

# Finding a New Minister for Your Church

A unique, step-by-step approach for identifying the right candidate and developing a mutually healthy church-minister relationship

## Written by:

M. Wayne Oaks  
Baptist State Convention of North  
Carolina

## Adapted by:

Richard Faling  
Church Personnel Information Service  
Church Health and Growth Section  
Baptist General Convention of Texas  
Dallas, Texas

## About This Manual:

Numerous search or personnel committees have found that the “old rules” of the process no longer apply. This handbook describes a new approach—one that emphasizes the leadership of the Holy Spirit and encourages churches and ministers to foster a mutually healthy relationship. The original book was written for use by churches of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, with their permission, we have adapted it for Texas Baptists.

The manual addresses four primary concerns surfaced by those involved in the search process:

- **Helping the church identify its own mission** and find the minister whose gifts in ministry will help the church fulfill that mission.
- **Conducting face-to-face dialogue** to exchange adequate information and develop knowledge of the church and candidates. Encouraging discussion of dreams, leadership style, core beliefs, and needs, the process leads the committee and candidate toward prayerfully informed decisions.
- **Securing background checks** on candidates without questioning their personal integrity. The manual presents a new approach to this process, done with the full knowledge, permission and signature of the candidate.
- **Writing a minister-church covenant** to clarify expectations. A mutually-supported covenant agreement, approved by the church congregation creates the basis for a healthy relationship.

# **FINDING A NEW MINISTER FOR YOUR CHURCH**

**Written By**

M. Wayne Oakes

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

**Adapted By**

Richard Faling

Baptist General Convention of Texas

**We are grateful for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina granting permission to the Church Personnel Service of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to use this manual.**

Permission is granted for churches to reproduce forms included in this book.

Frequent reference is made in this manual to the book *Risky Business* by Lynn Buzzard and Susan Edwards. This church hiring and volunteer selection guide was published jointly by the Church-State Resource Center, Norman A. Wiggins School of Law, Campbell University, Buies Creek, North Carolina, and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. The book is available for \$12.00 through the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Call 919-467.5100 or 800-395-5102 ext. 454 to order a copy.

@ 1998 Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Cary, North Carolina.

All Rights Reserved. Printed in the United States of America.

All references quoted are used by permission.

# Foreword

The leadership of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina have done an excellent job in putting a step-by-step outline for a search committee to use. We are grateful for their willingness to share this manual with us for our Texas Baptist churches to use.

This manual was originally designed to be used by a pastor search committee. However, the process, outline and attached forms are applicable for all search and/or personnel committees to use in their search for ministers in their churches.

## ***Why another manual on the search committee process?***

As a staff member of an association and more recently as the Baptist General Convention of Texas staff liaison working with the search and personnel committees from the churches, we have had the requests for the material contained in this manual. The process outlined in this manual was developed somewhat out of the experiences of the author, M. Wayne Oakes as a pastoral candidate. In addition, the committees with whom he worked have helped in giving material as to the things that worked and what did not work well for them. This manual is a compilation of their suggestions and incorporation of their ideas. What you find in this manual is best of the thinking and experiences of Southern Baptist churches from all across the state of North Carolina. This document is written with seven primary concepts in mind for the work of the search/personnel committee:

*A process that affirms the autonomy of the local church.* Providing a cafeteria of options but affirming the work of the search committee as it follows the traditions, mandates, and Spirit-led decisions of the committee, the committee is encouraged to use the parts that work best for them.

*A process that involves the congregation.* The congregation is asked to be a part of the process by completing self-studies, providing names of potential ministers, and prayerfully participating in the church's visioning process.

*A process that respects the relationship of the minister with the current congregation.* Tremendous harm can be done when a committee comes to hear the minister preach or lead in his own church. It sends a signal that the minister is seeking to move; and if he does not leave, his congregation may conclude that their minister may not be desired by others or by them. This process encourages the committee to focus attention on face-to face dialogue around such topics as leadership style, core beliefs, and communication. Going to visit the minister in his own church should be the last step, not the first.

