. The employee's 7.65% and employer's 7.65% of FICA taxes are each comprised of two components: 6.2% is social security tax; 1.45% is for Medicare hospital insurance. (Verify the accuracy of percentages with government publications.) The church provides one half this cost so as to provide equal treatment by the employer to the ordained and the non-ordained. This is reported as income and subject to income tax as with all such employees. (7.65% of Salary, Housing & Utilities, and S.S. Equivalent)

### C. Personal Income

#### 1. Cash Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Education, experience, responsibilities and expertise should be considered when determining basic compensation.

#### 2. Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_

Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code offers housing allowance to ministers. This allowance cannot exceed the fair rental value of the furnished house in which the minister resides. (SECTION 107 APPLIES TO THE COSTS OF UTILITIES AND FURNISHINGS. THIS LINE ITEM COULD CONTAIN ALL SUCH COSTS, OR A SEPARATE LINE ITEM COULD BE USED FOR EACH, (I.E., UTILITIES, FURNISHINGS, LAWN CARE, ETC.)

#### 3. Utilities Allowance \_\_\_\_\_

Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code offers utilities allowance to ministers. Allowance cannot exceed actual cost.

## Putting Together a Church Information Packet

Make assignments to committee members to put together a packet of information on the church and community. Have several copies of the packet available to send to each viable candidate about the time you schedule your first interview visit. It should include items such as:

- Copy of church budget, church constitution and by laws, personnel policies, any policy and procedure manuals, etc.
- Chart of organizational responsibilities.
- Copies of past newsletters and / or bulletins that give an indication of the types of activities in which your church participates.
- Copy of your latest church calendar.
- Copies of the last few monthly financial statements.
- Any church brochure(s) you may have.
- Information about the parsonage, as applicable (size, age, features, location, picture, floor plan, color scheme, drapes, carpet, etc.)
- A simple drawing of your present facilities with a list of statistics about the building.
- Any future plans voted on by the church that would affect the future of the church (you may want to include copies of your last few business meetings).
- Church statistics for at least the last five years (preferably ten years) to give the candidate information about your church (available from the ACP – Annual Church Profile).
- List of organizations in the church.
- Copy of the latest church picture directory.
- Information about your town/area (contact the chamber of commerce).

## Critical Agreements and Considerations

Each of these issues will be critical in the performance of your Search Committee and the outcome of your search. Discuss each statement seriously and decide whether or not you will do it. Write down the results of your discussion to avoid misunderstandings.

(Yes / No)

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. We will require a unanimous vote of the Search Committee regarding the final recommendation of a pastor to our congregation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. We will maintain full confidentiality in all matters (including wives, or not?).
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. We will coordinate all expenditures of the search with committee approval.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. We will only consider candidates for whom we receive resumes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. All recommendations that the committee receives must be written.
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. The pastor profile will be used as the primary means to evaluate the priority listing of our prospects.
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. No individual will be recommended to the church until the committee has thoroughly completed its investigation of the candidate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. We will use the approved financial provisions in discussions with the candidate. If we feel this must be changed, we will first gain appropriate approval before proceeding with the search process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. We will not allow church members to "rush" us in the search process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. We agree that a candidate will not preach before our congregation until the committee is ready to recommend him to the church as pastor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. We will only negotiate with one candidate at a time.

## **Code of Ethics Pastor Search Committee Members**

All those who have been privileged to become involved in this search certainly realize their fellow members have placed great confidence in them personally and spiritually. Each one should be encouraged and called to a solemn sense of responsibility. We covenant together to preserve a prayerful and effective service for our Lord in every aspect of the matter before us.

**We will pledge to pray daily for each other and to remain in a constant vigil for matters in our congregation that may encourage or discourage our assigned task:**

1. We pledge to speak plainly and with honest intent regarding all matters to be considered.
2. We will not knowingly withhold thoughts or reports that bear impact upon our task, but with careful attention to the honor and testimony of our brothers and sisters, we will offer a fair and factual statement to the committee in session for the purpose of its deliberation and counsel.
3. We pledge to receive all information, discuss all information, and meditate upon all information with a confidence that each speaker has spoken to the common good, without intent of harm or hurt to persons present or absent. We will look for the common encouragement found in each challenge, and we shall resist the temptation, should such arise, to think less of one another.
4. In all matters, our concern shall be first to seek our Heavenly Father's will and submit attentively in prayer to His direction.
5. In order to protect the integrity of our covenant, we pledge to uphold all confidentiality.
6. We undertake this task as a spiritual challenge and recognize our personal and corporate need for prayer and wisdom in order to fully accomplish our work in the Lord.

**AMEN.**

## Pastor Search Committee Expenses

Understanding that there will more than likely be expenses related to securing the next pastor, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. All expenses should be coordinated through the chairman of the search committee.
2. Reimbursement should only be expected when there are receipts submitted to the church.
3. It is recommended that the cost of the Pastor Search Committee would come from the line item in the church budget: Pastor's Salary or other related line items. However, it would be wise to save as much of the pastor's salary for moving expenses for the pastor your church will select, since there probably is no provision in the budget for these related expenses. The pulpit supply/interim pastor expense can also come from the Pastor's Salary line item.
4. A monthly allotment should be established early in the search. If it appears that expenditures will exceed the monthly allotment, church approval should be received prior to financial commitment, if at all possible.
5. Reimbursements should be expected for the following items:
  - A. Transportation, meals, and lodging of the search committee for trips to interview a prospective pastor. (A suggested amount for automobile expenses would be the allowed IRS expense per mile – 40.5 cents per mile in 2005).
  - B. Postage expenses related to the search.
  - C. Telephone expenses related to the search. (The church phone should be used as much as possible to call the candidate. Should the candidate call, it would be good to offer to call him right back so he would not have to pay for the call.)
  - D. Transportation, meals, and lodging for the candidate to and from the church field. (A suggested amount for automobile expenses would be the allowed IRS expense per mile – 40.5 cents per mile in 2005).
6. Any other expense related to searching for a pastor that is approved by the church.

