

# Pastoral Transition Manual

Procedure for Selecting a Pastor  
of a District Council Affiliated Church

6.18.15

## A Letter from the Superintendent

**Advisory Team** (unofficial church 'board plus no more than two additional persons for pastoral search purposes),

Identifying the pastor to serve your church is a sacred responsibility. This is true because the church family with whom you worship is God's church and only He knows who can best lead you to fulfill your role in your community and His kingdom. As a District Affiliated Church you will have the assistance of the District Superintendent, your Sectional Presbyter and another ordained minister to lead you in this process. Although the future pastor of your church will be appointed by them, they will do their best to know you as well as the needs of your church and community. They will serve you by reviewing each resume and doing the necessary research to provide you with the pastor who will best fit the unique needs of your specific context. Your voice of approval or disapproval will be heard when this process has been completed and a pastoral candidate is presented to the congregation. The search will begin anew if there is not a strong, favorable vote.

This manual offers tools that will guide and assist you in working through this vitally important process. It includes more material than some may want or need. Don't let its size overwhelm you. Please read pages 2-4 to get an overview of the entire process. Then take a few moments to skim through the Appendices to find what helps are available. You will discover tools, questions and insights which can help you understand the process as well as be a part of it.

Please call me or your Sectional Presbyter if you have questions or encounter problems in your church family. We will be serving as your 'spiritual covering' during this time of transition. We must all pray for each other. Psalm 9:10 tells us, "Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who trust you." This is a promise we can stand on both in good times and bad times. The Lord will never let us down. I am confident that with His guidance and in His timing He will send you a pastor to lead you into the future.

Bob Wine

Nebraska District Superintendent

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## **TO THE ADVISORY TEAM:**

The most critical factor in a pastoral search is embracing the fact that selecting a pastor is not the same as hiring a person for a secular job. God calls a person to pastor a church, not the church, advisory team, or the District officials. At the same time, God has chosen the advisory team to serve together with the District leadership and the Holy Spirit in this spiritual assignment. It is important for each member to 1) discover the values and characteristics of the church family as well as the character, heart, vision and skill set needed of the future pastor; and 2) give extraordinary time interceding and seeking to hear when He whispers His truth and guidance. In this way each 'vote' taken in the process becomes a reflection of the Holy Spirit's leading rather than human preference. This will be a spiritually life-changing adventure that, if done right, will allow each individual to see God in a new way, who He is, not just what He does.

The selection of a pastor is a process, which if done with humility and diligence, will bring glory to the Father, take the church family to a new spiritual level and also transform one's own spiritual life. While this can certainly be very challenging it can also be very rewarding!

An interim pastor will be appointed to serve you each Sunday until a new pastor is elected. He will preach each week to build up the church family and work with the Advisory Board to facilitate the necessary weekly functions. It will be the churches responsibility to do what it can to provide for his travel expenses and give him an honorarium for time he invests in preparing sermons and leading the church. He will be in regular contact with the District Superintendent and/or the Sectional Presbyter.

The following two fundamentals need to be kept before the church at all times! These principles must be settled in the minds and hearts of the team, church membership and attendees:

**GOD HAS HIS OWN TIMETABLE!** The process cannot be hurried but it can be restricted! The impatience of the church members can be minimized by the Advisory team as it finds ways to maintain regular communication with the District Superintendent and the Official Church Board (the Sectional Presbyter and another appointed ordained minister) and church membership.

**PRAYER IS THE KEY** to the success or failure of the pastoral search. The District Superintendent and/or the Official Board, the Church Advisory Team and the church body must commit to serious prayer. Specific times for prayer and fasting should be established as the selection process unfolds. When God is asked for wisdom He will shower it out on those who seek Him.

As a District Affiliated church you will enjoy working together with experienced Nebraska District Council leaders. They bring with them years of experience in leading churches and will also serve as guardians and mentors throughout the entire process. Their care is reflected each time they make contact by phone, email or text.

## **Advisory Team Assignments and Procedures (for District Council Affiliated churches):**

- The Advisory Team leader as representative of the entire team must purposefully stay in communication with the District Superintendent and/or Sectional Presbyter who have been designated to lead the pastoral search. It will be important to inform them of on-going victories, concerns and potential problems in the church family as well as the Interim Pastor.
- The selection of a pastor for a church is not like a political election (about popularity) but a process of hearing who the Holy Spirit wants to serve as the next pastor. Therefore, a great deal of humble and earnest prayer is essential to be certain each person hears His whisper on this subject. The leader of the Advisory Team should do their part in leading the group to set aside time every week to pray together including fasting if possible. This will build unity as individual minds and hearts blend with the mind and heart of Christ. It takes time! Patience is required! Prayer in faith is the best investment and resource for this kind of endeavor.
- The primary task the Advisory Team must do is assemble a 5-7 person Pastoral Search Team (PST) and appoint a temporary chairperson. This person needs to have a strong passion for God and His church and have experience in productively leading a discussion with strong personality individuals. The PST should consist as much as possible of at least two Advisory Team members along with a demographic cross-section of the church membership who are passionate in their love for God and His church, positive influencers and gifted in discernment. It should consist of 5-7 people, but no more than 9 (none from the same family) and work in complete submission to the church board.
- Pastoral transitioning involves varied emotions that can inhibit critical thinking. Understanding the normal grieving process can help mitigate this matter. A district appointed person will talk the Advisory board and PST through **Appendix I The Church Grieving Process** in order to allow the team to accomplish more and do so more rapidly. The PST chairperson will then lead the team in doing **Appendix III Church Self-Study**. This needs to be well processed and completed as soon as possible. The next task would be for the PST to fill out the **Appendix V Pastor Profile Worksheet**. These documents must be emailed to the presbyter and Superintendent to be used to help identify a candidate who would best fit the needs of the church.
- Once the Holy Spirit guides the District Officers to select a couple to candidate, they will be invited to come to the church as soon as an agreeable date can be found and announced to the congregation. The candidate will have an opportunity to share God's Word with the entire church on a Sunday morning. This will be followed that afternoon or evening by a vote of the membership. The purpose of the vote will be to approve or disapprove of the candidate selected by the Official Board. Once the candidate has been affirmed by a vote, the District will appoint him to serve as pastor. Arrangements would then need to be made for their move to the community.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **THE CHURCH GRIEVING PROCESS**