*A process that encourages the congregation to seek a minister to own their vision first.* The church must know who it is and what distinguishes it from other nearby churches. It does not work to expect the minister to bring the vision to the people. Their real concern should be whether the minister's gifts in ministry match their perceived needs as they seek to be the people of God.

*A process that encourages the committee to work with only one candidate at a time.*

Unfortunately, committees are often tempted to consider several candidates at once and to choose the one that looks and sounds the best. However, this is not an employment process; it is a spiritual process. The goal of the committee is to bring before the congregation the person whom they believe God has uniquely prepared to serve as their next pastor. This can only be determined by emphasizing the spiritual dimensions of prayer and earnestly seeking God's will. Hopefully, a congregation will hesitate to terminate a pastor if they also believe that this is the person God prepared to serve their church.

*A process that encourages the church to have a covenant agreement that clarifies the expectations of both the congregation and the minister.* This is different from a job description in that it takes into account the uniqueness of the minister and the changing needs of the congregation. It should be negotiated with the new minister and reviewed annually.

*A process that allows the committee to do background checks on the minister with his knowledge and permission but with integrity.* There are appropriate ways to perform background checks on the minister. These should be done only with the minister's knowledge and signature. Churches were searching for ways to do this, and frequently they were trusting hearsay information without having a way to determine the reality of a situation. The purpose of the background check is to assure the congregation that their new minister is worthy of trust and to protect the church's witness to the community. After the congregation is advised as to the level of background checks done, the people can easily affirm and demonstrate their trust with a minimum of risk. This will help the minister and congregation develop healthy relationships quicker.

***Is this manual really needed?***

We looked at materials currently available, and some excellent ideas were expressed in them. However, we found them to be too wordy or emphasizing that the committee should go to visit the minister as a first step. The approaches we read did not support our own experience as a pastoral candidate or what we are hearing today from ministers.

***Who will use this manual?***

The manual is meant for use by search committees in churches affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. We have made it available on the web site so that a search committee may copy and use any part as they desire. We have also observed that most committees use a three-ring binder to hold this material and subsequent resumes. This manual suggests steps a committee should consider as it goes through its process.

No one is expected to follow this manual to the letter. The committee must first be true to their local traditions and guided by their church's constitution and bylaws. It is most important that the committee be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The manual is designed in a simple ten-step process that fits into a twelve-month timetable.

***Does this manual support and encourage both ministers and churches?***

We believe it does. Ministers tell us, “it's written to protect the congregation,” and committees tell us “it's written to protect the minister.” Both are right. For example, the suggested process engages the congregation in getting in touch with its identity. Whenever a church expects the minister to bring identity to a church, it seems to fail. At some point, some church members may accuse the minister of not really knowing and not really loving them. Likewise, the covenant agreement encourages clarity about the minister's role and the congregation's expectations of the minister. It is a two-way street in that the minister should also have expectations of the church. The goal is healthy congregations who know who and whose they are as well as healthy ministers who are empowered to serve their Lord through His church. Efforts are made to treat those in the search process with integrity and respect. The committee and the minister are together seeking the leadership of the Holy Spirit. While some may have problems with the legal issues raised, the cause of Christ and the integrity of His church will be well served by ministers and churches making informed decisions.

***Does this imply that ministers are persons of character or the opposite?***

Wayne Oakes stated that he pastored in four associations in North Carolina over a twenty-two year period. This gave him opportunity to meet numerous pastors as peers in ministry. As a DOM and since coming to his position with the Baptist State Convention, he has spent time with hundreds of ministers. He believes from experience and observation that Baptist ministers have the highest sense of integrity and Christian commitment. They sacrificially work long hours as they seek to serve their Lord through obedience to His calling to ministry. However, it is also true that a small number of ministers have malevolent motivations or have been guilty of improprieties that should disqualify them for ministry. No congregation or its witness to the community should suffer because their minister has an unwholesome agenda.

***What are your hopes for this manual?***

It has been written to foster healthy relationships between congregations and ministers. Healthy congregations know their identity, and healthy ministers exercise their gifts and calling in leading God's people. This manual will help committees, churches, and ministers to come together in a shared vision of serving our Lord through His church.

