

## **SOME SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES FOR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Interpreting our selection as members of the Pastor Search Committee of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church as a most important assignment, we have unanimously agreed upon the following statement of Policy and Procedure as the guidelines to be followed in the fulfillment of our task. We present the statement to the church for consideration and approval in the interest of harmony and mutual understanding as we seek God's man to lead our church as pastor.

### **PRINCIPLES**

1. We believe in a God-called and a God-placed ministry. We feel that God has a man, called and qualified to lead us at this particular time in the ministry to which our church is called.
2. We believe that such a man would be a Christian gentleman whose record would reveal the moral qualities, academic training, and doctrinal stability that would fit him to lead a Southern Baptist Church. We further believe that he would have a pastor's heart, a love for people, a soul-winner's compassion, and a record of pastoral service indicative of spiritual insight and understanding.
3. We believe that God's man for our church can be found as we prayerfully and carefully seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit in calling His chosen man for our church. When the committee and the man are agreed that they have found God's will in the matter, the committee will prepare a recommendation on the financial and other considerations that would permit God's man to serve most effectively. Further, having found God's man, the church should pledge him their love and loyalty as pastor and people together engage in their God-given ministry.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. The Committee requests that all who desire to present recommendations for consideration, do so in writing, giving as much information as possible on the person being presented, and give the written recommendation to any member of the Search Committee. Every recommendation will be acknowledged by the Committee and given careful and prayerful attention.
2. The Committee will process each recommendation, obtaining further information as available through denominational and other sources.
3. When the information is in hand the Committee will make a thorough, prayerful study of each candidate. The Committee will then pray and counsel together until they are impressed with one man from the list of recommendations.

4. When the Committee is unanimous in their desire to pursue the matter with one man, the prospective pastor will be called, told of the Committee's desire, and if he is agreeable to exploring the matter, a date would be set for an interview in his community, our community or in between, with the Committee paying his expenses, if any. If the Committee and the prospective pastor agree then to continue exploration of the matter, a date will be agreed on when the Committee will hear him in his own pulpit or, if he is not a pastor, one in which he can arrange to preach.
5. Should the Committee and the man then sense the Lord's leading to further consideration, the prospective pastor and his family would be invited to spend a few days in our city, meet the church family in an informal reception, confer with the church leadership, and preach both morning and evening services on Sunday. It is suggested that the Sunday evening service the week prior to the prospective pastor's visit be given to a presentation by the Search Committee. The presentation could include a brief word from each member of the Committee, and the Committee serving as a panel to respond to the congregation's questions.

The committee, with counsel from other church leadership, will at that time present a written recommendation to the church. The recommendation would include a clear statement of the financial and other considerations under which the call would be extended. The church would then vote their conviction as to the Lord's leadership in the matter.

6. If at any stage of the procedure described, either the Committee or the man in question would decide the matter should not be pursued further, a notification would be given to all parties, and the Committee would start again and follow the same procedure until they are convinced God's man has been found.
7. In order to keep the church informed and prayerful, periodic progress reports will be made by the Pastor Search Committee.

We respectfully request that our church consider the above Principles and Procedures, and authorize their Pastor Search Committee to proceed under these guidelines in seeking a pastor for our church.

## CHART FOR GUIDING THE CHURCH AND PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE DURING THE TRANSITION PROCESS

(Tasks are roughly in numerical order.)

Church/Deacon Tasks	Pastor Search Committee
1. Pastor announces his resignation privately to deacons.	
2. The Deacons review the church constitution or by-laws as to guidelines to follow during Transition time. Deacons frequently are assigned task of providing pulpit supply.	12. Pastor Search Committee (PSC) arranges for Director of Missions and/or consultant from the Baptist Building to lead them in an orientation session.
3. Pastor announces resignation to the congregation.	13. PSC elects officers and organizes for its work.
4. Deacons/church leaders conduct an exit interview with departing pastor.	14. PSC reviews self-study finding.
5. Assigned committee makes proper plans for reception and recognition of pastor's service to congregation. Help the congregation to say good bye to the departing pastor and his family.	<i>(See Column I - Church/Deacon Tasks - for #15 -#16)</i>
6. Chairman of deacons contacts Director of Missions and/or Missouri Baptist Convention for presentation on type of ministry available during the transition time between pastors, e.g. traditional interim pastorates vs. Transitional Pastor process.	17. PSC develops a pastor profile/delegates to proper compensation package for new pastor.
7. Church determines expectations for the interim pastor (Sunday only, Wednesday service, crisis ministry, pastoral calls, evangelism, supervise staff, etc.)	18. Identify methods of finding potential applicants.
8. Decide whether the deacons or designated committee will be responsible for pulpit supply or interim. Delegate authority and responsibility accordingly.	19. Develop introductory statement, questions, and written materials to use when communicating with referral sources.
9. Plan on proper honorarium for pulpit supply travel and meal expense reimbursement. Provide hospitality if supply preacher is to be present on the field for both morning and evening services.	20. Develop materials to send to potential applicants (description of church and Pastor's Information Form).
10. Make decision to do self-study and address certain developmental tasks during the interim/transition time: Coming to terms with history; Examine leadership and organizational needs; Renew denominational linkage; Develop a new identity and vision; and make a commitment to new leadership.	21. Send out materials.
11. Follow the constitution and by-laws on selecting a Pastor Search Committee (PSC). <i>(See Column II)</i>	22. Send a personalized form letter to everyone who sends in an application, describing the process.
	23. Review initial applications/resumes. Do first round of eliminations. If you have many applications left, send nonacceptance letters to persons you have screened out.

