

The *Search* **is on**
Finding and Calling a Pastor!

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Table of Contents

<i>The Interim Time-A Wilderness Journey.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Selecting a Pastor Search Committee</i>	
<i>-Basic Concepts.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Pastor Search Committee Selection Process.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>The Pastor Search Process.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Get Ready.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Secure, Receive and Read Resumes.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Prioritize Resumes.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Focus on the Number One Candidate.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Present the Candidate to the Church.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Help the New Pastor Get Started.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>1. Sample Pastor Profile Survey.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>2. Pastor/Congregation</i>	
<i>Covenant Agreement.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>3. Letter and Candidate Inquiry Form..</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>4. Letter and Reference Inquiry Form...</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>5. Church and Community Packet.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>6. Directory of State Conventions.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>7. Directory of Baptist Seminaries.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>8. Reading Resumes.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>9. Minister's Financial</i>	
<i>Support Worksheet.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>10. Church Screening Program.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>11. Degree Names and Requirements.....</i>	<i>34</i>

the

*Interim
Time*

a

*Wilderness
Journey*

*Wilderness
journeys*

**can provide
many *benefits*
for an individual
or a church**

Church members have various reactions to the time between pastors. Some have great anxieties about the church and its future. Some have feelings of excitement and joy about the possibilities for the church. Some don't know what has happened or what is happening.

We call the time between pastors the interim time. Some have referred to this time as the Wilderness Journey. Wilderness journeys can provide many benefits for an individual or a church. The people of God called the Israelites had forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

Biblical characters such as Abraham, Moses and Paul experienced wilderness journeys. Jesus also had a wilderness experience. The point is that times in the wilderness can be used by God to prepare an individual or a church for what He wants to do in their lives.

A church should not fear the time between pastors. A better approach involves working your way through the journey to see what God has in store for you. This booklet provides suggestions to help a church make it through the in-between time related to the selection and election of a pastor search committee and the pastor search process.

A church will go through several stages during the interim time including getting direction for the interim, determining what kind of pastor is needed for the church, the search and call process and the beginning of ministry for a new pastor.

One of the most significant tasks of a church in an interim period or wilderness journey involves the calling of a new pastor. This involves the election of a pastor search committee and the effective functioning of that committee. This booklet will hopefully enable a church to perform these tasks with greater efficiency and effectiveness under the leadership of the Lord.

Some churches might also consider using the Intentional Interim Ministry during the interim time. This ministry enables a church to work through five developmental or transitional tasks that ultimately prepare the church to call a new pastor.

If you want to know more about this ministry, please go to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention website, www.absc.org. In the "Search" box, type in the key words, "Intentional Interim Ministry."

You can also get help from the **Leadership and Worship Team of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention** in providing names of prospective interim pastors, pulpit supply pastors and intentional interim pastors. The LWT can also provide training for the pastor search committee. Call **800-838-2272 or 501-376-4791, ext. 5114** and ask for help.

a *Selecting
Pastor
Search
Committee-
Basic Concepts*

Perhaps the most crucial elements in the search for a new pastor involve the selection and election of the pastor search committee. The relationship between the search committee and the potential pastor makes this process very critical.

A search committee working with the prospective pastor has much at stake and sometimes becomes very delicate. The relationship between the candidate and the committee foreshadows and determines the nature of the relationship between the pastor and the church.

“This relationship between prospective pastor and the search committee highlights the importance of the composition and the procedures of the search committee.”

This relationship between prospective pastor and the search committee highlights the importance of the composition and the procedures of the search committee. Those churches and church members who select the search committees without prayer, in a casual or perfunctory manner, do the church and the future pastor a disservice. A poor search committee not only limits the tenure and effectiveness of the pastor but also the quality of ministry the church receives.

Before looking at a process for selecting a search committee, let's examine some basic concepts that the church needs to consider before electing a search committee.

First, the committee should accurately reflect the congregation. Any attempt to artificially represent the church should be avoided. The future pastor is not always well served by an attempt to make the committee represent the different groups in the church rather than the whole church.

For example, a church that is predominantly elderly might attempt to have a representative committee that included a youth Sunday School teacher, a member of the Single Adult department, a member of the Senior Adults, a member of the WMU, and a member of the median adults. In so doing, one would think the church was well represented.

However, the most important dimension of the church's make-up has been “covered up” by this approach: the church is predominantly elderly. Some pastoral candidates would immediately recognize that the committee was “artificial” and some would not. In the best case, the candidate would have to work harder to determine the true nature of the church. In the worst case, he would never know

*Critical
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of the pastor
search committee**

until after he became pastor.

Second, the committee needs to be able to assess the gifts, abilities and personalities of prospective candidates that qualify them for effective ministry to the whole church. The godliest people, the most discerning, those most involved in the life of the church compose the best search committee. They have spiritual maturity that enables them to look beyond whether or not they “like” the candidate and accurately appraise his impact on the church.

Third, the committee needs to be able to exercise its God given influence in the church. The best committee will be the one that is most influential with the entire church. The members of the committee should be people who are widely trusted, and whom the congregation believes will follow God’s leading. The most important question a candidate will have is this: “If you recommend me to the church, will they vote to call me?” The more influence the committee has among the congregation, the more likely it can answer “yes.”

Sometimes a candidate will want to know if the church can make some changes related to the job description, housing, salary, or some other area of ministry. The committee should be made up of people who can influence the congregation to make such changes.

Fourth, the committee needs to insure the best possible beginning of the new pastor’s ministry. This could mean that the committee should also serve as a pastor relations committee or transition committee for a period of time after the new pastor begins his ministry. Again, in this role, the pastor needs the most influential people in the congregation. The committee’s ability to understand the congregation and to deal with the initial problems of transition is critical.

*Prospective
pastor needs
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influential
people in the
congregation
on the search
committee*

- first* 1 The committee should accurately reflect the congregation.
- second* 2 The committee needs to be able to assess the gifts, abilities and personalities of prospective candidates that qualify them for effective ministry to the whole church.
- third* 3 The committee needs to be able to exercise its God given influence in the church.
- fourth* 4 The committee needs to insure the best possible beginning of the new pastor’s ministry.