Again, we are grateful to Wayne Oakes, the Office of Minister Church Relations, and the administration and the leadership of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina for allowing us to use and adapt this manual. Thanks a million!

Richard Faling  
Office, Church Personnel Information Service

# Contents

A Pastor Search Story .....	1
Time Table for Search Process.....	4
Initial Concepts and Acknowledgments.....	6
Step 1: Gathering Information .....	7
Step 2: Conducting Congregational Studies .....	10
Step 3: Gathering Names of Prospects .....	13
Step 4: Prioritizing Contacts .....	17
Step 5: Setting Up Files .....	19
Step 6: Contacting the Prospective Minister .....	21
Step 7: Completing Background Checks .....	25
Step 8: Visiting the Minister’s Church Field .....	28
Step 9: Calling the Minister .....	30
Step 10: Following Up After the Call .....	31
Appendix 1: Church Membership Questionnaire .....	33
Appendix 2: Survey from the Search Committee .....	35
Appendix 3: Survey for the Search Committee .....	36
Appendix 4: Warning Notice .....	38
Appendix 5: Reference Release Form .....	39
Appendix 6: Reference Letter .....	40
Appendix 7: Telephone Interview Reference Form .....	41
Appendix 8: Credit and Legal Information Release Form .....	43
Appendix 9: Letter to Minister Regarding Questionnaire .....	45
Appendix 10: Prospective Candidate Questionnaire .....	46
Appendix 11: Minister’s Compensation .....	48
Appendix 12: Sample Minister-Church Covenant .....	51
Appendix 13: Council on Caregiving.....	54
Appendix 14: Installation Service .....	55

# A Search Committee Story

After Reverend Roger Weeks left Proctor Creek Baptist Church, a committee was elected to find a new pastor. At the first meeting of the committee, the chairperson, Mary Ann Hickman, suggested that they seek some help from their local association. The director of missions, Jack Wilson, made suggestions about how to go about their task. He suggested several things they might consider doing. He even suggested that today the process of finding a pastor is different. He said the committee should:

1. Concentrate on face-to-face conversation with the pastor and make hearing a sermon preached a last criteria. To hear the pastor earlier, ask for an audiotape.
2. Lead church members to clarify the church's reason for existence and to sense what God wishes to do through their church.
3. Help build trust between the new pastor and the people. Determine ways the minister's experiences, lifestyle, and current situation make the pastor a trustworthy candidate.
4. Have the new pastor and the search committee write an agreement to explain what each expects of the other. This could be made even more significant by stating that the pastor is being called under the guidelines of the printed covenant.

Mary Ann and the committee liked these ideas, but they were still not sure where to begin.

Jack suggested they involve the church in their process by informing the people as to how the committee would be working to find a new pastor [Step 1: **Gathering Information**]. The congregation could assist them by suggesting names and securing resumes of suitable candidates. He also suggested that they have the congregation complete a family survey [Step 2: **Conducting Congregational Self-Studies**] that would provide information on the composition of their congregation by age, sex, marital status, location, vocation, etc. He said this would help them when they talked with a potential pastor, and it would help the new pastor and the congregation discuss the kinds of ministries the church should have.

Jack suggested that another way the congregation might help was by making a profile of a potential minister. Since the congregation is trusted to know the Lord's will on these matters, this would give them an opportunity to speak about the age range, education, experience, and giftedness of the next pastor. Mary Ann told the committee that the word was out and resumes were showing up in the mail. Sometimes they came to the church; often she would find a resume in her personal mail at home. Since the committee had agreed to work with one candidate at a time [Step 3: **Gathering Names of Prospects**], she thought it would be a good use of her time to call each candidate on the telephone so each would have a better knowledge of the church and the process it would be using. She told each candidate briefly about the congregation, its size and location. She concluded by asking if the candidate still wished to be considered by the committee. Some of those contacted were already being called to other churches, and some resumes had been sent by friends. Some of the pastors, for personal reasons, had to locate in another part of the state. She was so glad she took the time to find out if all of these were good prospects for the committee's work. The committee thanked Mr. Wilson for his help and scheduled their next meeting.