Depending upon whether the pastoral change has been amicable or traumatic, the members of the church will go through some form of a grieving process in the 18-24 months following the pastor's resignation. This natural process was designed into the human fabric by the Lord to help them cope with the pain of loss and move on from the past and into tomorrow. The stages of mourning and grief are universally experienced by people from all walks of life although their sequential order, intensity and/or duration of each stage will vary.

Church leadership should be alert to the emotional and spiritual condition of each member. Some will need special care in their return to unreserved worship and ministry. While patience needs to be extended to those grieving, guidance must also be offered since some may become 'stuck' in a stage which will eventually thwart their spiritual growth.

Some will experience the following normal stages of grief more deeply than others:

#### **SHOCK**

This is an initial sense of being totally surprised and temporarily overwhelmed.

#### **DENIAL**

The essence of this stage is epitomized by the following expressions: "Things were going so well, why did they have to change." "I don't believe it." "This can't be happening to us."

#### **ANGER**

This strong emotion can be directed at God, the church board, another person or persons in the congregation, the former pastor and/or his spouse and family or even District leadership.

#### **BARGAIN WITH GOD**

People will do almost anything to hurry God's favor and reduce pain they are experiencing. This includes cutting deals with God and others.

#### **WITHDRAWAL**

Some may withdraw from the fellowship completely or curtail their involvement in church activities and ministries. Those who are grieving will often exhibit self-pity, frustration and illogical behavior. There may be a higher incidence of physical and emotional problems. It is during this time that some of your people may turn away and take a long vacation from the church and their God. This downward spiral will continue until the final step of the grief process is reached.

#### **ACCEPTANCE**

Arrival at this stage allows refocusing to begin. The new pastor and his unique qualities, different from those of the previous pastor, will be more easily accepted. Better judgment is executed. Hope begins to dawn, faith is renewed, confidence returns.

Awareness of human behavior experienced in times of loss, helps one you in the tough days that are ahead. The elements most important for recovery from grief are:

Time – Time must be allowed for recovery.

Love – Love must be expressed through acceptance and forgiveness (1 Corinthians 13:4a – 8)

Faith - Trust and confidence must be rebuilt.

Hope - In the most difficult of times, the hope of the Gospel is the anchor of the soul.

Here are a couple of helpful things a person can do for someone going through grief:

- a) Help them understand the grieving process and that it is universally experienced by people from all walks of life. Point out that God designed it as a tool to gracefully separate the past from the present and future.
- b) Help them separate the pastor from God's church. Encourage them to focus on working with God to complete His purpose for the church. Urge them to ask the Holy Spirit to heal the pain of their loss and give them fresh perspectives about how He wants to use them that day or in the days ahead.

\*\*The grief process was adapted from thoughts offered by Rev. Marcus Bakke, former Superintendent, North Dakota District Council, Assemblies of God.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR A PASTOR**

The following insights and suggested questions to ask have proved to be an invaluable aid in having a successful experience. The most important thing to consider is “what is God looking for in a pastor who would lead us to where He wants our church to go in the future?” A pastor is not ordained by God to be an entertainer or politician. They are a God-assigned, Spirit anointed under-shepherd. They are the one responsible to God for the spiritual condition of the church family. Since they are to be God-assigned, it is critical not to seek a person who only pleases the ears. Rather they should be the one that very lovingly leads the church family to be fully, spiritually mature disciples of Christ. The Bible provides specific qualifications for a pastor. Mark 12: 30, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 give the prerequisite biblical qualities for anyone desiring to be a pastor. The following list gives the qualities that God says are prerequisites for the position of pastor (1 through 13) and some of the qualities necessary if one is to be an effective leader (14 through 27):

#### Biblical Requirements

1. Loves God with “All” their heart, mind, soul and strength.
2. Personal character above reproach within and outside the church.
3. Thoughtful, dignified, and self-controlled
4. Not a novice
5. Not a drunkard (substance abuser)
6. Not violent, quick-tempered, quarrelsome, arrogant, or over-bearing
7. Not a lover of money or pursuer of dishonest gain
8. Gentle in their dealings with men
9. Upright and holy in their life before God
10. Loves what is good
11. Faithful in marriage with a well-ordered home and disciplined children
12. Hospitable
13. An apt teacher