Pastor search committee

Selection Process

In order to eliminate any problems, a church should always look at the church constitution and bylaws to discover if any selection process is already in place. Avoiding any violation of established policies and procedures will keep the church from creating problems in the selection process.

In order to select and elect the best possible committee, a church would do well to consider the following suggestions:

Set a date for nominating the pastor search committee.

This should be several Sundays in the future in order to give time to prepare the church for the nomination process.

Determine the number to serve on the pastor search committee.

If this is not specified in the church's constitution and bylaws, a leadership group in the church (deacons, church council, etc), should recommend the number to serve on the committee to the congregation. Generally speaking, a search committee should have no less than five and no more than nine members.

Determine the qualifications for serving on the committee.

Again, if these qualifications are not established, the leadership group should determine what qualifications will be used in the selection process. These qualifications may include some of the following:

- A church member.
- 18 year of age or older. *(Each church will need to set its own age requirements.)*
- Regular in attendance.
- Regular contributor to the church's financial needs. Make sure to communicate to the church that no one will know how much a person gives but just that he/she gives regularly.
- Husband and wife cannot serve on the team. The spouse with the most votes will be the one elected to serve on the committee.

Each church should spend some quality time in discussing and finalizing these qualifications. These should be published two or three weeks in advance of the date for nominating committee members.

Have someone preach a message on the importance of the search committee.

The interim pastor, the associational missionary or a convention staff member might be asked to preach this

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qualifications

message. In most cases, this message should be preached one week before the nominating process.

Nominate the persons to serve on the pastor search committee.

On the assigned Sunday, the congregation will have the opportunity to nominate a number of persons equal to the number to serve on the committee. Each church will have to make a decision about proxy voting.

Count the nominations.

A committee of the leadership group will be asked to count the nominations and make the selections of those who will serve on the pastor search committee. Those receiving the highest number of votes should be considered first. Then if one or more do not fit the qualifications established, the counting committee goes to the next person with the highest number of votes.

Rather than electing “alternates” to the search committee, the decision can be made that if a person has to move or resign from the committee, the person with the next highest vote would be added to the committee.

A word of caution needs to be made at this point. Bringing an alternate into the committee weeks or months after the committee has been working creates many changes in the group dynamics. The second difficulty with alternates relates to the problem of bringing a new person up to speed in the process. In most cases, the best approach is not to have alternates.

Contact and secure a commitment from those selected to serve.

The leadership group should contact each person who was nominated and secure a positive response to serving on the committee.

Announce and affirm the pastor search committee.

After the committee has been selected and all have said “yes” to serving, the leadership group should announce the names of the search committee and ask the church to affirm this group as the church’s search committee.

Conduct a dedication time for the pastor search committee.

On a given Sunday, the church should conduct a dedication service for the search committee. This could be as simple as asking the search committee to come to the front of the worship center, having church members surround them and someone leading in a dedicatory prayer for the committee.

*Conduct a
dedication*

**service for the
search committee
on a given
Sunday**

Get Ready

An essential activity for most people involves getting ready. We get ready to go to work. We get ready to go to church activities. We get ready for a test. We get ready for school. And on and on the list could go.

A pastor search committee cannot neglect the “getting ready” phase of the search process without suffering consequences. If that is true, what should a pastor search committee do to get ready for the search process?

First and foremost the committee should pray. One person who was elected to a pastor search committee said: “The first thing I’m going to do is buy some knee pads.” In other words, this person planned on spending much time in prayer. The committee that fails to pray will probably fail to find the right person to pastor its church.

Another preparation activity involves reading and reviewing the biblical qualifications of a pastor. The search committee would do well to spend some time studying I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. If necessary, invite a guest Bible teacher or preacher to lead this study.

Next, the search committee should review the church’s constitution and bylaws. The committee needs to be familiar with these documents in order to properly interpret them to the prospective pastor. The committee should also be aware of any constitutional provisions for calling a new pastor, such as when the vote is to be taken, the percentage of the vote necessary to issue a call to a new pastor, etc.

Early in the process, the search committee should determine the standards of conduct that will guide the committee in its work. Some standards that should be considered are confidentiality, how the committee will make decisions, unanimous recommendation by the committee, reporting to the congregation, silence is agreement, and no subsequent meetings by just a few search committee members after committee meetings.

Another important action early in the process involves establishing open communication with other church groups. The search committee will want to talk with the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee about salary packages, personnel policies, and funds for the PSC to complete its tasks. The search committee may also want to examine the SBC Compensation Study when working on the salary package for the pastor. This study can be found by going to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention web site (www.absc.org).

*Essential
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involves *getting*
ready**

org) and typing in “Compensation Study” in the “Search” box.

One of the most important considerations of the search committee involves reporting to the congregation. In most cases, the committee should report monthly. The committee should never share names of prospective candidates; but the committee should help the congregation understand the search process, where the committee is in the process and share prayer concerns with the congregation.

As part of getting ready, the search committee must develop some key documents and instruments to be used in the search process. Consider preparing the following to be used later in the process:

- 1. A survey to help develop the pastor’s profile.**
(See Appendix 1)
- 2. A tentative pastor and congregation covenant.**
(See Appendix 2)
- 3. Letters and inquiry forms to be used in contacting candidates and references.** *(See Appendices 3 and 4.)*
- 4. Church and community information packet to be sent to candidates.** *(See Appendix 5)*

During the “getting ready” phase, the search committee will want to conduct the survey that will be used to develop the pastor’s profile. Assuming the survey has been prepared (See Appendix 1 for a sample survey), the committee will need to make plans to distribute the survey, compile the results and develop the profile.

In most cases, following a Sunday morning service presents the greatest opportunity for conducting the survey. If the survey is brief, a person can complete it in a few minutes; and the counting group can collect them as members leave the service. Those who would like to participate in the survey but would not be present on the Sunday of the survey would need to pick up a copy of the survey early and return it before the actual Sunday of the survey.