After the agreed upon date for receiving resumes, the committee [Step 4: **Prioritizing Contacts**] began to put the resumes in priority order. This led them to the resumes of five persons they all agreed would make excellent pastors in their setting [Step 5: **Setting Up Files**]. The committee agreed that Mary Ann would set up a dinner meeting for the committee with the pastor who was the first choice and his wife, Gene and Mary Holland. This dinner meeting and the two meetings following went great [Step 6: **Contacting the Prospective Candidate**]. They began by asking simple "getting to know you" questions. By the third meeting, they began to have serious discussions about the church's needs and its vision. They wanted to know about the pastor's leadership style and what "kind of Baptist" he was. The more they talked, the more they realized how much they had in common. It was as if Gene Holland had known them forever. They would ask a question, and his answer was as if the committee had written it just for him. They were all aware that this must be of the Lord. They found it interesting that he had been called into the ministry in his late twenties after a successful business career selling real estate.

Knowing the committee had a responsibility to the candidate but also to the church family, they asked Mr. Holland for permission to do background checks [Step 7: **Completing Background Checks**]. They also gave him a questionnaire to fill out just to make sure there were no surprises later. The credit report did say that he had been late paying bills, but that had been six years ago. The committee wondered why this might have happened. When the questionnaire was returned to them, they discovered that the pastor had experienced a heart attack; but following successful bypass surgery, he had functioned well with no continuing problems.

The pastor search committee felt relief that there was no problem in Mr. Holland's past that seemed a major concern. Their telephone calls to his references also supported their earlier findings. In their next meeting with the pastoral candidate, they asked him if he would work with them in writing a covenant agreement. They each brought to a later meeting a list of their expectations with specifics about what the church would expect from the pastor and what the pastor could expect from the church. As they completed this document, they made plans to visit him [Step 8: **Visiting the Candidate's Church Field**] on his church field.

Mr. Holland preached a biblically based message that confronted sin and called for personal repentance and spiritual maturity. The worship hour was a time of celebrating God's presence, forgiveness, and love. Later in the committee's visit with the pastor, they finalized understandings about the completed covenant and their financial agreements. They also made plans for him to preach at their church in four weeks.

When the "big" weekend came [Step 9: **Calling the Minister**], the committee made arrangements for the pastor and his family to meet with other church staff members and lay leaders of the church. On Saturday evening, the church had a nice get-acquainted dinner. The congregation knew that the pastor had been through a series of background checks; they knew, too, that Mary Ann and other members of the search committee knew their congregation well. Everyone felt positive about proceeding with the time of worship on Sunday and the vote that would be taken later. When the congregation voted, as expected, they made the already approved covenant a part of the call for Mr. Holland to become their new pastor.

Now, they must turn their attention to helping the new pastoral family feel that they are at home [Step 10: **Following Up After the Call**].

# Time Table for Search Process

Months ..... 1 ..... 2 ..... 3 ..... 4 ..... 5 ..... 6

## **1. Gathering Information**

- Collect introductory materials.
- Detail presentation materials.
- Update congregation on process.

## **2. Conducting Congregational Self-Studies**

- Study congregational demographics.
- Create a candidate search profile.
- Process church study and vision.

## **3. Gathering Prospective Names**

- Get names from other sources.
- Get names from within the congregation.

## **4. Prioritizing Contacts**

- Determine order to contact prospects.
- Structure process.

## **5. Setting Up File**

- Document contacts with candidate.
- Set up permanent paperwork files.

## **6. Contacting the Candidate**

- Request permission to check references.
- Explain background check process to candidate.
- Conduct initial and subsequent contacts.
- Plan possible questions to ask.
- Begin to write covenant agreement.

Months ..... 7 ..... 8 ..... 9 ..... 10 ..... 11 ..... 12

**7. Conduct Background Checks**

- Decide which background checks to do.
- Receive questionnaire from candidate.

**8. Visiting the Minister’s Church Field.**

- Discuss salary, housing, ministry expenses.

**9. Calling the Minister**

- Plan for candidate to visit church family.
- Vote to call minister under guidelines of the covenant agreement.