#### Qualities necessary if one is to be an effective leader

1. Disciples others to have a heart like Jesus who gave His all out of love for His Father
2. Models a passion to know God Himself, not just what He does
3. Leader-developer rather than heroic leader
4. Can develop a ministry vision that respects congregation, community and world needs
5. Can translate that vision into a concrete plan
6. Can make and stay within a realistic budget
7. Can motivate others to become part of the vision without manipulation
8. Can maintain control of a church and its programs in a healthy manner
9. Can build group cohesion and healthy pride
10. Can coach others to give their best performance
11. Sets an example for others to follow
12. Earns the loyalty of staff and congregation
13. Cares deeply about individuals who make up the congregation, not just the corporate church
14. Is available and visible to staff and congregation
15. Able to forgive from the heart
16. Able to admit personal limitations
17. Able to admit mistakes
18. Able to acknowledge your strength and weaknesses

## **APPENDIX III**

### **CHURCH SELF-STUDY**

This comprehensive self-study can be one of the most insightful steps of the pastoral search process. Serious prayer is needed for this evaluation. It would be best to address all of the following areas. A selective summary of this self-study will be sent to all primary applicants. It will also be used by the Advisory Team and District leaders to make a pastoral profile for the church.

#### **1. General Description of the Church.**

- \* The date of the church's inception.
- \* The top 5 non-negotiable core values shared by the church leadership. (Things that get them up in the morning and they are willing to die for.)
- \* The number of voting members, Sunday worship and SS attendance (not only today, but also five years ago).
- \* The congregational breakdown by age (i.e. percentage of members under 20, between 20 and 34, between 35 and 49, between 50 and 64, and 65 and older)
- \* The total annual church budget and mission's budget.
- \* The church programs for children ages 12 and under.
- \* The church programs for young people ages 12 through 18.
- \* The adult group organizations; including the name of the group, frequency with which group meets, and its usual attendance.
- \* A description of the buildings, the inside and outside physical condition including a discussion of their adequacy for current church programs, the condition of the landscaping, mortgage indebtedness, and monthly mortgage payments, parsonage and its condition (if applicable).
- \* A list of all salaried staff besides the pastor. (It should include the person's name and position.)
- \* The names of the last three pastors who have served the church; their dates of service, the reason why the last pastor left and what each former pastor is doing now.

#### **2. General Description of the Community**

- \* A description of community immediately surrounding the church.
- \* A description of the community's racial composition, ages, educational levels, and occupations. Are any significant changes in the community's composition occurring now?
- \* A description of education availability at the primary, secondary, college, and graduate levels.
- \* A description of what medical care is available.
- \* A list of challenges presently facing the community.

A few websites to assist in finding out information about your communities:

<a href="http://www.epodunk.com">www.epodunk.com</a>	for small communities
<a href="http://www.census.gov">www.census.gov</a>	for larger communities and state information
<a href="http://www.dataplace.org">www.dataplace.org</a>	online source for housing and demographic data
<a href="http://www.thearda.com">www.thearda.com</a>	American Religious Data archive

Additions sources might be local schools websites, community action groups, social services, and etc.

#### **3. The History of the Church**

- \* A list of the significant experiences the church has gone through since inception including dates and events.
- \* A description of the pastors who have served and their most important contributions. (All pastors should be included if the church has a short history. A church with a longer history should only include a selected group of pastors.)
- \* A brief historical description of what the Holy Spirit has done or has been attempting to do in and through the church.



**4. Strengths and weakness of the church** (Normally there are patterns that have developed over the years.)

- \* A list of the three top strengths of the church and what makes them a strength
- \* A description of how the church has been utilized to build God's kingdom
- \* A list of the three top weaknesses of the church and what makes them a weakness
- \* A description of how Satan has used these weaknesses to thwart the building of God's kingdom

**5. The Holy Spirit inspired vision for the church's future.**

- \* A detailed description of what the Holy Spirit has repeatedly called the church to become or to do through prophecies, excited discussions, intercession, sermons, etc.

**6. How the Holy Spirit reveals Himself in your church**

- \* A detailed description of how the Holy Spirit reveals Himself in your church family. (Churches tend to experience the Holy Spirit's presence in different ways. Some have more verbal expression in their worship services such as tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecies, word of knowledge. Others seem to focus more on healings, working of miracles, or other signs and wonders. Still others encourage these same expressions but in the warm environment of small groups.)

**7. Challenges Facing the Church** (This will only be sent to the finalists!)

- \* A detailed explanation of the areas in the church that especially need to be strengthened or situations that need to be resolved.

(Please know that the information you gather in this important preparation step should be kept confidential. While the Superintendent and Presbyter will see this information they will use it only in the process of identifying a match for your church. The future applicants and their spouses should not share the information with anyone else. If you have questions about sharing with others about the results of this study, please discuss it with the Superintendent and/or Presbyter)

**Additional things can be included that helps make your church special or unique.**

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**Based on the above findings - The profile for the future pastor of the church**

Keep in mind, a pastor must not be elected based on his personality, but rather on what the Holy Spirit reveals to be the type of person He knows will best serve the church's spiritual future.