When the profile is developed from the survey, the search committee can use the profile to assist in the evaluation of resumes. The committee would do well not to make the profile the law of the “Medes and Persians,” but rather use the profile as a general guideline in processing resumes. Also, the committee should consider sharing the profile with the prospective pastor.

Secure/Receive and Read Resumes

The next step in the search process relates to securing, receiv-

Search committee

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search process**

ing and reading resumes. The committee should set a deadline for receiving resumes; otherwise, the process will never be completed. In most situations, two or three months will suffice to secure, receive and read resumes. Do not rush this step.

How does a search committee go about the task of securing and receiving resumes? When the general public knows that a pastor is leaving or has left a church, the church will begin to receive a few resumes by mail.

The committee may consider the following actions to secure and receive more resumes:

- **Go to the ABSC web site (www.absc.org) and click on the Resume Service link at the top of the Home Page. You will find instructions about securing resumes.**
- **Call or contact other state conventions and ask for resumes. A list of State Convention offices is found in Appendix 6.**
- **Call or contact seminaries and ask for resumes. A list of seminaries is found in Appendix 7.**
- **Contact associational missionaries for resumes. You can find a list of the Arkansas associations and the associational missionaries on the Arkansas Baptist State Convention web site (www.absc.org). Type in “Associational Missionaries” in the “Search” box.**

As you contact these various entities, share your pastor’s profile with the person to whom you talk. This will help them to provide resumes that match your profile.

Some committees advertise in the state Baptist paper for resumes. Your committee must evaluate this possibility and determine if this provides the best approach for your church. When you advertise, you will receive a large number of resumes. Many of them will not match your pastor’s profile; therefore, the committee will spend a great deal of time processing these resumes.

In addition, the committee may call friends or pastors they know to ask for recommendations. In all cases, ask for a resume. The committee may also contact denominational leaders in Arkansas or other states to ask for recommendations and resumes.

This leads to the next action in the process-----reading resumes. Appendix 8 provides guidelines in how to read a resume. The

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committee
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committee should review the guidelines together and make a commitment to read every resume carefully using these guidelines.

You might consider the following suggestions for reading resumes if you have a large number to read. Number the resumes 1 to however many you have. Have the committee members read resumes 1-10 for the first meeting in which resumes will be considered. Rank these resumes according to the suggestions in “Prioritize Resumes.”

For the next meeting, the members will read and rank resumes 11-20. This keeps the weekly task small; and the committee is constantly shortening the number of resumes to consider. When the reading and ranking of resumes are completed, the committee could use the suggestions in “Prioritize Resumes” to rank the number one candidates from the weekly rankings.

Needless to say, every search committee member should receive a copy of every resume that is submitted or received. A good way to keep these organized is to provide a notebook for each committee member in which the resumes can be filed.

Prioritize Resumes

As the committee receives resumes, you should develop the habit of determining if the resumes fit your pastor profile. If the committee feels that a particular resume does not fit the pastor profile that has been adopted, they should place this resume in an inactive or holding file.

The goal of the process at this time is to narrow the number of resumes to approximately ten to fifteen. To help achieve this goal, the committee might use the following actions:

- (1. Review the tentative Pastor/Congregation Covenant.
Ask the question: Does this candidate have the necessary education, skills and experience to meet the pastoral commitment outlined in the covenant?
- (2. Review pastor profile established by the committee.
Ask the question: Does this candidate meet the profile established by the committee?
- (3. Pray and ask for God’s direction and the discerning power of the Holy Spirit.

The process goal
at this time is to narrow the number of resumes to 10-15

As the committee reads and studies the resumes and prays for God’s leadership, the committee will be able to reduce the number of resumes to a manageable ten or fifteen. There is no magic about the numbers ten to fifteen. It could be eight, ten, twelve, fifteen or twenty. The committee will be able to determine a manageable num-

ber when the time comes.

After the number of resumes has been reduced to ten to fifteen, these prospective candidates should receive the letter and inquiry form found in Appendix 3. At the same time, the committee should send the letter and inquiry form found in Appendix 4 to the references on the resume.

The search committee needs to recognize that these actions take time. Allow two or three weeks for the candidates and references to complete the inquiry forms. You might suggest a deadline when the inquiry forms are mailed to the candidates and references.

After all the questionnaires are received and shared with the committee, the committee must take plenty of time to discuss and compare answers to the questionnaires. Also, the committee needs to spend time in prayer asking for God's direction for the next step.

The next step involves narrowing the choice of candidates to the top four or five. Some committees use a ranking system to help them after they spend much time in prayer. For example, if you want to narrow the choice to the top five candidates, ask each committee member to rank the resumes 1, 2, 3, etc. Then, when the committee comes together, each member shares his/her ranking. Often, the top five candidates will be very obvious from such a simple ranking.

When the committee has selected the top four or five candidates, the committee will want to complete the following actions:

- (1. Send the church and community packet to the candidates. This packet was prepared in the "Get Ready" step. See Appendix 5 for material to be included in the packet.
- (2. Conduct personal interviews with these top four or five candidates. These interviews should not be conducted until after the candidates receive the church and community packet. Some of these interviews will have to be over the phone. If the candidate lives close by, the committee may conduct the interview in a neutral site.

The committee chairperson will lead this interview process. The purpose of this interview is three-fold:

- Allows the committee and candidate to get to know each other on a personal level.
- Allows the committee to clarify any questions that might have surfaced in the written questionnaire, the person's resume or the reference responses.
- Allows the prospective candidate to ask any question he

During the interviews

the committee should share the salary, benefits & expense package

desires of the committee.

Also, during this interview, the committee should share the salary, benefits and expense package with the candidates. Be sure to include that the church will bear the moving expenses of the pastor. Perhaps the committee would want to share this information using the form suggested in Appendix 9. The committee should be upfront with the candidates about financial matters. Also, the committee should give the candidates opportunity to ask questions about the financial package; and the committee should encourage the candidate to share his financial needs with the committee if he feels the church's financial package is inadequate.