**10. Following Up After the Call**

- Inform minister of the call.
- Notify the local association office and the the Baptist Standard.
- Plan installation service.

# Initial Concepts and Acknowledgments

1. The information contained in this manual comes from a variety of sources. It has been compiled from personal experience and the experiences of numerous search committees. **The guidelines presented are suggestions only.** Your committee needs to make its own decisions in light of your church's traditions, written documents, and instructions.
2. Your search committee has the responsibility of deciding through what process you will bring the name of a potential minister before your congregation. Your church is autonomous, and no one has a right to dictate the type of process you must follow. The information in this manual provides a cafeteria of options your committee may wish to consider. For example, should your committee choose to do a complete background check, a process to accomplish that is included. However, this is your decision and your decision only.
3. Most ministers operate out of a deep sense of God's call. They are also highly committed and diligent in working long hours in obedience to that calling.
4. No minister is perfect. While most are conscientious, *a* few demonstrate unacceptable behavior or have been guilty of decisions that may disqualify them as ministers.
5. How can this happen? The Baptist ministry has no educational requirements, and no hierarchical body above the local church exercises authority over the suitability of a particular person for ministry. The local congregation can "set aside" (ordain) any person, as it wishes, for ministry.
6. Names of potential ministers may come to the committee from various sources such as your associational director of missions or your Baptist state convention. These do not come to you as recommendations; they are merely the names of persons who sense that God is leading them into a new area of ministry.
7. Your committee is responsible for discovering the suitability of any person to serve as a minister in your congregation. Your committee is encouraged to spend much time in prayer, in open discussion, and in detailed study.

# Step 1: Gathering Information

- 1.1 Allow time for the committee to become a "community." This can be accomplished by spending time in prayer and by talking about each committee member's spiritual journey and history with the church. Building a strong trust level is extremely important.
- 1.2 The church should have an interim selection committee if appropriate for the position. If the church has had the same minister having served for ten or more years or if there has been a history of conflict, the congregation will be wise to consider calling an intentional interim minister, who has had experience and additional church systems training. For more information, contact the office of Minister Church Relations, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, TX 75246, phone 214-828-5185.
- 1.3 The church may wish to consider making two basic agreements with the new interim minister.
  - That the interim minister will not become a candidate for the position.
  - That the interim minister will not use his trust relationship with the congregation to present resumes of potential ministers.
- 1.4 Be prepared to present basic information about your church to any prospective candidate including information about size of the church, location, facilities, and housing for the minister. Provide this information by telephone or by mail to determine whether the minister wishes to be considered as a candidate for the vacant position. If so, ask the candidate for a current resume (if needed).
- 1.5 Be prepared to present detailed information about your church to your prioritized, serious prospective candidates. (See Step 4.) This information includes:
  - Brief history of the church.
  - Description of church and community, facilities, membership, and special ministries.
  - Adopted church goals.
  - Plans for future construction.

- Organizational enrollment and current attendance.
- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all former pastors or appropriate staff members.
- Paid staff members' names, titles, and duties.
- Job description for the vacant position, if one exists
- Overview of finances-receipts, expenditures, total debt, average weekly receipts.
- Results of any self-studies.
- Three-mile demographic and psychographic study of your church community (secured by calling the office of Research and Information Services [ 214-828-5138] of the state convention).

1.6 Interpret to the congregation the process the committee will follow.

- Report on findings from the church's internal demographic and search committee surveys.
- Explain the approach the committee is taking, and clarify how the committee will keep the congregation informed through reports and written updates.
- Do not disclose confidential resume information. The names of persons under consideration or those no longer being considered should not be disclosed by the committee. Take care not to do anything that might hurt the minister's work in his current place of service.

## Sample Comments

1. Our committee is suggesting that the congregation join us in a time of prayerful self-study in preparation for seeking a new minister or ministry staff person.
  2. The committee will talk with ministers during the week and interview those who are serious candidates. We will go on Sunday to hear only the minister with whom we share a strong sense of calling to serve our church.
  3. We will ask the congregation to provide resumes of persons they think should be considered, but we will not report back whether a particular candidate is under consideration. We will, however, notify the minister if the committee is looking elsewhere.
  4. Please pray for our committee as we seek God's will for our church.
- 1.8 As individual members of the search committee, you may choose to visit several churches to observe their worship format and style and styles of ministry. This may help you clarify in your own mind the attributes you will seek in a minister.