15. Pastoral duties may need to be divided among the church leadership/church provides budget expense for the PSC.
16. Support the development of a worship program that keeps the congregation interested and involved.

*(See Column II – Pastor Search Committee for #17-#33)*

24. Interview by telephone the reference persons of the remaining candidates and/or mail reference forms seeking feedback on your top candidates.
25. Listen to and/or view video of applicant sermon tapes and evaluate. Do second round of elimination based on the references, study of resumes, and evaluation of sermon tapes. Reduce the number of candidates to four to six persons. (You may wish to contact the candidates and share where you are in the process as well as to determine if they are still available and/or interested in being considered). (Also some PSC will want to just deal with one top candidate and follow the process till it is completed.)
26. Prepare for personal interviews. Identify questions, who will ask them, and in what order.
27. Have personal interview with applicants and their spouses. Use group telephone interviews with those for whom distance prevents personal meeting or go to neutral site.
28. Identify your strongest candidate. Visit him in his home church. Arrange for weekend visit “in view of call” for the candidate and family.
29. Have congregation vote on candidate. If vote meets percentage requirement set forth by candidate and/or by constitution & by-laws to call a pastor, extend a call. If vote is negative, recycle to appropriate step in this chart.
30. Once you are certain the candidate is coming, send nonacceptance letters to remainder of applicants.
31. Send thank you letters to those who have been helpful in your search process.
32. Destroy personal information of candidates that you have collected during the search process.

34. Church thanks the PSC for a job well done. If the church budget allows, send them and their spouses to a nice restaurant for a thank you dinner. If it doesn't find some other way to say "Thank You."

33. Have at least one person (usually the chair) stay in touch with your new pastor to orchestrate practical help during his move. The PSC should have monthly meetings with the new pastor for each of the first three months he is on the field and then meet quarterly for the first year of service for the new pastor. This will keep lines of communication open and provide a pastor/church relations committee to assist in addressing potential issues of concern for all parties.

*(See Column I - Church/Deacon Tasks - for #34)*



**FOR MBC USE ONLY**

ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Filled: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHURCH PROFILE**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHURCH INFORMATION**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                     Street                                    City                                    State                                    Zip

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Association: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of State (circle one): NE, NW, Central, SE, SW

Resident Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Average A.M. Worship: \_\_\_\_\_

Average Sunday School: \_\_\_\_\_

Baptisms Last Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Church Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Church Indebtedness: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Community (circle one): Open country, Village (pop. Up to 499), Town (pop. 500-2,499), Small City (pop. 2,500-9,999), Medium City (pop. 10,000-49,999), Large City (pop. 50,000 +)

Is your church singly aligned with the Missouri Baptist /Southern Baptist Conventions?  
 Yes     No

Church Contact Person Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
                                     Street                                    City                                    State                                    Zip

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION INFORMATION**

Position Seeking to Fill (circle one): pastor, associate pastor, education minister, music minister, youth minister, evangelism minister, recreation minister,  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Experience Preferred: \_\_\_\_\_

Age Preference:  Yes     No  
 If Age Preference (circle one): 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+

Educational Requirements (circle one): none, high school/GED, college, seminary, doctorate

Bivocational Acceptable?  Yes  No

Doctrinal expectations for potential staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

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Ministry expectations for potential staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PREVIOUS COMPENSATION PACKAGE**

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**Salary**

Base Salary: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Housing Allowance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Parsonage (fair rental value): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Benefits**

Retirement Annuity: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(10% of total compensation recommended)

Insurance:

Group Life: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Disability: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitalization: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Reimbursement for Social Security: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Expense Reimbursement**

Auto: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Convention/Conference: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Education, Books, Journals: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Compensation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

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Return form via e-mail to [bkelly@mobaptist.org](mailto:bkelly@mobaptist.org); or mail to Missouri Baptist Convention, Attn.: Becki Kelley, 400 E. High St., Jefferson City, MO, 65101-3253; or fax to 573-635-0904.