After all the interviews are conducted, the committee will need to spend much time in prayer and then come together to rank the top candidates, one through five. The committee has two options about ranking the top five candidates. First, they can pray together and individually for a defined period of time. Each committee member would be asked to rank the candidates one through five.

When the committee comes together in a meeting, each member shares their ranking. By a process of discussion and comparing, they can try to reach consensus about the ranking.

The second option includes the praying time as specified in the first option. Then the committee could use the following ranking system to determine the ranking of the candidates.

For illustration purposes, let's assume you have five top candidates. Each candidate that receives a "1" ranking, gets 5 points. Each person receiving a "2" ranking gets 4 points, etc. Total the points and consider that the person receiving the most points is the best candidate. The committee should agree on any ranking process before this time.

NOTE: The search committee should consider notifying a person if the committee no longer feels that this person is a viable candidate for the church. If a resume is secured from a state convention, a seminary or an association and no contact has been made with the individual, there is no need to notify this person.

However, if the potential candidate sent his resume in response to an ad or someone asked him to send his resume, the committee should notify this person if he is no longer a candidate whenever this occurs in the process. This is the courteous action to take.

*The search
committee*

**will focus on
one candidate
at a time**

Focus On The Number One Candidate

From this point in the process, the search committee will focus on one candidate at a time. The committee already knows a great deal about the number one candidate. They have checked his references on his resume. The candidate has completed a questionnaire.

They have talked with the candidate either by phone or in a personal interview. Now, the committee should complete the actions required in this step.

First, the committee will want to get references from people who were not on his reference list. Contact someone at the previous church where the person served. Do not contact anyone from his current church. This may cause him to have some problems. Contact the associational missionary where the candidate serves and ask for some different references. Contact the state office to discover if anyone there can give a reference on him. Be creative.

Second, ask the candidate for an audio or video tape of one of his sermons. A word of caution about video tapes needs to be considered. If the church where the candidate serves does not have video capabilities, he may just ask someone to use a home video camera and record one of his sermons. This type of video will not be of the same quality as the church with video capabilities. The committee may be influenced too much by a poor quality tape. The purpose of securing a tape at this time is to get a feel for how the candidate preaches.

Next, the committee needs to conduct a thorough background check. This will include a credit check and a criminal background check. See Appendix 10 for a form that must be signed by the candidate that will allow you to make these inquiries. An on-line service is available for a minimal cost. Go to www.absc.org and click on Leadership Resources. From that point follow these steps:

- (1. Click on Tax/Legal**
- (2. In the left column, click on “Background Check.”**
- (3. Click on “Find out if your organization is using these services.”**
- (4. Click on ABSC link.**
- (5. Click on Extensive Employee Screening Process and follow the instructions.**

Note: If you have difficulty with this process, call the Business Affairs Team Leader at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for help in using this service.

If the committee still feels that this is the right candidate at this time, the committee should schedule a visit to the candidate’s church to hear him preach and observe him in his current setting as a leader. Always call and tell the candidate that the committee will be present on a given Sunday. Make sure the candidate will be preaching.

Plan to take the candidate and his family to lunch after the

*Committee
needs*

**to conduct a
thorough
background
check**

service or meet with him and his family later in the day. This will give you an opportunity to visit with the wife and children. Also, you will want to use this as another opportunity to clarify any question the candidate or the committee may have.

As a last action in this step, the committee may consider asking the pastor and his family to visit the church field. Usually, a Friday and Saturday visit would be sufficient. During this visit, consider the following actions while the candidate and his family are on the church field:

- **Tour community and church facilities.**
- **Finalize the pastor/congregation covenant. This would include finalizing the financial support, vacation, time off, benefits, and expenses.**
- **Allow plenty of time for the candidate to ask questions. You might consider a meeting of the committee and the candidate. Special activities could be planned for his wife and children during this meeting.**
- **Allow time for the candidate to meet the paid staff of the church if they have not had this opportunity before.**

At this time, the committee should ask the candidate one last question: “If the committee determines that you are the person they want to present to the church, will you say “yes” to the call if it is a positive vote?” If the candidate is feeling positive about the possibility of accepting the call and committee still feels positive about this candidate, then the committee is ready to move to the next step.

In most situations, the committee should not present the candidate to the church if he is not feeling positive about the possibility of being called to your church. The committee may consider giving the candidate time to pray and consider the answer to the above question. If he cannot resolve this issue in his mind and heart, the committee may decide to move to the number two candidate on their list.

*Committee
should not*

**present the
candidate to the
church if he is
not feeling
positive**

Present The Candidate To The Church

The first action in this step involves sharing information about the candidate to the congregation. This information can be shared through the church’s regular publications such as a newsletter that is mailed to each home or in the Sunday church bulletin. If it is feasible, the committee might consider a special mailing of the information to the church family.

The committee would share a brief testimony from the candidate, his resume and information about his family. If it is possible to use pictures, this makes the information more helpful. The infor-

mation should also include the pastor/congregation covenant and the financial support package for the candidate. It should be noted that some churches do not share financial packages publicly. Each church will handle this information as is the custom and policy of the church.

The information shared with the congregation should also include the plans for the weekend visit of the candidate and his family. This weekend visit will be negotiated with the candidate according to his schedule and the church's calendar of activities.

In most cases, the committee should consider making this a weekend of special activities. In a very small membership church, you may consider just a Sunday of activities.

The purpose of the weekend or Sunday of activities is to allow the congregation the opportunity to meet the pastor and his family in an informal setting. The committee could schedule meetings with the deacons, Sunday School workers, choir members, volunteer music workers, senior adults, single adults, etc. The committee needs to plan the appropriate meetings depending on the church size and the need for various groups to have the opportunity to interact with the candidate. At these various meetings, the people have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidate.

On Sunday, the candidate will preach during the morning worship hour. During the service, he should have the opportunity to share his testimony of salvation and call to ministry as well as bringing the morning message.