# Step 2: Conducting Congregational Self Studies

- 2.1 Churches with a strong sense of mission and vision generally make the most progress. An important question for a church to ask is, "Who will own the church's vision?" The church's vision will be owned by either the minister or the congregation.

The new minister will come to the church with training, experience, and sense of call to ministry. However, what worked in another congregation may not work at all in your situation.

The new minister is in a poor position to own your church's vision because of:

- No prior knowledge of what has been tried-what failed and what succeeded.
- Little personal knowledge of the makeup and dynamics of your church community.
- Not knowing who in the congregation really has a finger on the pulse of the church and who just has an opinion. To whom should the minister listen?

For the minister to "own the vision" does not work well. At first, the congregation may like the new ideas presented. However, congregations frequently conclude after a couple of years that the minister is leading the church in a direction they do not want to go, so an effort begins to remove the current minister.

The congregation's goal is to "own" its vision based on its unique history and understanding of its founding dream.

For the minister and the congregation to have a shared vision for ministry is ideal. This often happens when the minister's gifts in ministry match the recognized needs of the congregation as it remains true to its vision.

- 2.2 Do self-studies of the church membership. (See Appendix 1: Church Membership Questionnaire and Appendix 2: Survey from the Search Committee, pp. 33, 35.) These include doing a demographic self-study by family units, a minister's profile study by individual members and, a third study within the search committee.

- Personalize questionnaires by deleting or adding information as appropriate. Ask one person from each family to complete the first study. To ensure that all members have opportunity to participate, the committee may choose to mail the survey and request its return. Make copies of the results to share with the congregation and with any serious candidate.
- All active church members should complete the second study. It should be distributed for at least two Sundays in order to involve the greatest number of participants. Provide time during Bible study and worship for persons to complete the form. Try not to let the survey out of the building.
- Use the compiled information from these other studies as a guideline in deciding on the type of candidate the church needs at this time. The third study will lead you to develop a code for the ministry priorities of your new minister. This will be used by the Search Committee as a search criteria in gathering names of prospective candidates.

2.3 To clarify expectations, conduct congregational Bible studies as appropriate. The studies may be led by the interim, a gifted layperson, or an outside presenter. The areas of study might include:

- A study of Baptist history and doctrines such as Hershel Hobbs' book and other material relating to Baptist Distinctives such as *The Baptist Faith and Message*. (These materials are available from the Baptist General Convention of Texas.)
- A biblically based study on the role and purpose of the church.
- A biblically based study on the role and responsibilities of clergy, church leaders, and laity.

2.4 Encourage the congregation to go through a process to recover their founding dream. They should also seek to verbalize what they believe to be God's will for their church in the future. The ultimate goal is to determine where God is at work in the church. It should provide them the opportunity to explore where the church is in terms of worship, discipleship development, outreach, personal evangelism, mission, and ministry.

- Assistance with this process may be obtained from your local associational director of missions or from the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Church Health and Growth Section.

2.5 Consider developing your own process. It should involve a significant number of your people in seeking a shared vision for your church. The process might include:

- Looking at the past ten years in the life of the church.

- Reviewing current community demographics.
  - Identifying currently held opinions about the church and its future.
  - Studying the Bible extensively. Clarify the role and purpose of your church. This is a great time to emphasize praying together and for one another.
  - Identifying several shared dreams for the future.
- 2.6 Understand that the potential minister will also have a vision for the church being considered, *Your goal is for the visions to be mutually supportive*
- 2.7 Consider encouraging the church to form a council on caregiving. The purpose of this council is to offer encouragement to the pastor/staff plus provide a means for clear, open communication within the church family. (See Appendix 13: Council on Caregiving, p. 54.)