- 1) What is the Holy Spirit revealing about the DNA of the pastor that the church is looking for? For example: Does the Advisory Board and church family sense they need a person gifted as an evangelist, a teacher, a pastor?
- 2) Is there a sense the church needs a strong Bible-oriented, disciple-making person or someone who is strong in doing things like relationship building with a community oriented focus?
- 3) What is expected of the pastor?
  - a) Is he expected to have a job to position him/her to have more exposure to the community or to support him and his family?
  - b) Is he to be younger or older? (how young or old?) Married/single?
  - c) Is he expected to just provide a sermon on Sunday morning, regularly visit the members, etc?
  - d) Is he expected to have musical skills, ranching experience, athletic skills, or a teaching certificate?
- 4) What vision has the Holy Spirit given the leadership for the church?

The presbyter or district appointed consultant is available to help discuss things of this nature and to help the team process such concerns.

## **APPENDIX IV INTERIM PASTOR**

### **Interim Pastor's Role**

The District Superintendent and/or the Official Board will seek insights from the Advisory Team as to the type of person they will appoint as Interim Pastor during the pastoral search. The remainder of this appendix outlines several important considerations for selecting an Interim Pastor.

The Interim Pastor's responsibilities will vary according to the size of the church and to the desires of the Superintendent and the local Church Advisory Board. In general the Interim Pastor is to fill the pulpit and care for the pastoral needs of the congregation. The Interim needs to consistently communicate to the church that they are not to be considered as the church's pastor or as a candidate to become the church's next pastor.

In the beginning it is important to make every effort to insure that the expectations of the Interim Pastor, Church Advisory Board and church family are clearly articulated. An agreement should be discussed in advance defining how much time each week (days, office hours, etc.) will be given to the assignment; how to handle previous engagements made by the Interim Pastor; and how he/she will remunerated for his/her service (salary and expense reimbursements).

#### Goals for the Interim Pastor

- Create an atmosphere of fellowship, reconciliation, healing and harmony within the church family
- Provide continuity of congregational leadership
- Work with the Advisory Board to develop short-range [six-month] goals for the church identified through a goal-setting process. (This is a critical step in the interim process.)
- Prepare the congregation for the arrival of a new pastor

#### Responsibilities:

- Prepare well-structured, Biblically based weekly sermons/worship
- Facilitate regular worship service responsibilities in consultation with the church advisors
- Perform weddings, funerals and baptisms when called upon
- Administer baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Arrange for someone to do pastoral calling on sick, shut-ins and other members or coordinate local leaders to help out when absent
- Provide pastoral presence in order to promote a sense of continuity and stability so the congregation has a feeling that a pastor is really there
- Consult with leaders and committees assisting them in carrying out their assigned tasks
- Attend Advisory Board Meetings and Pastoral Search meetings to offer pastoral counsel on transitional issues and coordinate items related to church services, operations, activities, etc. This is also a good opportunity for Interim Pastor to coach the Advisory Board in their leadership and keep each other informed on potential areas of conflict within the Body of Christ.
- Welcome and follow up with church visitors when appropriate
- Use discretion in offering counsel unless requested
- Communicate regularly with the District Superintendent and the Sectional Presbyter as to what is happening in the church, especially regarding any budding conflicts.

## **APPENDIX V PASTORAL PROFILE WORKSHEET**

In order to prioritize the spiritual requirements and the personal profile of the new pastor, this worksheet can serve as a tool to define the characteristics of ministry and help the Advisory Team find a consensus of opinion.

The first priority is to sense what the Spirit is saying about the type of pastor the church needs? This activity should be completed before reviewing resumes.

### **Advisory Team**

Please rate each item in order of importance for you as an individual on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least important. A zero (0) means it is not important at all.

*It is important to me (and, in my opinion, important to our congregation) that the senior pastor:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is passionately seeking to know God's values and ways through the Word.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to negotiate business contracts, research and purchase big-ticket items (such as vehicles, copy machines, furniture, etc.), and administer the daily business of the church (website, church bulletin, receive business visitors, responsibilities of advertising, etc.)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ attend regularly and work with the local ministerial alliance, establish relationships with local business leaders and social organizations.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is very social – opening up his home for visits, stopping by the homes of our attendees, attracting people to our church by his/her outgoing, charismatic personality.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ has the ability to share and provide ministry training for lay leadership, disciple and mobilize individuals in the church body into fruitful ministry within the church and community.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ makes it a priority to establish, communicate with and build relationships with the Church Advisory Board and develops and builds the leadership skills of volunteer church leaders.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ develops and maintains good communication skills with the support staff; is willing to share ministerial responsibilities with ministry leaders for the purposes of enhanced local ministry and the development of the church leaders.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ has a well thought-out strategy and is able to effectively work it to shape the heart of each church member to love God as Jesus loved His Father in the garden of Gethsemane.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ has a strong ministry work ethic.

## Ministry “Style”

Please check the box next to those items that are very important to you.