# CONGREGATIONAL SELF-STUDY FORM

As part of our work in finding a new pastor, the pastor nominating committee would like your input in describing our church as you presently experience it. We would like your thoughts about its strengths, its weaknesses, the needs you foresee for our church in the next five to ten years, the priorities you think our next pastor should have, and the qualities you believe he should possess.

It will probably take from thirty to forty-five minutes to thoughtfully answer the questions on this questionnaire. Please consider this an investment in helping find the person who can effectively lead our church in the next phase of its growth. Try to be as honest as you can, even in your criticisms. Your questionnaire will remain anonymous unless you choose to sign it. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful input. It will be carefully reviewed by the committee.

Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Number of years Member or Attendee \_\_\_\_\_

## STRENGTHS

Please identify three or more areas in which you believe this church meets your needs or the needs of others well. \_\_\_\_\_

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## WEAKNESSES OR CHALLENGES

Please identify one or more areas in which you believe our church is not meeting your or other members' needs as well as it could. \_\_\_\_\_

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Are there any unresolved problems within the congregation that you believe the church or the next pastor should attempt to address? \_\_\_\_\_

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If your answer is yes, what are they? Please be as specific and complete as you can be. \_\_\_\_\_

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## CONGREGATIONAL SELF-STUDY FORM (continued)

### FUTURE AREA OF MINISTRY

In what areas, if any do you think our church should attempt to have a ministry in the next five to ten years that it is not having now? \_\_\_\_\_

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In what areas of Christian living, if any, do you think you need to be challenged to grow by our next pastor? \_\_\_\_\_

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### PRIORITIES

Pastors are called on to do many more things than their time allows them to do. As a consequence, they have to make decisions about priorities. In this process, it is helpful for them to know what their congregation view as priorities. Please look through the following list and circle the 1 beside the three or four activities you think are most important for your pastor to do. Go through the list a second time and circle the 4 beside those activities you believe are least important for your pastor to do (you may use 4 as many times as you wish). Circle either 2 or 3 (indicating moderate priority) beside the remaining activities.

Preparing for and leading corporate worship	1	2	3	4
Preparing for preaching and teaching	1	2	3	4
Congregational home visitation	1	2	3	4
Hospital and emergency visitation	1	2	3	4
Counseling	1	2	3	4
Training members in and doing personal evangelism	1	2	3	4
Planning a balance of worship, teaching, and fellowship experiences for church members	1	2	3	4
Encouragement of foreign missions work	1	2	3	4
Involvement in local, associational, and state mission work	1	2	3	4
Oversight of educational program of church	1	2	3	4
Administrative leadership of church staff	1	2	3	4
Involvement in community leadership	1	2	3	4
Community Ministerial Alliance and interfaith activities	1	2	3	4
Involvement in associational and state denominational work	1	2	3	4
Providing oversight for activities and committees of church	1	2	3	4
Providing oversight for building programs as needed	1	2	3	4
Encouraging the development of small groups to meet specific needs within the church	1	2	3	4
Dealing with people who might cause division	1	2	3	4
Monitoring and guiding church expenditures to stay within the budget	1	2	3	4
Conducting weddings, baptisms, and funerals	1	2	3	4
Providing leadership when church discipline is needed	1	2	3	4

**CONGREGATIONAL SELF-STUDY FORM**

**CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

Would you be willing to consider a person for pastor who had at sometime in the pastoral experience been involved in moral failure if there was evidence of genuine repentance since that time? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Perhaps \_\_\_\_ Reason or comment \_\_\_\_\_

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**QUALITIES OUR NEXT PASTOR SHOULD HAVE**

Based on your knowledge of our church, of its present strengths and weaknesses, and of the needs we may have in the next five to ten years, please identify the qualities that you think are important for our next pastor to have. \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for your time and input. Your responses will be considered carefully by the Pastor Search Committee.

**FURTHER COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- Portions adapted from the book CHOOSING A NEW PASTOR by Henry A. Virkler, Oliver Nelson Publishers, Nashville Tennessee.

Dear Fellow Church Member:

You are a part of the body of Christ, the Church. Your Pastor Search Committee desires your suggestions and recommendations in regard to the selection of a pastor. We are providing this questionnaire as a means whereby you may communicate your thoughts to us. As a family unit, please give this your prayerful, careful, and thoughtful attention as together we submit all phases of calling a pastor to the power and guidance of God's spirit. If extra space is needed, please feel free to add extra sheets. If possible, return this questionnaire to the committee by next Sunday. A collection box will be located in the vestibule for your convenience.