The committee should be fair and frugal with expenses. The search could last for several months.

## The Process of Finding a Pastor "Search Etiquette"

The Pastor Search Committee's conduct and practice is the first impression the candidate and his family will have regarding your church. As in all areas of life and work of the church, the highest standard should be followed. The process to locate, interview, evaluate, and pursue a potential pastoral candidate affects his current ministry field, regardless if the candidate eventually serves as your pastor. A set procedure gives confidence to your committee members, to your church, and to the prospective candidate.

The Search Committee should realize that the search process usually takes *several* months. A rule of thumb is "one month per year that the previous pastor served, with a minimum of six months required."

The following should be considered:

1. **Determine a process to secure someone to "fill the pulpit" and secure a committee to assume responsibility for this process.** The interim pastor/minister should **never** be considered for the permanent position of pastor. It is almost inevitable that church members will eventually express a desire that the interim become the permanent pastor/minister. The eligibility of the interim as a candidate for the permanent position undermines the search process (See "Who Will Preach For Us?").
2. **Respect the Process –**
  - 1) You are the representatives of the larger body (do not serve with a personal agenda);
  - 2) Remember the *principle of imputed trust* (Since trust is **earned**, the trust level of the congregation for the new pastor is a function of the trust the committee has gained through the search process – poor process equals low trust level for the new pastor upon his arrival).
  - 3) Confidentiality (Information about persons under consideration or information about committee deliberations should not be shared or discussed with any individual outside the committee until the committee is ready to make a recommendation.)
  - 4) Congregational communication/information (The committee should report to the church as often as possible to explain what the committee is doing.)
3. **Use the Pastor Search Committee Questionnaire to get an idea of the congregation's expectations of the pastor.** (See Appendix 3: Church Questionnaire). Develop a pastoral profile to be used by the committee in its search.
4. **Draft an updated Pastor's Job Description (a statement of a pastor's tasks and expectations) and Pastor's Compensation Package, and have them approved by the appropriate committee(s) and then the congregation** (See Appendix 4: Sample: Pastor's Job Description and Appendix 5: Compensation Worksheet for Personnel Costs). These are normal expectations any candidate should understand before serving as your pastor. State the obvious, leave no assumptions.
4. **Make assignments to committee members to put together a packet of information on the church and community to give to prospective candidates.** Assemble several packets and keep them as current as possible. (See "Putting Together a Church Information Packet"). Develop a written information piece to be used with each candidate, giving a full and succinct description of the church and its community.

**5. Discuss and approve a Code of Ethics that your Search Committee will use in their conduct through the entire search process.** Deal with matters such as confidentiality, honesty, relationships with other committee members, and common courtesy among members.

**6. Conduct the search for a pastor.**

The Pastor Search Committee should agree upon the process of the search. A variety of methods can be used in the process of the search:

- The committee can travel to visit with the prospective pastor.
- It can be arranged for the prospective pastor to travel to a neighboring church in which he can demonstrate his preaching style, focus and demeanor.
- The Pastor Search Committee should make good use of videotapes or audiotapes prior to either 1 or 2 above.
- The Pastor Search Committee should agree with and gain approval from the congregation in advance of expenditures regarding any use of congregational funds necessary to the expected search. (See "Pastor Search Committee Expenses")
- The Pastor Search Committee should develop a covenant of confidentiality and agree upon the method of sharing search information with the congregation. The committee should also agree upon the content of the report that is shared periodically with the congregation, being careful not to divulge individual names or current pastorates of possible candidates. In addition to information, the committee spokesman should request fervent prayer by the congregation for the work of the committee.
- The committee must agree upon a meeting schedule that will enable the committee to conduct the search in a timely, responsible manner. Meetings of the committee should be held regularly, with all members fully informed of the expected agenda.

**IMPORTANT: The chairman should normally be the primary spokesperson of the committee in all matters (with the congregation, with the potential candidates, and with any outside influences).**

**7. Develop a list of names of prospective pastors.** Several candidates will be shared with you from a variety of sources. Each should be graciously accepted. Resumes may be received from the state office, association office, seminaries, colleges, other pastors, friends of candidates, and members of the congregation. Establish a **cut-off date** for receiving resumes.

**8. Do not accept a recommendation without an accompanying resume. The recommendation should also include a written reference from the source.** In receiving recommendations of potential pastors, those providing such suggestions or recommendations should be informed that each suggestion would be treated in the same procedure as all others.

**9. A letter of acknowledgement need not normally be sent to each candidate, unless for some reason, the candidate was personally contacted by the committee.** If the search committee has requested the resume of a candidate, a letter should be sent stating receipt of the resume. If at a later date that particular candidate is rejected, a letter should be sent to notify him of the committee's decision.

**10. Using the pastoral profile, develop a list of prospective pastors.** Establish a process for using the resumes and the pastoral profile to determine **the number one** candidate for the position. To minimize conflict and to encourage consensus, the Search Committee should deliberate/negotiate with only one candidate at a time.

**11. Assign committee members to thoroughly investigate available information on the number one candidate by contacting his references.** Respect the prospect's current ministry field. In every contact made, please be sensitive not to disturb the church he currently serves. Making random inquiries to someone who is not a reference could be disruptive to the fellowship of fellow believers. **Caution:** Develop a standardized, written means of inquiry to be used with each

reference and with the candidate directly (see Appendix 6: Letter to Candidate's References; and Appendix 8: Personal Reference Information Form). Check all references. Ask each reference if he knows one other person who might know the candidate that could give a good objective report. The committee should be very thorough in the investigation of the candidate's background (resume), financial dealings, doctrinal beliefs, family relationships, leadership style, as well as his references. **Make sure you obtain at least one weakness (*growth area*) from each reference.**