*It is important to me (and, in my opinion, to our congregation) that our senior pastor:*

- Conforms to the worship practices normally used by our congregation.
- Leads us into new styles of vocal and musical worship.
- Not* exercise leadership and oversight in the area of vocal and musical worship.
- Exercise* leadership and oversight in the area of vocal and musical worship.
- Encourages our worship leaders to use a blend of old and new styles.
- Preaches a balance from the Old and New Testaments.
- Emphasizes prayer around the altar.
- Preaches a sermon series frequently.
- Prefers an evangelistic style of sermon. (very motivational and challenge oriented)
- Prefers an expository style of preaching.
- Preaches until he’s finished, no matter what time it is.
- Preaches as led by the Spirit shown by people responding at the altars and in the offerings.
- Preaches a reasonable length of time cognizant of people’s scheduled lives.
- Is a story-teller, using verbal illustrations to emphasize and enlighten.
- Uses technology (PowerPoint, videos, etc.) to assist with the message.
- Often emphasizes the Holy Spirit in preaching and teaching.
- Has a commitment to and an emphasis on the operation of the Holy Spirit.
- Does the majority of hospital, nursing home, visitation ministry himself.
- Teaches and enlists members of the church to meet the spiritual, physical, and social needs of the flock.
- Knows how to recruit, equip, and release leaders to genuinely lead others.
- Has a spouse who is very engaged in ministry.
- Has guest speakers on a regular basis.
- Wears a coat and tie on Sundays to church.
- Is comfortable wearing casual dress for church service.

This list certainly can be modified if there are other things the Advisory Team considers to be important.

## **APPENDIX VI PASTOR'S INFORMATION FORMS**

The following is provided to help the Advisory Team understand what has to happen so far in the pastoral search as well as become more a part of the process in the future. The Official Board will want to know what the team may be sensing at this point. Its input will help these experienced District Officials as they make decisions to select a pastoral candidate that will serve the church in the best way over time.

Examining resumes can sometimes be complicated and confusing. The following insights must be taken into consideration when evaluating resumes:

1. An entire new industry has grown up that does nothing but produce resumes. Resume writers are trained to cover up failures or weaknesses in a person's work history.
2. Professional resume writers are trained in using words that connote power and exceptional performance, even selecting special types of paper and typefaces that increase readability and prestige.
3. Resumes do not always address the most important questions a church or District leadership want answered. All negative information is excluded.
4. Resumes make it very difficult to compare pastors using the same criteria, thus removing some objectivity.

A good way to get insightful information is to ask the applicant to fill out the "Pastor's Information Form." An example of this form is noted below.

Some potential applicants will not want to take the time to complete a Pastor's Information Form, particularly if they already have prepared a resume. However, a person who is unwilling to spend an hour completing such an important application is making a statement about how strongly he is being led and motivated by the Holy Spirit to be the church's next pastor. The Pastor's Information Form can actually serve as a filter to help separate serious applicants from those who are only casually interested.

For these reasons, it is wise to use a standard form for all applicants. Pastors who have a resume can send it along with a completed Pastor's Information Form.

The following questions will help obtain vitally important information from the applicant beyond just the basic content of a resume. From the list below the Advisory Team should select the questions that would reveal the heart of the candidate in meeting the needs of the church and the community. After selecting and reformatting the questions, the Advisory Team should send them to the Sectional Presbyter or Superintendent. They will forward the list to possible candidates. The candidate will then answer the questionnaire and return it to the Presbyter or Superintendent within the predetermined period of time.

### **Education and Credentials** (if not listed on resume)

- Give a list of the College(s) you have attended, including the years you attended.  
What was your Major(s), Minor(s) and the degrees earned?
- Do you hold ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God? Date received \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you ever been disciplined or on rehabilitation? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please explain in full.
- Have you or your spouse ever been divorced and remarried? \_\_\_\_\_
- Will you agree to us doing a credit and background check? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you or anyone in your family have any physical or emotional needs that might affect your pastoral ministry? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please explain and specify how you have been able to carry on your ministry despite these circumstances.
- Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, please explain.
- Have you been repeating any sinful habits (gambling, pornography, etc.)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

## References

Please list the names of three reasonably objective people who know you well and would be willing to serve as references. One of these should be your present District Superintendent or the District Superintendent for the last church in which you served. A second should be someone who knows you and your abilities well. The other two should be people you have pastored.

1. District Supt. Name City/State Phone
2. Name Relationship City/State Phone
3. Name Relationship City/State Phone
4. Name Relationship City/State Phone

## Pastoral Experience

Please discuss your previous pastoral or Christian service experience. For each experience:

1. List your responsibilities
2. How long you served
3. The most important contributions you believe you made to the church or organization
4. How your service there contributed to your personal faith journey
5. Your reason(s) for leaving.

If you have had a long pastoral career, focus on your last two or three pastorates.

## Preaching Experience

Please send the Presbyter or Superintendent at least two typical sermons you have preached in the last six months. They will be given to the church Advisory Team. These can be either audio or video and formatted as a DVD, CD, YouTube or internet podcast.

**Broad-based Questions** \* Asterisk describes heart condition. (Select a total of 15-18 questions from below that most apply to the church.)

In order to become better acquainted in a short period of time, please fill out the following general questions. Thank you for taking time to help us know you.