The vote on the candidate should be as quickly as possible after he preaches, preferably in the evening worship service if this does not conflict with the church's constitution and bylaws. Remember, also, to keep in mind the percentage of vote necessary to extend a call if this has been determined. In most cases, the candidate will be ready to give an answer to the call immediately. The committee should inform the church as soon as possible.

If something were to happen and the vote was negative or the candidate said "no," the committee would begin working with the candidate ranked number two and start the process beginning with "Focus on the Number One Candidate."

*Pastor search
committee's*

**job is not
completed when
the vote is taken
& the candidate
says "yes"**

Help The New Pastor Get Started

The pastor search committee's job is not completed when the vote is taken and the candidate says "yes." Consider the following actions to help the pastor and his family get a good start in your church.

- **Plan and conduct an installation service.**

This service may be as simple as giving the keys of the church to

the pastor which signifies that he is now the church leader. It may include a special message of challenge by the associational missionary or a state convention leader. It should include a time for the congregation to express its willingness to follow the leadership of the pastor. The service may also include an opportunity for the pastor to accept the challenge of the message and pledge his commitment to be a faithful servant leader under the leadership of the Lord. One church had a public signing of the Pastor/Congregation Covenant as part of their installation service.

- **Help the pastor and family get acquainted in the community.**

The pastor search committee should help the pastor and family get acquainted with local doctors, banks, schools, associational missionary, etc.

- **Meet regularly with the new pastor for the first year.**

The committee should plan a series of meetings for the first year to continue the orientation of the pastor to the church, allow for opportunity for feedback to the pastor, give the pastor opportunity to express his evaluation of the church, and to discuss any problems that might have arisen. In essence, the search committee becomes a support group for the new pastor. These meetings should be no more than quarterly.

Conclusion

Hopefully this booklet has provided some specific guidance for pastor search committees from the experiences of denominational leaders, especially those who have served as pastors previously. Their experience and expertise have contributed to the content of this booklet.

Each committee that uses the booklet may need to “fine tune” the suggestions for the particular church it serves. Remember, however, these suggestions have been used and proven to be effective in churches before.

The pastor search committee may also consider contacting the state convention office and asking for a consultant to train the search committee. Several state convention employees have been trained in this process and are willing to go to any church and provide training for search committees.

Our prayer is that your church’s search committee will be helped through the pastor selection process and that your church will have the best possible pastor because of the process used by the search committee. Ultimately, our prayer is that the kingdom of God will be advanced because your church has been matched with the pastor that is able to lead your church to be on mission for God.

Our
prayer
is that the
kingdom of God
will be advanced

Appendix 2

Pastor/

Congregation

Covenant

Agreement

_____ Church enters into covenant with
the Rev./Dr./Bro. _____ to provide
pastoral leadership beginning ____ (Date)_____.

Pastoral Commitment: The Rev./Dr./Bro. _____
will provide pastoral leadership in the following ways:

- Lead services of worship, including the celebration of the ordinances of the church.
- Perform pastoral duties (visiting sick, bereaved, members in crisis, etc.) as necessary.
- Officiate at weddings, funerals, and baptisms.
- Perform administrative duties related to office, staff, and property that are necessary in coordinating the ongoing life and ministry of the church. Some of these duties may be delegated to staff members.
- Provide counseling as needed and as time allows.
- Work with the various organizations and committees, as time allows, to assist them in performing their assigned tasks.
- Supervise the staff as stipulated in the church's staff structure.
- Represent the church in community and denominational activities.
- Witness to the lost of the community as well as train and lead others to witness to the lost.
- Work with the deacons to provide spiritual leadership to the congregation.

Commitment of Church Members.

- Church members will support the pastor and church leadership through faithful attendance and giving.
- Pray for the pastor and his family regularly.
- Provide the resources for the pastor to fulfill his job description.
- Provide salary, benefits and expenses adequate to meet the pastor's financial needs.
- Talk with the pastor about problems or concerns rather than talking about him to others.

Financial Support Worksheet (See Appendix 9)
(Attach the Financial Support Worksheet to the Covenant.)

Appendix 2
continued

*Pastor/
Congregation
Covenant
Agreement*

Agreed and Accepted by: _____

Date: _____

Authorized Church Representative: _____

Date: _____

Pastor: _____

Note: *Each church should write a covenant agreement that is unique to that church. This covenant is provided only as a guideline.*

Appendix 3

Sample Letter to a Prospective Candidate

Sample Letter to a Prospective Candidate

Dear Doctor/Reverend/Brother _____:

The Pastor Search Committee of _____ Baptist Church, (town/state) has received your name as a prospective pastor for our church. We are interested in finding out more about you and your ministry. We realize that any approach we take to get to know someone better seems awkward. We believe, however, that a letter of inquiry like this is a most valuable aid in helping us find God's will for our church.

We do want to acknowledge several things to you in this inquiry.

1. You may not have known until now that you are being considered. Furthermore, you may not be interested. If you choose not to respond to the inquiry, we will assume that you are not interested and do not wish to be considered.
2. Your response to this inquiry is NOT a commitment on your part.
3. This inquiry is NOT a commitment on our part. However, our initial prayerful investigation has led us to want to know more about you.
4. We will keep in strictest confidence the information that you share. In no way do we want to embarrass you or negatively affect your work.
5. If for any reason we cease to feel that you are a candidate, we will immediately notify you.

Please send your response in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope. We would appreciate your response by _____. Be assured of our prayers for you. Thanks you so much for your willingness to consider this letter and its implications for you and our church.

Sincerely,

Candidate
Inquiry

We do not expect you to prepare a theological treatise. We recognize that volumes could be written on each subject but just a few sentences will suffice for each inquiry. We want to know in brief what your thinking is concerning each of the following areas:

1. Tell us about your conversion experience.
2. Describe your call to the ministry.
3. Describe your view of the role of a pastor in a local church.
4. Describe your style of leadership.
5. What types of sermons do you generally preach?
(Expository, topical, etc)
6. State your views concerning evangelism/outreach and describe the kinds of programs/events you prefer to utilize in church outreach.
7. How would you deal with people coming from other denominations desiring membership within a Southern Baptist church?
8. How comfortable do you feel working with all of the age groups that make up the membership of the church where you are now serving? Which age group do you feel most comfortable with?
9. What is your interpretation of the role of deacons? Describe biblical pastor/deacon relationship as you see them.
(Minister/servants or /administrators/supervisors).
10. How actively are you involved within the association and in denominational affairs?