12. **Contact the candidate directly for an initial visit.** Before conducting a personal interview with the candidate, have him write his philosophy of ministry/leadership, define his core values, describe his ministry vision, and declare his statement of beliefs. Evaluate his beliefs by comparison with the "statement of faith" adopted by the church (usually a part of the church's constitution/bylaws). Keenly respect the present ministry of the candidate. **Do not speak to the church secretary** about an initial visit or any other subject. Speak to the pastor personally and arrange an appointment for the committee to visit at length with him (prior to hearing him preach, if possible). A drop-in committee is more likely to have expended tremendous effort in arranging their own schedules, using travel resources, building up expectations; only to discover the absence of the pastor or to find a very busy pastor who does not have time to give the attention deserved. Make appointments directly with the candidate and be sensitive about the meeting place so as not to arouse suspicion. If not practical to visit the candidate on his field of ministry, it is possible to use video and other media to evaluate him.
13. **Keep the appointment.** If emergencies require changes, communicate the problems and reschedule.
14. **Be honest, even if it is humbling.** Be descriptive of all things: faults and successes of the church. Do not attempt to obscure the bad with an emphasis of the good.
15. **Try not to be conspicuous while visiting in services.** After making sure the pastor will be preaching, arrive as friends, making a visit among brothers and sisters in Christ. Sit in various places among the congregation, not as a board of inquiry. Take good notes on the sermon and worship experience. It is hard to recall your evaluation from memory (see Appendix 9: Prospective Minister's Sermon Evaluation Form). Do not linger, but make a point before leaving to share privately with the pastor that you will be back in touch. Information and details can be shared by phone earlier or later, but not at the dismissal handshake.
16. **Make an immediate follow-up phone call that afternoon to relieve the candidate's anxiety about your conclusions of the visit with him.** Even if the news is "no news," it is more caring to communicate with honesty than to be silent.
17. **Make arrangements for a second visit to the candidate's church.** Use good judgment as to whether or not the entire committee should attend the worship service. However, for the second visit, all committee members should attend the interview with the pastor and his wife (See "Making a Second Visit with the Candidate").
18. **Determine how the Search Committee will present the candidate to the congregation.** This is a very important step in the process and should not be overlooked because first impressions are critical (See "How to Present the Candidate to the Congregation"). When prepared to announce the committee's choice to the church, distribute the candidate's resume to the church and schedule a get-acquainted weekend. Give the church approximately one month's advance notice. Arrange for the candidate to preach at all services on that Sunday. Schedule times for the candidate to visit with the church staff, deacons, church ministry leaders, church organizational leaders, and the various age groups of the church. Schedule a question/answer time to allow church members the opportunity to satisfy their concerns.
19. **Determine how the Church will vote on the candidate.** Based upon the successful conclusion of the visit, recommend the call of the candidate, as appropriate. Schedule the church vote one week

later than the get acquainted weekend visit to allow the church members and the candidate one week to earnestly pray about the matter. *The less the committee is perceived to rush the process, the more confidence is engendered by those church members who might be cautious.* Always conduct the voting process in accordance with the requirements stated in the church's constitution and bylaws (See "How to Make a Recommendation and Vote on the Pastoral Candidate"). When the vote is taken, communicate the results of the vote and notify the candidate of the vote results. Receive his reply, and communicate this information to all concerned.

- 20. Completion of the Task.** Assist the individual in his transition to the area, and consider scheduling an installation service. Keep the search committee in place for at least six months after the call of the new pastor to act as a support group for the pastor and to assist everyone in interpreting the job description and covenant agreement.

### **Pastor Search Observations**

In zeroing in on a prospective pastor, here are some observations that a committee may seriously consider and weigh:

1. After a pastor has been at a church a year, the church begins to take on his personality.
2. A church will never grow beyond its pastor – in spiritual/Biblical growth and in numbers.
3. A pastor will never grow a church beyond his vision or comfort level.
4. When a Search Committee begins to tire or become anxious or discouraged, it quietly moves into a different mode. Subconsciously, it moves to "just find someone". It begins to ease its requirements/expectations and gives less attention to do homework and background checks. The goal becomes "fill the position." Rationalizations are made. The qualifications become:
  - 1) "Is he available?" and
  - 2) "Is he cheap?"
6. Closely consider the pastor's history of tenure. It may appear that he has 20 years experience, when in reality he has 2 years experience repeated ten times.
7. There are two kinds of preachers:
  - 1) Those who have something to say, and
  - 2) Those who have to say something. When a church relies on having a different supply in every Sunday during the interim time, they primarily get the latter.

**Remember: The Church has the right to ask God for, and expect from Him, the very best man possible.**

## Making a Second Visit with the Candidate

Since you were evidently greatly impressed with him the first time you contacted him, this second visit should be more lengthy and thorough. Again, the committee should phone in advance, talk to the prospective pastor only, and make plans to visit with him. If at all possible, hear him in his own pulpit if he is presently pastoring a church. (It may be that you heard him the first time in another church when he was on vacation, in a revival meeting, or, by your committee's arrangement, in another pulpit.) Include as many committee members as possible.

Perhaps, you may want to take him out for a meal and a time of fellowship and discussion prior to the Sunday worship hour. Be sure to include his wife. However, if the prospect's church is in a very small town or rural area, where everybody knows everybody, it may not be wise to take them out to a meal since it could place his present ministry at risk. You do not want to jeopardize his present ministry. If the couple has small children, help them arrange child care so that the children will not distract the couple from giving full attention to the meeting. It is prudent to make prior arrangements with the prospect so that the atmosphere will be conducive to a relaxed time of conversation and discussion.

What should you discuss with the prospect?

Somewhere in your conversation you should ask the candidate many questions in order to get to know him personally and professionally. (See Appendix 10: Important Questions to Ask a Prospective Pastor). Give him an opportunity to ask questions about your church. Be prepared to answer the following kinds of questions:

- The unity of your church
- Why the last pastor left
- If there is freedom in your church pulpit (freedom to preach as God leads)
- The church staff – if you have one
- Support of missions
- The church's concept of the work of the pastor
- The growth potential of the church
- Your outreach and witnessing program
- Church facilities
- The strongest program of your church
- The weakest program of your church
- The greatest thing your church has done in the last five years.