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### PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. About what age person would you like for our next pastor to be, assuming that other characteristics are favorable? Check one.
  - Age should not be a major factor
  - Under 30
  - 30-39
  - 40-49
  - 50-up
  
2. What preference, if any, do you have regarding the formal education our next pastor should have? Check one.
  - Formal education should not be a factor
  - At least a college degree
  - At least seminary training
  - Doctoral program in theology or ministry
  - Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Consider this list of typical activities for a pastor. Think about our church, its needs, its programs, community needs and your own personal needs, and rank the following as you believe them to be important. Assign a rank order of importance with number 1 being the most important.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Preparation and presentation of sermons
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Visitation of church members
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Counseling activities, advising individuals
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Attending of meetings or functions of the church
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Visitation of prospective church members
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Office work, administrative work
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Denominational work (associational, state, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal evangelism, soul winning
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal prayer and Bible study
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Community involvement
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching activities (study courses, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

4. List briefly any qualities or characteristics you would especially like to see in a person serving as our pastor. Indicate any which you feel are of greatest importance.

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5. What are our church's greatest strengths? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What are our church's greatest needs? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What are our church's greatest weaknesses? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What areas of our church's ministry need to be emphasized more, for which our next pastor needs skills and abilities? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. In order to meet the needs of our church and its members, what emphasis do you feel our future pastor's preaching should take? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Additional comments you may want to express:

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## Pastor Search Questionnaire

*We need your input....*As we look for the person God would have for \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, the thoughts, opinions, hopes and dreams of *each member* are important in guiding the work of the Pastor Search Committee. Our worship services, our ministries, and the future direction of our church will be affected by the Pastor we choose. Thank you for taking a few minutes to carefully and prayerfully fill out this questionnaire. Return it to the box in the foyer by Sunday evening, \_\_\_\_\_. **Be sure to fill out both sides.**  
(date)

1. What age would you like the new pastor to be, assuming all other characteristics are favorable?  
\_\_\_\_\_ under 30    \_\_\_\_\_ 30-39    \_\_\_\_\_ 40-49    \_\_\_\_\_ 50 – up    \_\_\_\_\_ not a primary factor
2. What preference do you have concerning the pastor's formal education? (check one)  
\_\_\_\_\_ At least college degree  
\_\_\_\_\_ At least seminary training  
\_\_\_\_\_ Theology or ministry doctoral program  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Formal education not a primary factor
3. Should we consider a bivocational pastor? (That is a person who holds another job besides pastor.)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, that is acceptable  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, only consider a full-time pastor  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not a major consideration
4. What qualities or characteristics would you especially like to see in our next pastor? (Indicate those you feel are of greatest importance.)
5. In order to meet the needs of our church and its members, what emphases do you think our pastor's preaching should take?
6. Identify three or more areas in which you believe our church meets your needs or the needs of others well.
7. Please identify one or more areas in which you believe our church is not meeting your or other members' needs as well as it could.
8. What are our church's greatest needs?
9. In what areas, if any, do you feel our church should attempt to have a ministry in the next 5-10 years that it does not have now?

10. Are there any unresolved problems within the congregation that you believe the church or the next pastor should attempt to address? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No If yes, what are they? Please be specific as possible:

11. Because pastors are called upon to do more than time often allows, they have to make decisions about their priorities. What do you think these priorities should be? Circle 1 among the three or four activities you think are the most important. Circle 4 beside the things you feel are least important. Circle 2 or 3 (indicating moderate priority) beside the remaining activities.

- 1 2 3 4 Preparing for and leading worship
- 1 2 3 4 Preaching and teaching preparation
- 1 2 3 4 Home visitation of congregation
- 1 2 3 4 Hospital and emergency visitation
- 1 2 3 4 Visiting prospective church members
- 1 2 3 4 Counseling
- 1 2 3 4 Training members in and doing personal evangelism
- 1 2 3 4 Planning a balance of worship, teaching, and fellowship experiences for members
- 1 2 3 4 Planning opportunities for Christian growth and discipleship
- 1 2 3 4 Encouragement of home and foreign missions work
- 1 2 3 4 Involvement in local, associational, and state mission work
- 1 2 3 4 Oversight of church's educational program
- 1 2 3 4 Equipping members and leadership training
- 1 2 3 4 Community leadership involvement
- 1 2 3 4 Involvement with other area ministers and interfaith activities
- 1 2 3 4 Associational and state denominational work involvement
- 1 2 3 4 Providing oversight for church activities and committees
- 1 2 3 4 Encouraging development of small groups to meet specific needs within the church
- 1 2 3 4 Personal prayer and Bible study
- 1 2 3 4 Office and administrative work
- 1 2 3 4 Monitoring and guiding church expenditures and budget
- 1 2 3 4 Conducting weddings, baptisms, and funerals
- 1 2 3 4 Attending church meetings and functions
- 1 2 3 4 Providing leadership when church discipline is needed

12. In what areas of Christian living, if any, do you think you need to be challenged to grow by our next pastor?

13. Are there any specific suggestions you have for this Pastor Search Committee? Do you have any other comments?

14. Please tell us about yourself (optional, but preferred):

\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_ Age I've been a member \_\_\_\_ years.