- \* 1. Please briefly relate the basic progression of your spiritual life. (i.e. when saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, ministry growth development in local church)
- \* 2. Describe your focused personal devotional time with God.
  - a. How you do it
  - b. Frequency including the average number of concentrated hours invested per week
  - c. How and when God speaks to you the most
  - d. The focus of your prayers
  - e. Your method of Bible reading/study
  - f. Any other things that come to your mind
- \* 3. In the last six months, how do you believe the Holy Spirit has been shaping your life? What has that looked like?
4. Why are you interested in local church ministry as compared to other ministries?
5. What are your spiritual and career goals for the next two and five years?
6. Describe what 'ministry' to and in the community would look like? (schools, community events, civic groups, outreaches, etc.)
7. If the church is not 'self-supporting', how do you see you and your spouse's preparation to obtain secular work within the community or near-by communities in order to supplement your income while serving the local church family?
8. What is your perspective and involvement in Missions?
9. In which of the nine power gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12) have you been used?
- \* 10. What are your top three personality strengths and weaknesses? How do you manage them?
- \* 11. What are your strongest natural abilities and skills? What you have accomplished with each of them?

- \* 12. What are your strongest spiritual giftings? Where you have seen the most spiritual fruit in your ministry and in what ways?
- \* 13. What aspects of ministry make your heart beat faster, brings tears to your eyes, make you want to sing, causes you to dream, and motivates you get up in the morning?
  - 14. How do you get people to follow you and become involved in your ministry?
  - 15. How do you work with people's independence or difficult circumstances that may inconvenience or even frustrate your plans?
  - 16. Describe your understanding of spiritual authority and what it looks like in the roles of husband, father, and pastor. Describe both a significant unhealthy and healthy experience you've had with spiritual authority in your own life.
  - 17. Which Christian leader has most influenced your values, motives and approach to serving others? With whom do you identify most? Who are your favorite authors that influenced you?
- \* 18. List your top five to eight core values in life (not people or things).  
NOTE: These are values you have the deepest convictions in, dream the most about, and would invest the most energy in. These are the things that subconsciously motivate or govern your choices. (EX. success, excellence, authenticity, pleasure, life-change, etc.) Beside each value, write a statement that clarifies it.
- \* 19. Describe your child rearing philosophy and how your immediate family relates to one another.
  - 20. Describe what you expect an average week of your "ministry" will look like, and what part of ministry activities that you expect to enjoy the most. (Describe the types of activities, calculate the total number of hours, etc.)
  - 21. Describe your philosophy of ministry, especially in the portfolio areas where you want to serve.

It would be good to end the questions with the following:

Thank you for your time in completing this Pastor's Information Form.

Finally, please sign the following release and return it with your Pastoral Information Form to NDC, PO Box 1965, Grand Island NE 68802 or in digital format to [bob@neag.org](mailto:bob@neag.org). (The release portion below will need to be sent in in order to have your signature.)

"I hereby give the Pastoral Selection Team of the Nebraska District Council permission to contact my references, do credit and background checks, and verify the information given in this application.	
Social Security # _____	Birthdate _____
Full Legal Name _____	
Signature _____	Date _____

Because of its very personal nature, you will receive a broad report of this information from the district official working with you in this process.

\*\* Select which of the above information will be significant in selecting your next pastor. The district office will then create a document and send it to viable candidates with a date you would like them to return the information to the district office who will pass it on to the advisor team.

## APPENDIX VII EVALUATION OF A SERMON

By this time, each applicant should have provided two sermons. All members of the Advisory Team should listen to each sermon. The minimum number of evaluations needed is three. This is important because the combined ratings will more accurately represent the congregation's preferences. One member of the team should be designated for calculating and averaging the responses and sending them to the Sectional Presbyter and/or District Superintendent.

The form below is a tool to use for evaluating the sermons. Each item should be rated using the following scale: Excellent-5, Above Average-4, Average-3, Below Average-2, Seriously Deficient-1. The sermon should be compared with the average sermon the evaluator is used to hearing in a local church. (It should not be compared to television, radio or internet sermons). The average of all items evaluated can be written at the bottom of the page.

### Rating

1. Introduction: The introduction captured my attention and interest. It made me want to hear the rest of the sermon. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Scripture: Scripture was used to clarify and illuminate points. It was used in context. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Content: Insights from Scripture added fresh value to my spiritual journey. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Logical continuity: The points of the sermon were built logically and in the proper sequence. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Clarity: The points of the sermon were clear. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Relevance: The sermon topic was developed in a way that was relevant to my life. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Humor: If humor was used, was it appropriate to the setting and points of the sermon? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Self-disclosure: If speaker used himself as an illustration did it help make the sermon more meaningful? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Vocal inflection: Did the speaker's vocal inflections add an appropriate emphasis and interest to the sermon? (Did it feel like the preacher screamed or scolded audience?) \_\_\_\_\_
10. Illustrations: Were illustrations used to clarify or deepen the impact of a point rather than prove points? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Motivation: Did it inspire (vs guilt) me to want to know, love or serve God more? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Action Steps: Did it tell me how to apply the sermon in the days ahead? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Interest: I wanted to hear more sermons from this pastor. \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

AVERAGE (The average of the total should be divided by 10.) \_\_\_\_\_



## **APPENDIX VIII**

### **SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

#### **FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW**

This last means of evaluating a candidate will not occur until the candidate comes to preach at your church. It is normally done when the candidate has a Saturday evening meal with the advisory board. The team needs to prepare and coordinate their questions with one another beforehand in order to minimize awkward silences and repetition. Some interviewers may start with ad lib questions then other will insert a random question. The applicant often views such interviews as confusing and disorganized. To address some of these concerns, the PST should do the following:

1. Use a prepared set of questions.
2. Be aware of the tendency to make premature decisions during the first few minutes of the interview. It is always best to not arrive at conclusions about the applicant until the end of the interview.
3. Develop an organized plan for how the group will ask questions so that all essential topics will be covered in depth and so that all members of the team have an opportunity to participate.