Be open with him. Never try to hide the facts and condition of your church. And be kind to him. Do not interrogate him!

Finally, talk about "money matters" and other benefits (see Appendix 5: Compensation Worksheet for Personnel Costs). God-called men are not in the ministry for money, but it does take money to meet financial responsibilities, and "the laborer is worthy of his hire." Since he already has a copy of the church budget that you mailed to him in the packet of materials, this is a good time to discuss what the church has agreed to offer a pastor in the way of salary, housing, utilities, protection benefits (such as retirement and insurance) and ministry reimbursements (such as car expenses, convention expenses, books, and continuing education).

Talk about the amount of vacation offered, number of revivals and teaching or conference opportunities permitted, payment of moving expenses, what the church would provide in additional staff personnel, and any other matters of mutual concern. After talking with the pastor, increases may need to be considered in some areas. **It would be wise for the committee to give the prospective pastor a written copy of these matters, even if on a tentative basis.** Later, if the committee should recommend calling him as their pastor, **a firm, written agreement** should be made between the prospective pastor and the church. This will avoid any misunderstandings at a later time.

Have a conversation at this time about what the church expects of a pastor (see Appendix 4: Sample: Pastor's Job Description). Use the results from the Church Questionnaire. There should be an honest and free conversation about a working schedule, office procedures, and other mutual concerns about pastor-church relations you have not already discussed.

Give him an opportunity to talk with you about some expectations he would have for the committee and the church. These expectations should be honestly conveyed to the congregation **before** the church votes to call him as pastor. It is recommended that you develop a Covenant to clearly express the commitments and expectations of both the church and the pastor (See Appendix 11).

By this time, your committee should have some "signals" from the prospective pastor about his interest in your church. If he does not show any real positive feelings about your church, ask him to make it a matter of genuine prayer. Commit yourselves to do the same and tell him you will contact him later.

Stay in contact with this candidate until he agrees to come in view of a call or until he decides that it is not God's will for him to come to your church. If at any time your committee does not feel that you should proceed with this candidate, let him know immediately with a full explanation. Then proceed to the next candidate on the priority list you developed.

**Appendix 6**  
**Personal Evaluation Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: On a scale of 1 - 10, please circle the degree to which you evaluate yourself.

**CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AND ATTITUDE**

**1. Christian Character:**

Consistently demonstrates love, patience, and forgiveness toward others.

Does not demonstrate a real understanding of Christian standards.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**2. Personal Discipleship and Witness:**

Consistently demonstrates a maturing Christian discipleship based fellowship and service.

Does not give evidence of spiritual growth in his daily walk.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**3. Cooperation:**

Actively seeks ways to work with others to achieve desired results.

Selfish, never seeks to work with others.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**4. Attitude:**

Consistently demonstrates a positive, edifying attitude.

Very poor; is critical, sarcastic, or moody much of the time.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**5. Relating To People:**

Consistently demonstrates a capacity and willingness to work harmoniously with staff, workers, and laymen.

Alienates others, is distant and uncaring in relationships.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**PROFESSIONAL SKILLS:**

**6. Quantity of Work:**

Consistently produces more than is required.

Does not meet minimum standards.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**7. Quality of Work:**

Excellent; always top-notch demonstrates good thought, planning, and follow-through.

Very poor; results are far below standard most of the time.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**8. Organization and Planning:**

Always plans his work and then works his plan; delegates, involves others.

Flies by the "seat-of-his pants" never involves others in the planning process.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**9. Knowledge of Job:**

Above average education and experience for current position; continues to grow in the job.

Below standard; does not demonstrate a clear understanding of what can or should be done.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**10. Work Habits:**

Energetic; good manager of time and other resources; punctual.

Lazy, wastes time and other resources; not punctual.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**11. Responsibility:**

Very dependable; always gets the job done within the quality, quantity, and time limits required.

Cannot be trusted to perform within cost predetermined limits; requires constant supervision.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**12. Initiative:**

A self-starter; looks for ways to improve or help the situation.

Must always be prodded into action; does not initiate on his own.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**13. Communication:**

Clear, consistent, and effective.

Confusing, unclear, and inconsistent.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**14. Confidentiality:**

Can be trusted to hold confidences; loyal.

Tells all to all.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**15. Creativity:**

Consistently develops new ideas or new ways of doing old tasks.

Never attempts new ideas or methods, only relies on "the way we've always done it."

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**15. Able to Cast Vision:**

Directs the church toward a God-given idea of the future.

Never attempts to share of view of Where the church is going.

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

**Appendix 7**  
**Letter to Candidate's References**

*Send this to the references noted on the resume.*

*Enclose a self-addressed, pre-stamped envelope for return on church letterhead*

Dear Mr. Reference:

The Pastor Search Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church has been given your name as a reference for Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ who is a candidate for Pastor of this church.

Our committee is particularly interested in your evaluation of this candidate and will be awaiting your earliest reply before proceeding with further consideration of this candidate.

We would greatly appreciate your forthright and honest opinion of his current and past ministry, as you know it. Please rest assured we would handle your comments with the utmost care since we recognize the importance of so doing. Any narrative or additional information you might give us beyond the questions asked regarding his pastoral skills, giving both positive and negative factors, would be very insightful and useful to this church.

The committee would appreciate it if we could have this vital information in the next 15 days.

Thank you for your help and please join our church in prayer that the church and the man will know God's will when He calls.

Yours in His service,

Chairman, Pastor Search Committee  
\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church

encl: Personal Reference Information Form

## Appendix 8

### Personal Reference Information Form \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church (Address)

Reference for: \_\_\_\_\_ Form Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

THE ABOVE NAMED INDIVIDUAL IS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE POSITION OF \_\_\_\_\_.  
PLEASE ASSIST OUR SEARCH COMMITTEE BY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS FULLY AND AS OPENLY AS POSSIBLE. YOUR ANSWER WILL BE HELD IN STRICTEST OF CONFIDENCE.