Note: Feel free to add questions or delete any of the above questions. Remember to keep the inquiry as brief as possible.

Appendix 4

Sample Letter to send to a Reference by Mail

Sample Letter to Send to a Reference by Mail

Dear _____:

I am a member of _____ Baptist Church, (town/state). I am contacting you as a reference for Dr./Rev./Bro. _____ who is being considered as pastor for our church.

I would appreciate it very much if you would provide our search committee with information related to the questions on the enclosed inquiry form. You may be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Use as many pages as you need to answer the questions.

Please return the inquiry in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you very much for taking the time to provide this valuable information to our committee.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

When Contact of a Reference by Telephone

Hello. My name is _____ and I am calling as a member of the Pastor Search Committee of _____ Baptist Church, (town/state). You have been listed as a reference for Dr./Rev./Bro. _____ who is being considered as a prospective candidate for pastor of our church. Our search committee is trying to become more knowledgeable about him and would appreciate your help. Do you have the time to respond now, or would you prefer to respond by mail? You may be assured that you responses will be kept confidential.

Note: If the person is willing to respond over the phone, ask the questions on the inquiry form. Make accurate, careful notes.

Reference Inquiry Form

Reference
Inquiry
Form

1. Please rate the candidate on a scale of 1-10 on the following areas with the number 1 being low and the number 10 being high.

- _____ Leading
- _____ Planning
- _____ Administration
- _____ Relationships with staff
- _____ Relationships with deacons
- _____ Relationships with other lay leaders
- _____ Motivating
- _____ Preaching and worship
- _____ Visiting (members and prospects)
- _____ Counseling
- _____ Teaching
- _____ Personal and spiritual growth

2. What kind of sermons does he generally preach? (Expository, topical, etc)

3. How does he relate to various age groups within the church?

4. How active is he within the community? Describe.

5. Does his wife support him in his ministry? Is she considered an asset? Are there any family problems we need to know about? Describe.

6. Does he attend the meetings of the association and generally support the work of the association?

7. Does he encourage the church to support missions (association, national, international and the Cooperative Program?)

8. Would you recommend him as pastor of a local Southern Baptist Church?

9. What would you say is his greatest strength? Weakness?

10. Please share any other information you think might be helpful to us.

Appendix 5

Church and Community Packet

Church and Community Packet

Church Items

1. Mission and Vision Statements
2. Statement of Core Values
3. Planning Documents
4. Constitution and Bylaws
5. Profile of Pastor
6. Annual Church Profile Statistics
7. History of church (if available)
8. Recent Sunday bulletins
9. Several copies of recent church newsletters
10. Pictorial Directory (if available)
11. The current year's budget
12. Committees/Team Lists and Members
13. Church organizational structure and leaders
14. Pictures of the church buildings
15. Other items committee chooses to include

Baptist Association Items

1. Recent copy of associational newsletter
2. Information about associational missionary
3. Associational strategic plans
4. Most recent associational annual
5. Copy of associational budget

State Convention Items

1. Most recent copy of *Arkansas Baptist News*
2. Copy of ABSC Resource Booklet
3. Copy of ABSC budget

Community Items

1. Census data on community
2. Map of the community/city where church is located
3. Map of Arkansas
4. Promotional material from Chamber of Commerce
5. Information about schools, hospitals, shopping centers, etc.
6. Other items committee chooses to include

ALABAMA

Alabama Baptist State Convention
P.O. Box 11870
Montgomery, AL 36111-0870
Phone: 334/288-2460
FAX: 334/288-2693

ALASKA

Alaska Baptist Convention
1750 O'Malley Road
Anchorage, AK 99507-7303
Phone: 907/344-9627
FAX: 907/344-7044

ARIZONA

Arizona Southern Baptist Convention
2240 N. Hayden Rd, Ste 100
Scottsdale, AZ 85257
Phone: 480-945-0880
FAX: 480-945-5355

ARKANSAS

Arkansas Baptist State Convention
P.O. Box 552
Little Rock, AR 72203-0552
Phone: 501/376-4791
FAX: 501/374-2754

CALIFORNIA

California Southern Baptist Convention
678 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
Phone: 559/229-9533, Ext. 242
FAX: 559/229-2824

CANADA

Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists
100 Convention Way
Cochrane, AB T4C 2G2
Canada
Phone: 403/932-5688
FAX: 403/932-4937

COLORADO

Colorado Baptist General Convention
7393 South Alton Way
Englewood, CO 80112-2372
Phone: 303/771-2480
FAX: 303/771-6272

DAKOTAS

Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship
P.O. Box 6028
Bismark, ND 58506
Phone: 701/255-3765
FAX: 701/222-4069

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

District of Columbia Baptist Convention
1628 Sixteenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20009-3099
Phone: 202/265-1526
FAX: 202/667-8258

FLORIDA

Florida Baptist Convention
1230 Hendricks Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32207
Phone: 904/396-2351
FAX: 904/346-0271

GEORGIA

Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia
2930 Flowers Road, South
Atlanta, GA 30341-5562
Phone: 770/455-0404
FAX: 770/452-6574

HAWAII

Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention
2042 Vancouver Drive
Honolulu, HI 96822-2491
Phone: 808/946-9581
FAX: 808/941-2309

Appendix 6 *continued*

ILLINOIS

Illinois Baptist State Association
P.O. Box 19247
Springfield, IL 62794-9247
Phone: 217/786-2600
FAX: 217/585-1029

INDIANA

State Convention of Baptists in Indiana
900 H. High School Rd.
Indianapolis, IN 46214
Phone: 317/241-9317
FAX: 317/241-9875

