

## Things to Consider for your Church When Searching for a Pastor

This is a transition time for your Church. We call it a “defining moment.”

It is a time for the church:

A time for UNITY. There should be a bond of church family meeting one another’s needs.

A time for HEALING. The church body needs a time to heal and then to deal with the process of finding God’s man.

A time for COUNSEL. We need to prepare the congregation for the new pastor. BRM can give good counsel in these days, and the Interim Pastor would be a good resource to help.

A time in the INTERIM. The time between pastors need not to be one of loss or indecision for the congregation. With the right leadership and guidance this can be a time for RENEWAL, DISCERNMENT and GROWTH.

### IN LOOKING AT CANDIDATES...

Remember, what you need most is the ONE RESUME, the RIGHT one for your church. These ideas can help to narrow down the search:

1)

**Filter all resumes to find the ones that you will want to look at the most carefully.**

See if the candidate went to the proper schools – Not all Bible schools are recommended. Not many of them will teach according to your church doctrine.

Note how many churches he has been a pastor in. Some men never stay more than a few years in any one church.

Note if he is an IFCA International man. Is he opposed to IFCA? Will he join IFCA International?

No candidate should get into your pulpit unless he fills out your questionnaire form and meets your approval.

2)

**When you find a candidate you want to look at more carefully...**

Go and hear him preach somewhere. Send two or three committee members and listen to him. If that is not possible, get a video of him preaching a sermon. Watch and listen to him.

When he has passed this criterion, schedule him to come and speak in your church one Sunday.

Use our BRM Guidelines for questions you can ask the candidate. Ask some of these questions over the phone, or get him to come in for a time of Q & A with the committee and the board members.

Check all of his references carefully. Use the BRM reference question form we put together. The committee might want to send this form to those references, or use the form as you conduct phone conversations with his reference people.

Check with the last church he has been as a pastor. See if the church secretary remembers him. Or see if there is a long tenure deacon or elder who has worked on the board with him. How well does he work with board members?

Do thorough backgrounds check on him on the internet as well. See if there are any pending legal matters concerning him as well as his credit rating. Is he debt free? Does he or anyone in the family have an arrest record?

Optional: You can learn a lot about the candidate's working personality from a quick temperament analysis. He can take a DISK analysis in 10 minutes, plus a spiritual gifts assessment. Have elders do the same thing, then see if your temperaments complement each other or will clash.

3)

Finally, **introduce him to the congregation** as a viable candidate. At this level in the process, the church should not be pursuing any other candidate until they exhaust the process with the one they are currently looking toward. Bring him and his family in so he can preach and meet the people (and they meet him). He can stay in the area for a few days or a week. Provide housing in a nearby hotel, or the parsonage if you have one. He is not to stay with any one member during this candidating period.

Provide the congregation with 5”X7” cards or paper where they can address questions they have for the candidate. After the service these can be dropped in a box on the narthex table. These question slips require no names or identification. No one should be intimidated for asking a question.

Provide a time for the candidate to answer these questions. The committee can look at the cards and carefully consolidate questions that are the same or similar. They can give a list of questions to the candidate for him to study ahead of time. He can determine how to address these questions. At a scheduled service, an appointed moderator can then ask each question verbally, and the candidate can answer each of the written questions. After each of the pre-submitted questions are answered to the satisfaction of the moderator, then allow the congregation any additional verbal questions. You will find that since you answered most of the questions already, verbal questions will be few.

If all is acceptable with the search committee, board and the congregation, schedule an official congregational meeting where the members can vote on the pastor. The final vote count should be in the affirmative by a comfortable margin according to the provisions of the church constitution.

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