1. How long have you known the candidate and under what circumstances have you known him?

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2. What do you consider his strengths as a pastor?

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3. What do you consider his weaknesses as a pastor?

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4. What can you tell us about his family?

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5. How does the family contribute to his ministry?

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6. Are there any problems relating to their children that would be distracting from his ministry?

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7. In what capacity of the church have you particularly worked with this pastor? Circle one or more: Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Deacon, WMU, choir, committee, Baptist Association, Convention, member, other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

How did this pastor relate to you and your group in the area of your involvement as mentioned above.

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8. Does this prospect's sermons have substance? Are the sermons delivered in a manner which holds the attention of the congregation?

---

---

9. Does the prospect's worship leadership help those attending services to experience worship in both the church services and their personal lives?

---

---

10. How does the prospect demonstrate his enthusiasm for ministry?

---

---

11. Does he exhibit a vision for doing God's work? Can he share his vision enthusiastically?

---

---

12. Does the prospect organize and challenge the staff and communicate well with committees and offices of the church?

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---

13. Describe the prospects involvement in ongoing mission activities.

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14. Would you desire to be a part of a church where this individual was serving? Yes \_\_\_\_; No \_\_\_\_\_. If your answer is "No," please explain

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---

15. Additional comments:

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16. Please give the contact information of at least one other person who could provide an objective appraisal of this candidate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

17. The following items, in alphabetical order, include many responsibilities of a pastor. All of the responsibilities are important. Would you please rank the candidate as to his strengths regarding responsibilities, roles, and attributes of a pastor. We ask you to rank him in what you believe to be his greatest strength - number 1 through 11 (1. being the most important). Explanation of categories follows the table.

	<b>ADMINISTRATOR</b> The pastor should possess good administrative skills; capable of leading the church staff, the deacons, and lay leaders to carry out effectively their respective ministries.
	<b>COMMUNITY RELATIONS SUPPORTER</b> The pastor should be aware of and concerned with community needs, activities and affairs and knowledgeably capable of addressing these concerns from a pastoral perspective; thus establishing respect in the community.

	<p><b>COUNSELOR</b> The pastor should be an effective counselor, setting aside a portion of his time for counseling, and making referrals when appropriate.</p>
	<p><b>DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONS</b> The pastor should be knowledgeable of and concerned about our church's efforts to cooperate and maintain historic values with sister churches in missions, education, evangelism, and other denominational activities.</p>
	<p><b>EVANGELIZER</b> The pastor should be involved personally in evangelism, sharing the gospel with those inside and outside the church.</p>
	<p><b>LEADER</b> The pastor should be a leader capable of inspiring, encouraging, and motivating church members to use their time and talents in doing the work of the church.</p>
	<p><b>MISSIONARY VISION</b> The pastor should be excited about his calling to the ministry and to our church, should exhibit a vision for doing God's work here, and should enthusiastically share it with the church. The pastor should support home and foreign missions, be aware of local community needs and lead the church in ministering to these needs.</p>
	<p><b>PRAYER AND WORSHIP LEADER</b> The pastor should arouse all people to prayer. His worship leadership should help members and those attending services to experience worship in both the church services and their personal lives.</p>
	<p><b>PROCLAIMER</b> Each sermon should have substance and should be delivered in a manner which holds the attention of the congregation. He must prepare well and then forth-tell God's Word from the pulpit.</p>
	<p><b>STUDENT</b> The pastor should have an ongoing program of study (including, but more than personal Bible study &amp; prayer) to develop new skills and knowledge and participation in activities which renew his physical, emotional, and spiritual energy and zest for his ministry.</p>
	<p><b>VISITOR</b> Within the limits of his time, the pastor should visit the church membership, including times of hospital care, grief, personal crisis and joy. The pastor should be friendly, approachable, and personable and should relate well to each age group in the church.</p>

Because the tasks of a pastor are multi-dimensional, the following overview may be helpful in completing the questionnaire.

**An Administrator** is one who sees that people are organized and challenged to be involved in Ministry for Christ. The ministry is a heavenly pursuit but also an earthly task; he should organize the staff into a team, be a good communicator to all segments of the church body and good manager of time, all to the Glory of God. In I Corinthians 9, Paul writes of disciplining his body for the pursuit of excellence for Christ. He labored in the ministry because he believed the consequences were eternal. Like Paul, the godly minister should be a team-oriented leader, relying on others when necessary as Paul did with Silas, Barnabas, Luke, Mark and Timothy, working together and demonstrating love: "by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another" (John 13:34-35).

**A Community Supporter** works in the civic and denominational areas, reflecting Christian principles on important issues. According to Acts 5:28, the early church's pattern was one of involvement: "you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Further examples abound: Acts 13:44, 14:1, 16:5, and 17:3-4. A Counselor is one who can effectively deal with and help troubled people. It may involve listening, comforting and guiding. As Romans 13:14 suggests, scriptural counseling involves focusing on Jesus, denying self, and emphasizing a view toward changing behavior.

Neches River Baptist Association

**A Denominational Relations Supporter** works through the local, state and worldwide organizations of our denomination to further the cooperative goals of meeting both the spiritual and earthly needs of the people in our world. The Christians in Antioch exhibited this when, "The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for their brothers living in Judea." Acts 11:29

**An Evangelizer** works to reach the lost for Christ. There is a need to be both faithful and focused. Paul admonishes Timothy to "keep your head in all situations, endure hardships, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." (II Tim. 4:5) There are two ways to evangelize: through our lives and through our words. He is to be salt and light to a lost world by living an evangelistic lifestyle, and is to evangelize through speech - "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (I Peter 3:15)

**A Leader** guides others towards God's way, in the same way a shepherd guides his flock. This includes both a knowledge of what is right and an intimate knowledge of his sheep. I Peter 5:2 says "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight of it."