IOWA

Baptist Convention of Iowa
2400 86th Street, Suite 27
Des Moines, IA 50322
Phone: 515/278-1566
FAX: 515/278-0875

KANSAS-NEBRASKA

The Kansas-Nebraska
Convention of Southern Baptists
5410 Southwest Seventh Street
Topeka, KS 66606
Phone: 785/228-6800
FAX: 785/273-4992

KENTUCKY

Kentucky Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 43433
Louisville, KY 40253-0433
Phone: 502/245-4101
FAX: 502/244-6469

LOUISIANA

Louisiana Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 311
Alexandria, LA 71309-0311
Phone: 318/448-3402
FAX: 318/445-0055

MARYLAND/DELAWARE

Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware
10255 Old Columbia Road
Columbia, MD 21046-1736
Phone: 800/466-5290
FAX: 410/290-7040

MICHIGAN

Baptist State Convention of Michigan
8420 Runyan Lake Rd.
Fenton, MI 48430
Phone: 810/714-1907
FAX: 248/332-0194

MINNESOTA-WISCONSIN

Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention
519 Sixteenth Street SE
Rochester, MN 55904
Phone: 507/282-3636
FAX: 507/282-3922

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205-0530
Phone: 601/292-3201
FAX: 601/968-3928

MISSOURI

Missouri Baptist Convention
400 East High Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone: 573/635-7931
FAX: 573/659-7436

MONTANA

Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship
P.O. Box 99
Billings, MT 59103-0099
Phone: 406/252-7537
FAX: 406/252-0196

Appendix 6

continued

NEVADA

Nevada Baptist Convention
406 California Avenue
Reno, NV 89509-1520
Phone: 775/786-0406
FAX: 775/786-0700

NEW ENGLAND

Baptist Convention of New England
87 Lincoln Street
Northboro, MA 01532
Phone: 508/393-6013
FAX: 508/393-6013

NEW MEXICO

Baptist Convention of New Mexico
P.O. Box 94485
Albuquerque, NM 87103-4485
Phone: 505/924-2325
FAX: 505/924-2349

NEW YORK

Baptist Convention of New York
6538 Baptist Way
East Syracuse, NY 13057
Phone: 315/433-1001
FAX: 315/433-1026

NORTH CAROLINA

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina
P.O. Box 1107
Cary, NC 27512-1107
Phone: 919/467-5100
FAX: 919/460-7507

NORTHWEST

Northwest Baptist Convention
3200 Northeast 109th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98682-7749
Phone: 360/882-2295
FAX: 360/882-2295

OHIO

State Convention of Baptists in Ohio
1680 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43203
Phone: 614/827-1777
FAX: 614/827-1860

OKLAHOMA

Baptist General Convention
of Oklahoma
3800 North May Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
Phone: 405/942-3800
FAX: 405/947-7170

PENNSYLVANIA-SOUTH JERSEY

Baptist Convention of
Pennsylvania-South Jersey
4620 Fritchey St.
Harrisburg, PA 17109-2895
Phone: 717/652-5856
FAX: 717/652-3902

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina Baptist Convention
190 Stoneridge Drive
Columbia, SC 29210-8254
Phone: 803/765-0030
FAX: 803/799-1044

SOUTHERN BAPTIST

CONSERVATIVES OF VIRGINIA
4101 Cox Road, Suite 100
Glen Allen, VA 23060
Phone: 804/270-1848
FAX: 804/270-1834

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF

TEXAS CONVENTION
P.O. Box 168585
Irving, TX 75016-8585
Phone: 972/953-0878
FAX: 972/870-1986

Appendix 6 *continued*

TENNESSEE

Tennessee Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 728
Brentwood, TN 37024-0728
Phone: 615/371-2255
FAX: 615/371-2014

TEXAS

Baptist General Convention of Texas
333 North Washington Avenue
Dallas, TX 75246-1798
Phone: 214/828-5100
FAX: 214/828-5314

UTAH-IDAHO

Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 1347
Draper, UT 84020
Phone: 801/572-5350
FAX: 801/572-5347

VIRGINIA

Baptist General Association of Virginia
P.O. Box 8568
Richmond, VA 23226
Phone: 804/672-2100
FAX: 804/672-2051

WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists
Number One Mission Way
Scott Depot, WV 25560
Phone: 304/757-0944
FAX: 304/757-7793

WYOMING

Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 4779
Casper, WY 82601
Phone: 307/472-4087
FAX: 307/235-9945

Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary
200 Seminary View
Cochrane, Alberta T4C 2G1
Phone: 403/932-6622
FAX: 403/932-7049
Web site: <http://www.csbs.ca>

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary
Ministry Placement Services
Strawberry Point
Mill Valley, CA 94941
Phone: 415/380-1443
FAX: 415/380-1302
Web site: <http://www.ggbts.edu>
Email: placement@ggbts.edu

MidAmerica Baptist Theological Seminary
Church Relations Ministry
2095 Appling Road
Cordova, TN 38016
Phone: 901/751-8453 or 800/988-4508
Web site: <http://www.mabts.edu>
Email: smay@mabts.edu

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Vocational Services Office
5001 North Oak Street Trafficway
Kansas City, MO 64118
Phone: 816/414-3733 or 800/944-6287
FAX: 816/414-3797
Web site: <http://www.mbts.edu>
Email: vocserv@mbts.edu

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Church Minister Relations Office
3939 Gentilly Boulevard
New Orleans, LA 70126-4858
Phone: 504/282-4455 or 800/662-8701
FAX: 504/286-8451
Web site: <http://www.nobts.edu>

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Office of Ministry Referral
2825 Lexington Road
Louisville, KY 40280
Phone: 502/897-4616 or 800/626-5525
ext. 4616 FAX: 502/897-4076
Web site: <http://www.sbts.edu>
Email: ministryreferral@sbts.edu

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
Denominational Relations Office
P.O. Box 1889
Wake Forest, NC 27588-1889
Phone: 919/556-3101
FAX: 919/556-0998
Web site: <http://www.sebts.edu>

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Department of Church/Minister Relations
and Ministry Placement
P.O. Box 22000
Fort Worth, TX 76122-0120
Phone: 817/923-1921, Ext. 6330
FAX: 817/921-8844
Web Site: <http://www.swbts.edu>

Reading a Resume

The following suggestions will help your committee learn how to read resumes. The suggestions are not meant to be comprehensive but should provide plenty of help in the task of reading resumes.