One possible plan is to list, beforehand, questions that the applicant will be asked and the order in which they will be asked. Each committee member can then volunteer to ask certain ones. Each person who volunteers for a question is responsible for asking that question and any follow-up questions necessary to clarify the applicant's answer. Someone else may ask a follow-up question on that topic as well. It would be best to try to coordinate the sequence of questioning with each member so he/she is ready for his/her turn. The person coordinating the interview can then check to see if there are any further questions on that topic before moving on to the next designated person and question. In this way team members ask all questions on a given topic at the same time which gives the feeling of a more organized discussion.

The questions should be organized so that the early ones touch upon topics emphasizing the applicant's strengths and successes. After the applicant and group have built rapport and feel more comfortable with each other, the discussion can move into areas that may be more troubling for the applicant, such as, difficulties he has experienced. Sensitivity towards the applicant and his spouse is important. It is not easy to talk about personal failures with a group of unknown people, particularly when one does not know how they will respond to such honesty and vulnerability. Deal with each applicant with the same respect, kindness and gentleness that teams member would like to receive if they were the interviewees.

#### **SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS** (Add or reduce depending on the desire of the Advisory team.)

1. Which ministers, teachers, and authors have significantly influenced your beliefs and behaviors about the ministry and in what way?
2. Describe what you believe to be a healthy relationship between a pastor and:
  - the church board
  - the congregation
  - the denomination.
3. Give an outline of your desired weekly work schedule.
4. What goals do you try to accomplish through your preaching and what is the process you go through to prepare it?

5. Please describe your training and experience in counseling. Will you be willing to refer to a more experienced counselor if it would benefit the individual(s)?
6. Describe your concept of stewardship (time, talent and money) for church members and how you hope to increase participation.
7. In what way do you see yourself to be a steward of the church family?
8. Describe what a mature spiritual disciple looks like to you, how he/she is fundamentally different from a believer who has been saved for one year and how you shape him/her to grow into the fullness of Christ.
9. If you became our pastor, what would you be most passionate to accomplish?
10. Do you forgive from your heart those who offend you?
11. Do your children (age 12 and older) conform to your ideals of holiness that you teach? If not, please explain.
12. How do you disciple the heart of people in contrast to their behavior?
13. How much do you like to be involved in denominational activities at the district, state and national levels?
14. Have you struggled with paying your tithe to the district? If so, in what way?
15. Why do you desire to pastor this church and live in this community?
16. (The interviewee should be told about one of the problems the advisory team has identified through the self-study of the church. Then he should be asked the following question.) How do you think you would go about trying to resolve this problem?
17. How do you maintain your spiritual, emotional, and physical health? How do you like to spend your free time?
18. How do you mix your ministry with your family?
19. Are you involved in para-church ministries (i.e. police chaplains, nursing home, social action concerns)?
20. How many books do you read in a year?
21. What is your least favorite part of the ministry?
22. Do you, your wife, or any member of the family have any physical health problems or disabilities?
23. How do you feel about choreographed dancing in the worship service?
24. How do you feel about these musical styles:
  - a. Contemporary Worship Choruses
  - b. Traditional Hymns
  - c. Christian Rock
  - e. Southern Gospel
  - f. Contemporary Gospel
  - g. Instrumental Numbers
25. Do you have any strong feelings concerning the appropriate dress for church attendance and ministry in services?
26. If you are being paid from the church treasury, would you or members of your family accept tithes from members of the congregation for personal use?
27. What are your salary needs and expectations?

TO SPOUSE:

1. What is your attitude towards your husband's vocation?
2. Which area in ministry do you find to be the most fruitful and enjoyable as you invest yourself in ministry with your spouse?
3. Tell us about your children. Describe each one's spiritual desire for God.
4. What are your concerns about a possible move?
5. Are there any things about our church or our community that would be a source of apprehension if you were called to come here?