**A Missionary Vision** – Proverbs 29:18 "where there is no vision, the people perish." A pastor should see the opportunity of enlarging God's Kingdom and should lead the church to see that the field is white unto harvest, to enlist the unchurched, to minister in a loving and caring way to senior citizens, the singles, the divorced, and the young people in an ever-changing, immoral world.

**A Prayer and Worship Leader** should arouse all people to prayer and work with other staff members to insure an organized and meaningful service by inspiring the body of believers to "worship in the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus..." (Phil. 3:3) so that we may draw near to God, and He will draw near to us.

**A Proclaimer** must prepare well and then forth-tell God's Word from the pulpit. II Tim. 4:2 states "preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction," arouse within Christians and non-Christians alike the urgency to know and serve Jesus Christ with gladness day and night.

**A Student** is one who continues to learn, improving his skills as well as increasing his understanding of the Word. For example, I TIM. 4:6 challenges Timothy to denounce apostate teachings. This becomes possible by being a diligent, prayerful student of Scripture.

**A Visitor** visits with the members of the church, including the hospitalized, shut-ins and the bereaved. James reminds us that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction..." (James 1:27) He should also show hospitality good natured, extending kindness to strangers and not just friends. (Heb. 12:14; I Peter 4:9)



## **Appendix 10**

# **Important Questions to Ask a Prospective Pastor**

**Instructions:** Each member of the committee should have a copy of these questions. Carefully choose from the following list the questions that your committee feels are pertinent to your church. Check the questions that you would like to ask. Add your own. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, or to be used in its entirety, or in a particular order, although it could be. Take notes during the interview and rate the candidate on a scale of 1 to 10 for each category. Once the interview is over, transfer your scores to the Interview Summary on the last page.

**Name of Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Ministry Experience:**

What have you learned in the congregation you now serve that will make you a better pastor?

Describe a ministry experience with the congregation you now serve that captures you greatest strengths.

Describe a grievance you have had with any of the churches you have served. How was it resolved?

Have you had a positive or negative experience with a church building program?

Describe your weaknesses and your strengths.

### **Education:**

What skills do you bring to this position that you believe will serve you and the church well?

How did you obtain these skills? How do you apply these skills to your work?

Do you have plans regarding future education? What role do you believe the church should play in your continuing education?

### **Philosophy of Ministry:**

Describe the mission of your present congregation. In what ways have your ministry influenced this mission?

Describe your personal vision for ministry. Is there any particular congregation presently reflecting this vision for ministry?

What attracts you to this church? How long would you like to stay at this church?

Describe your leadership style. To what extent are you self-directed in your ministry responsibilities?

Give an example of how you have relied on someone else to give you direction.

Churches desire a pastor who has personal integrity. What does this mean to you?

How do you respond to criticism?

### **Theological and Ethical:**

Describe a personal experience that has significantly shaped your own theology.

To what degree if any do you differ with the historical doctrinal positions of this church?

Describe several ethical principles that guide your work.

Do you identify yourself with any particular religious political group?

Do you consider yourself a Southern Baptist? Why or why not?

### **Congregational Life:**

What changes may be in store for our congregation if you become our pastor?

What church structure do you view as best in helping a congregation to achieve its mission?

What planning model do you use in guiding the mission of a church? (How do you set goals, prioritize plans, define and evaluate success?)

Describe your operational strategy during the first 6 months with this congregation. (What would be your most important priorities?)

How have you approached the issues of finance and stewardship with your present congregation?

How do you conduct business meetings?

**Worship Leader:**

Describe a typical worship service for which you plan to lead. Do you use an order of service?

Describe the style of music you prefer and share its role in the service.

What special services do you like to conduct throughout the year?

How do you balance worship so it addresses the needs of different age groups?

**Preaching:**

Describe your routine process of preparing sermons.

How do you select sermon topics?

How much time do you devote each week to sermon preparation? How does that compare to time spent counseling or administration?

How long do you typically preach?

How do you feel about other ministers preaching at our church?

Are there any topics you feel uncomfortable preaching about, such as finances or current moral issues?

**Pastoral Care and Counseling:**

What role does pastoral care and counseling have in your present position? Give us an example of a typical week of pastoral care activities.

What duties are more important than pastoral care? What duties are less important?

Do you consider yourself a counselor? What type of counseling do you perform?

More recently, sexual misconduct within the church has become a more visible issue. What safe guards have you initiated to protect yourself and the church from such misconduct?

If a middle-aged man asked you to counsel him about divorce at his home, would you? What if it was a woman?

How do you equip church members to provide care to other congregational members?

How do you view your role in visiting members and church guests (visitors)?

Do you have any restrictions on the performance of marriages? Describe your approach to premarital counseling.

Do you feel that a pastor should have an unlisted phone number? Why or why not?

**Christian Education:**

Do you encourage participation in state and associational training?

Describe your present model of education for the church.

What successful approach have you found to adult education? (preschool, children, youth)

What is your role in Christian education?

What Bible study curriculum do you currently use for the different age groups within your church? How do you determine which to use?

What educational programs, other than Sunday School, do you emphasize?

**Missions and Evangelism:**

What role does evangelism play in your current church? (Worship, activities, etc.) Do you view some activities or services being more focused on evangelism than others? Which ones?

What types of outreach programs do you feel are important and relevant to this congregation?

How do you view the responsibility of world missions in your current church?

How do you now allocate financial resources to the local association, state and national mission endeavors?

Some people believe a church can become too big. Others feel that every church should become as large as possible. What's your view?

**Administration:**

Do you have a job description now? What parts of it do you feel confident about performing, and with what parts of it do you feel uncomfortable?

What is the primary role of the deacon body? What responsibilities, priorities or boundaries should the deacon body have in defining our church ministry?

What accountability should exist between the deacon body and the pastoral staff members?

How would you describe your working relationship with your present deacon body? Have you ever experienced conflict with a deacon body, how was it resolved?

What training and orientation have you provided for deacon bodies in the past?