The Obvious

- Family
- Age
- Home state
- How long in the ministry

Education

- Degrees—Make sure you know what all the abbreviations mean. (*See Appendix 11*)
- University/College
- Seminary
 - (1. If the candidate did not attend a Southern Baptist seminary, make sure that the seminary is accredited.
 - (2. Watch for mail order degrees. Your church deserves the best educated pastor.
 - (3. Watch for “I attended.....” This candidate may have taken only one course.

Previous Churches/Positions

Examine tenure.

Remember that ministers move quite often when they are young. If they are older and still move every two or three years, look carefully. Find out why.

Examine church growth/health

- (1. What kind of growth/lack of growth in baptisms, Sunday School, finances, etc.
- (2. Missions involvement-----partnership missions, Cooperative Program and associational giving/involvement.

Note: Your committee can use the Southern Baptist Directory Service to secure a twenty year history of statistics about a church.

Community involvement.

Most churches want their pastor to be involved in the community.

Projects/Accomplishments.

Examples: Building program, fund-raising projects, FAITH, etc.

Philosophy of Ministry

A person should be able to write his philosophy in a brief paragraph.

Denominational Politics

Your church does not need someone who is on a crusade related to denominational politics.

Skills

- (1. If your church has a staff, you must know how many people he supervised in his current or previous churches.
- (2. What size budget has he administered in previous churches?
- (3. What computer skills does he have?

Other

- (1. Check the neatness of the resume. If it is done carelessly, this may be an indication of his approach to ministry.
- (2. A picture would help; but it is not necessary.
- (3. Watch for grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.
- (4. Is the Associational Missionary on his reference list? If not, why not?

Appendix 9

Minister's Financial Support Worksheet

MINISTER'S FINANCIAL SUPPORT WORKSHEET

Name _____

Position _____

A. Personal Income

1. Salary / Cash Pay \$ _____

2. Housing Allowance \$ _____

*(all home-related expenses paid by the minister;
including furniture purchases)*

Total Personal Income \$ _____

B. Protection Benefits

1. Church Retirement Plan \$ _____

*(an amount equal to 10% of Personal Income
recommended)*

2. Protection Coverage

a. Term Life \$ _____

b. Personal Accident \$ _____

c. Medical \$ _____

d. Disability \$ _____

e. Dental \$ _____

3. Social Security Equivalent \$ _____

(taxable)

(7.5% of Total Personal Income: Salary & Housing)

Total Protection Benefits \$ _____

TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME & BENEFITS \$ _____

- Go to www.absc.org / Leadership / Church Staff Services / SBC Compensation Study
- Compare average Personal Income & Benefits of SBC churches of similar budget & size.

Reimbursed Ministry-Related Business Expenses

Not Compensation: It is strongly recommended that Ministry-Related Reimbursements be provided for the minister by the church, but NOT part of the minister's pay.

- Automobile (I.R.S. Mileage Rate recommended)
- Conventions, Conferences
- Books, Periodicals, Tapes
- Continuing Education, Seminars
- Hospitality, Meals

Total Budgeted Reimbursed Business Expenses \$ _____

(Reimbursed expenses are not reported as taxable, if accountable at least every 60 days)

For more info go to www.guidestone.org / Resources

Appendix 10

Church Screening Program

CHURCH SCREENING PROGRAM Notification and Authorization to Conduct Background Investigation

I hereby authorize _____ Church, (town/state) to investigate my background to determine any and all information of concern to my record, whether same is of record or not, and I release employers and persons named in my resume from all liability for any damages on account of his/her furnishing said information. Additionally, you are hereby authorized to make any investigation of my personal history, including, but not limited to a credit check, driver's license history, educational background, military record, and criminal record. I authorize the release of this information by the appropriate agencies to the investigative service of the church's choice. This authorization, in original or copy form shall be valid for this and for any future reports and updates that may be requested.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Full Name _____ SSN _____

Other Names or SSN used _____

Current Address _____
Street

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____

List All Addresses for the past 7 years:
(show others on back and check here ___)

Dates ___ / ___ / ___ _____
Street Address

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Driver's License # _____ State ___ DOB ___ / ___ / ___

***MAY WE CONTACT YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?
___yes ___no

***HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME?
___yes ___no

(If yes, please show details including date, charge, county, disposition on another sheet.)

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE ___ / ___ / ___

Degree Names and Requirements

A pastor search committee can use this information to understand more about degrees most often held by prospective pastors. This is not an all-inclusive list; but it does provide the most common degrees that pastors attain.

Degree Terminology and Requirements

Associate of Divinity (A.Div.) or the Diploma in Theology (Dip. Th.)

Requirement: Two years of full-time study for a person who is 30+ without a college degree.

Master of Divinity (M.Div.) or Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.)

Requirement: A college degree and three years of seminary training.

Master of Theology (Th.M.)

Requirement: Same as M.Div. plus one additional year of graduate work.

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)

Requirement: College degree, M.Div. degree, minimum of one year graduate work that emphasizes the practical aspects of pastor ministry, and a written project.

Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Requirement: A minimum of two years of graduate work, a thesis, college degree and M.Div.

Honorary Degrees

The most common honorary degree that pastors receive is the Doctor of Divinity (D.D.) Honorary degrees usually are given to recognize outstanding service by an individual. It is not an academic degree.

Certificates and Diplomas

Circumstances often prevent many men from receiving a basic college degree necessary for seminary study. Certain avenues are available to these men for getting training that results in a certificate or diploma. Our own Southern Baptist Seminary Extension offers a variety of biblical, theological, and practical courses that lead to certificates or diplomas.