## **APPENDIX IX**

### **QUESTIONS THE PST SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ANSWER**

1. What personal strengths and weaknesses do each of you have as elected leaders of this church?
2. Who are the primary influencers in your church and are they a “pastor’s friend” or his “competition” for leadership?
3. Is the pastor the chairman of the board and president of the corporation?
4. Describe how the church should be governed by the pastor and board.
5. What conflicts have there been between the pastor and the church or board in the last 3-5 pastoral terms and how have they been resolved?
6. Describe the last incident where unity in the church was broken and how it was restored.
7. Are the deacons (elders) regular tithers?
8. Do the deacons (elders) attend the services faithfully and regularly?
9. What do each of you see to be your primary role as a board member?
10. Describe a typical worship service here. Should it change? Why or why not? How?
11. Describe your participation in the altar time and in weekly services.
12. How have you handled complaints from one person about another member or leader?
13. Who evaluates “job” performance? How often? What criterion is used?
14. With which pastor have you most closely bonded? Why?
15. What indicators tell you a pastor is “through?”
16. What action or personality trait has caused some level of distrust toward a pastor?
17. If I came here, in what ways would you “loan” your influence to me?
18. What factors have led to longevity and brevity of pastoral leadership?
19. What change would create small or significant conflict?
20. What is your attitude toward planting other churches?
21. What do you think needs to be changed in our church?
22. What is your vision for this church and community?
23. How many or what percentage of your adult church family are spiritually mature disciples?
24. Who handles the church financial records? Are they audited in some way each year as part of the church board’s fiduciary responsibilities?
25. What safety precautions are in place to protect the church, as well as employees and pastor, from being accused of or involved in financial improprieties?
26. What is the church’s indebtedness?
27. Is this a missions-minded church? How much was given to missions last year?
28. Do you have a church policy manual that explains office hours, days off, vacations, etc.?
29. What compensation do you offer a pastor (salary, housing, housing allowance, mileage, health insurance, MBA retirement, Social Security, vacation? Normally two weeks at end of first year, 3 weeks after the 5<sup>th</sup> year, etc. Seasoned pastors would be given additional vacation time. (For example: If the pastor had three weeks’ vacation at his previous church, then it might be good to consider the same amount for his new pastorate.) Does the church cover expenses for District Council, District functions, Minister’s Retreat and General Council?
30. How does the church evaluate ministry performance and decide salary increases?
31. What are the cultural peculiarities of this church and this community?
32. What are the “favored” teachings or beliefs of this church family?
33. Is the church incorporated? Does it have a Federal Employee Identification number? Does it have a State Tax Exempt number?
34. Does the church make quarterly reports to the Internal Revenue Service as required by law?
35. What paid staff do you presently have?

## **APPENDIX X**

### **SAMPLE SCHEDULES FOR A CANDIDATE'S VISIT**

#### **Suggested weekend schedule when the candidate preaches:**

The entire schedule will need to be well defined before the candidate is presented to the congregation including the details of the voting procedures. Promotional material regarding the candidate will need to be secured: pictures, biographical sketch, etc. The congregation will need to be informed of his coming, the luncheon following the service and subsequent special business meeting to vote on the candidate a minimum of two weeks in advance. At that time they may submit questions for the Question and Answer time following the luncheon by filling out the bulletin insert "Here's My Question." These questions should be given to the candidate immediately following the service so that he will have time to think about his answers.

The District Superintendent or the Sectional Presbyter will preside at the special business meeting called for the pastoral vote of affirmation.

- Friday Evening – Dinner with Advisory Team members, their spouses, the candidate and his family.
- Saturday Morning and/or Afternoon – Candidate checks out available housing, shopping, cost of living, and the community as a whole.
- Saturday Evening – Eat early with departmental/ministry leaders (Discussion time should be limited to allow for prayer and final sermon preparation.)
- Sunday Morning – Introduction of the Candidate who presents his ministry. Ample time should be given for him to preach with no distractions. He must have advance notice if he is expected to do something additional in the service besides preach.
- Sunday luncheon – Carry-in or catered dinner with the candidate and the church body. If a District official is not present for this, an Advisory Team member should open the meeting and then turn the floor to the candidate for a Question and Answer time. A comfortable atmosphere needs to be created for the candidate and his spouse. (i.e., Bistro table with two stools.) The length of the meeting should be limited to allow the candidate and his family to spend some time to reflect by themselves on Sunday afternoon. The affirmation vote can be taken at this time if the congregation would prefer to do this without hearing the candidate a second time. (The candidate and his family should not be present at the business meeting.)
- Sunday Evening – The candidate may minister a second time and/or the church could have a business meeting held to take a vote of affirmation on the candidate. (The candidate and family should not be present at the business meeting. They can be allowed to wait in a designated area for the outcome of the vote.)

Once the vote of affirmation has been taken the District Superintendent or Sectional Presbyter will communicate and discuss the results with the candidate. The candidate may still need a period of time to respond (perhaps as much as a week). However, it is very important for both the candidate and the congregation to know when an answer is expected.

## **APPENDIX XI COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENTS**

### **CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT**

Many times District Afflicted churches are not able to provide full time financial support for their pastor. However, they often have a parsonage and are able to provide some form of compensation whether in cash, food or other forms of support.

With the help of the Sectional Presbyter and/or District Superintendent, the Advisory Board can evaluate the average annual income and expenses of the church to determine how much they can give the pastor. There can be various ways of considering compensation in light of possible future growth. One approach might be to offer the pastor what the church can honestly afford for a salary plus a possible increase based on the progress of the church finances. For example, the church could offer a salary based on the church's actual budget plus a percentage (i.e. 60%) of the increase of balance between income over expenses for the following year. So if the income increased \$2500 and the expenses increased \$1500 over the year, then the difference would be \$1000. At 60% the pastor would receive a \$600 bonus.

Since the pastor may not be able to receive sufficient salary to provide for his family, the Advisory Team and the congregation should find other creative ways throughout the year to show their love and support to the pastor and his family.

If the church has been sufficiently blessed to hire the pastor on a full time basis, the District Superintendent and/or the Sectional Presbyter can supply more detailed information on how the church can provide a complete compensation package.