**Staff Relationships:**

Describe how your management or leadership style affects your relationship with other church staff members?

What accountability would be expected among staff members?

How comfortable are you in providing direction to staff members?

Who should be included in staff meetings?

What type of conflicts have you experienced with other staff members, and how was it resolved?

How do you feel about a church member being employed as the church secretary, janitor, etc.?

Have you ever had to terminate a church staff member? If so, how did you handle it?

How would you respond to other staff members who in your opinion are doing a poor job?

**Financial Issues:**

What are your salary expectations?

On what basis would you expect future raises?

How many weeks of vacation do you presently receive?

Do you have a retirement plan?

What insurance plans do you have?

**Community Relations:**

What responsibility do you feel the church has to respond to the social problems affecting our community?

What organizations are you currently involved with outside the church?

Have you worked with ecumenical activities within your community?

**Family Life:**

Tell us about your family.

How does your family feel about the possibility of this job change?

What things would you like the church to do to provide support to your family?

If you were to move here, what type of housing would you be looking for?

If you were to die or become disabled, how would your family be provided for?

**Personal:**

Why are you a pastor?

What motivates you as a pastor?

What spiritual disciplines guide your life?

How do you cope with stress?

Have you been previously married?

When you face a personal problem, whom do you turn to for support and counsel?

Have you had any health problems in the past few years? How about now?

Do you take regular vacations?

Have you ever been charged and/or convicted of a crime?

Have you ever had financial difficulties? Will you give permission for a credit check?

Do you have outstanding debts with which you are struggling?

Do you have any severe problems with your children or teenagers?

Do you have any outside business involvements? If so, how involved are you?

**Questions about our church:**

How familiar are you with the history of our church? Do you have any questions about our past?

How familiar are you with the current life of our church? Do you have any questions?

What do you see that you like about our church?

What questions do you have about this position that have not been answered?

Are there any concerns about which we have not asked, which might be of a sensitive nature for you or our church?

## PASTORAL CANDIDATE

### Interview Summary

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Rating Scale: 1 = lowest rating; 10 = highest rating.

Category	Rating 1 to 10
1. Ministry Experience	
2. Education	
3. Philosophy of Ministry	
4. Theological & Ethical	
5. Congregational Life	
6. Worship Leader	
7. Preaching	
8. Pastoral Care & Counseling	
9. Christian Education	
10. Missions & Evangelism	
11. Administration	
12. Staff Relationships	
13. Financial Issues	
14. Community Relations	
15. Financial Issues	
16. Family Life	
17. Personal	
18. Questions About our Church	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**INTERVIEW IMPRESSION:**

- \_\_\_ Excellent Candidate
- \_\_\_ Good Candidate
- \_\_\_ Possible Candidate
- \_\_\_ Poor Candidate

## **How to Present the Candidate to the Congregation**

This process is crucial to an informed decision by the church. The committee must do two things simultaneously, anticipate and meet the needs of a church decision; provide a clear invitation to the candidate and his family.

The church constitution and by-laws might provide a clear procedure for calling a pastor. If so, it should be strictly followed, but with personal warmth that is characteristic of the congregation. You are inviting its prospective lead family to be a part of its fellowship, ministry and life.

### **Things must be in order.**

A written recommendation and introduction of the candidate should be provided to the church at least one month prior to the vote on the candidate. This must be done in a manner that does not cause undue concern in the current pastorate of the candidate. The candidate must appreciate the need for your church to be informed and in prayer about this historic decision in the life of the church.

A brief biographical sketch with picture of candidate and family is very appropriate. A brief statement of the type of ministry in which the minister is currently serving and a succinct explanation as to the conviction of the committee in presenting this candidate should be shared. This explanation is not to be a campaign speech to sway the votes of the church, but rather an open explanation as to the process used by the committee to bring this particular candidate before the church.

Schedule a get-acquainted weekend. Arrange for the candidate to preach at all services on that Sunday. Schedule times for the candidate to visit with the church staff, deacons, church ministry leaders, church organizational leaders, and the various age groups of the church. Schedule a question/answer time to allow church members the opportunity to satisfy their concerns.

## **How to Make a Recommendation and Vote on the Pastoral Candidate**

The process of calling a pastoral candidate:

1. The committee should announce one month in advance of when the candidate will preach in "view-of-a-call."
2. The candidate should normally preach both the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services.
3. Schedule the church vote for after the evening worship service. NOTE: Some churches prefer to vote after the AM service due to more people being in attendance.
4. The Pastor Search Committee should lead the church to conduct a secret ballot vote regarding the call of the candidate as pastor. (It is strongly suggested that children and youth be asked to immediately sit with their parents, and parents should be given a few minutes to discuss this important occasion with them prior to the vote.)
5. Pray with the congregation that God's will to be done in this matter.
6. Each active member should be provided with a secret ballot, and those voting should indicate on the ballot either **yes** or **no**.
7. The Pastor Search Committee should count the ballots.
8. It is suggested that a vote to call the candidate as pastor should require at least 75% of the voting ballots (see Church Constitution for required percentages).
9. The results of the vote should be shared with the congregation waiting in the worship center.
10. The candidate and family should be notified of the vote results. The candidate should respond to the "call" within one week. It would be anticipated that if the candidate responded favorably, he would commence his ministry at the church approximately one month later (or at the time previously determined in his interview).
11. If the vote of the congregation is not favorable, be prepared to make an announcement to the congregation immediately. Notify the candidate as soon as possible, and regroup the committee to proceed to the next candidate.

**Appendix 11**

**SAMPLE COVENANT BETWEEN \_\_\_\_\_ BAPTIST CHURCH  
AND  
REVEREND \_\_\_\_\_**

**The Pastor's Expectations of His Church**

1. Trust in him as a person of integrity dedicated to the work of the ministry and as a competent professional person who can manage the use of his time wisely.
2. Support for him as leader by faithful stewardship in coming, giving, and serving in the church along with recognition when his work is well done.
3. Consultation with him about church affairs before decisions are made so that the church can benefit from his training and experience and so that the work of the church can be coordinated.
4. Concern for him and his family by annual review of the pastoral compensation package.
5. Authority for him to approve or disapprove the coming of other ministers and religious groups to the church and to supervise all paid employees of the church.

**The Church's Expectations of Its Pastor**

1. Competency in ministry through well-prepared sermons, regular visitation where there is a need, pastoral care in crisis situations, administrative and organizational leadership, and the improvement of pastoral skills through continued study.
2. Availability by having it announced when and where he can be contacted during the week and by letting it be known how he can be contacted while he is away from the church field.
3. Leadership in worship services, evangelistic outreach efforts, the development of a Christian education program, and the administrative work of the church in cooperation with the church's leaders.
4. Loyalty to Baptist beliefs as specified in the Baptist Faith and Message, attendance at denominational meetings, and support for the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program.

**The Pastor's Obligation to His Church**

1. To fulfill the duties of the office of pastor as a servant of the church.
2. To seek to meet the spiritual needs of his people through Biblical preaching and teaching and to refrain from proclaiming his own opinions as the word of God.
3. To meet the reasonable expectations of the congregation for him as its minister while at the same time living his own life as he believes God would have him to do.

4. To manage his money with integrity so as not to bring reproach upon the church.
5. To accept the church as an imperfect organization composed of imperfect people who must be loved and forgiven, to work with the elected leaders of the church, and to try to be the pastor of all the people in the church.
6. To acknowledge that constructive criticism from the congregation can be helpful and to be open enough to accept it and profit by it.
7. To recognize the need for help from outside the church, such as the association or state convention, when his role as pastor is endangered and to avoid actions that would harm the church.

### **The Church's Obligation to Its Pastor**

1. To respect the office of pastor and to support his ministry for as long as he holds that office to which the church has called him.
2. To guarantee the freedom of the pulpit so that the pastor can preach his convictions in his own manner and style as the Spirit of God leads him.
3. To allow the pastor to be himself instead of trying to fit him into some ministerial mold and to expect no more of his family than any other family in the church.
4. To provide for the pastor's support to the best of the church's ability and to review annually the pastor's compensation as an evidence of the church's care and concern for his welfare.
5. To recognize that because the pastor is human he makes mistakes and needs forgiveness like everyone else, and that because of the limitation of time he cannot fulfill everyone's expectations.
6. To confer with the pastor about any accusation made against him instead of discussing it in secret, and to refrain from passing judgment upon him until he has had the opportunity to defend himself.
7. To counsel with the pastor when there is a disruptive conflict involving him and to give him adequate time to relocate if he needs to move.

### **Matters of Mutual Agreement**

1. This covenant shall be administered by the personnel committee, and they will work with the pastor in keeping this covenant up to date, abiding by the guidelines adopted for the relationship, reviewing compensation and time arrangements, arranging for mutual evaluation sessions, handling criticisms of the pastor and hearing his complaints, helping with staff difficulties, and dealing with any problems that may arise. The effectiveness of the personnel committee's administration shall be reviewed at each annual meeting of the church.

2. When the pastor moves to the community in which the church is located, the church shall pay the moving expenses.
3. If there is a disruptive conflict in the church, the pastor and the deacons shall mutually agree to seek competent help from outside the church membership to meet with them and advise them about solving their problems.
4. If the pastor is dismissed or resigns under pressure for other than moral, ethical, or doctrinal reasons, he shall be paid three months' salary as severance pay and shall not be expected to fill the pulpit or perform pastoral ministries during that time. Under ordinary circumstances the pastor shall give the church two weeks notice of his resignation.
5. Allowances and expenses shall be for the current calendar year only. Convention expense reimbursement requests shall be limited to the budget allocation. The pastor shall be authorized to include his wife in determining his actual expenses to the Southern Baptist Convention and/or state conventions.
6. In the event of disability of the pastor, the church will continue full financial arrangements up to a maximum of 6 months.

### **Annual Time Arrangements**

1. Vacation shall be dependent on years of full time service after completion of college and/or seminary as follows:
  - \* 0-4 years = 2 weeks vacation
  - \* 5-10 years = 3 weeks vacation
  - \* 11 or more years = 4 weeks vacation

A pastor called to or leaving the church shall receive vacation pro rated on 1/12th for each month served during that calendar year.

Vacation shall be scheduled 30 days in advance with the Deacons. Exceptions can be made for reasons satisfactory to the personnel committee.

2. Two days per week mutually agreed to by the personnel committee shall be considered days off.
3. The following holidays shall be observed: New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Good Friday, Thanksgiving Day, Friday following Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.
4. Only one week of vacation may be carried over to the following year.
5. Three additional weeks away from the church, not including vacation, will be granted for purposes of attending conventions, seminars or conducting revivals in other churches.
6. While the church acknowledges that the pastor's work cannot be rigidly regulated because of the nature of ministry, it is anticipated that consistency in office hours will be maintained.

Crisis situations and emergencies along with meetings and a heavy schedule may alter the pastor's schedule and sometimes necessitate his arranging his work and leisure at his own convenience. Despite week-end work and evening obligations, the pastor must find some time to spend with his family and for his own personal needs.

### Compensation Package

The pastor shall begin his ministry with the following compensation (It is anticipated that the pastor will receive at least an annual "cost of living" compensation increase, based upon the local inflation index):

#### A. Church Ministry Related Expenses

- 1. Automobile Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Convention Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Book/Tapes/Periodicals Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Continuing Education Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Hospitality Reimbursement \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL EXPENSES** \_\_\_\_\_

#### B. Protective Coverage

- 1. Insurance
  - A. Term Life \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Comprehensive Medical \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Disability \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Retirement \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Social Security Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL BENEFITS** \_\_\_\_\_

#### C. Personal Income

- 1. Cash Salary \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Housing Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Utilities Allowance \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Personal Income** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PERSONNEL COST** \_\_\_\_\_