# Step 3.- Gathering Names of Prospects

- 3.1 Gather names of prospective ministers from available resource people.
- Contact your local associational director of missions.
  - Contact the Office of Church Personnel Information Service of the BGCT.  
(Web Site: [www.cpis.org](http://www.cpis.org))
  - Contact accredited seminaries and divinity schools. (See listing on p. 14.)
  - Receive biographical sketches from other pastors, staff members, congregational members, or from potential candidates.
- 3.2 Decide under what conditions you will accept resumes. If only a name is provided, ask the person giving it to secure a resume for the committee.
- 3.3 Contact each candidate in order to determine if the individual is indeed a candidate for your position.
- The minister may be currently talking with another committee or may have just relocated. Also, the candidate may not be open to relocating to your area. This is a great time, also, to request a current resume.
- 3.4 Give the congregation an opportunity to submit names for consideration. Set a six- to eight-week cut-off date for receiving resumes in order to give any church member ample time to secure one from any candidate.
- 3.5 Following are schools that frequently appear on ministers' resumes. Listed are Southern Baptist seminaries and divinity schools connected to the Southern Baptist Convention and/or state conventions. Also listed are regional schools recognized by the Association of Theological Schools.

**Southern Baptist Seminaries****Phone Numbers**

• Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary	415 380-1300
• Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	816 453-4600
• New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary	504 282-4455
• Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary	800 284-6317
• Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	800 626-5525
• Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	817 923-1921

**Baptist Divinity Schools and Bible Colleges**

• Baptist Theological Seminary Richmond, VA	804 355-8135
• Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, AL	205 870-2718
• Campbell University Divinity School, NC	910 893-1830
• Florida Baptist Theological College, FL	904 263-3261
• Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute, NC	704 685-8886
• Gardner-Webb University Divinity School, NC	704 434-4400
• Loggssdon School of Theology, Hardin-Simmons University, TX	915 670-1287
• Mercer University School of Theology, GA	770 986-3474
• George Truett Divinity School, Baylor University, TX	254 710-3755
• Wake Forest University Divinity School, NC	800 393-4244

**Selected Schools Accredited by ATS (These schools have also met the high academic standards of the Association of Theological Schools.)**

• Andover Newton Theological School, MA	617 964-1100
• Asbury Theological Seminary, KY	606 858-3581
• Bethel Theological Seminary, MN	612 638-6180
• Candler School of Theology, Emory University, GA	404 727-6322
• Central Baptist Theological Seminary, KS	913 371-5313
• Colgate Rochester Divinity School, NY	716 271-1320
• Columbia Biblical Seminary, SC	803 754-4100
• Columbia Theological Seminary, GA	404 378-8821
• Crozer Theological Seminary, NY	716 271-1320
• Dallas Theological Seminary, TX	214 824-3094
• Denver Conservative Theological Seminary, CO	303 761-2482
• Drew University Theological School, NJ	201 408-3258
• Duke University Divinity School (Baptist House), NC	919 660-3401
• Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, PA	215 896-5000
• Erskine Theological Seminary, SC	803 379-8885
• Fuller Theological Seminary, CA	818 584-5200
• Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, MA	508 468-7111
• Hartford Seminary, CT	203 232-4451
• Harvard University Divinity School, MA	617 495-5761
• Lexington Theological Seminary, KY	606 252-0361

• Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, IL	708 620-2100
• Oral Roberts University School of Theology, OK	918 495-6096
• Princeton Theological Seminary, NJ	609 921-8300
• Reformed Theological Seminary, MS	601 922-4988
• Regent University School of Divinity, VA	804 523-7063
• Shaw Divinity School, NC	919 832-1701
• Talbot School of Theology, CA	310 903-4816
• Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, IL	708 945-8800
• Union Theological Seminary, NY	212 662-7100
• Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, VA	804 355-0671
• University of Chicago Divinity School, IL	312 702-8200
• Vanderbilt University Divinity School, TN	615 322-2776
• Virginian Union Univ. School of Theology, VA	804 257-5715
• Wesley Theological Seminary DC	202 885-8600
• Westminster Theological Seminary, PA	215 887-5511
• Yale University Divinity School, CT	203 432-5303

#### **Associate Schools with ATS**

• Conservative Baptist Seminary of the East, PA	215 646-3322
• Hood Theological Seminary, NC	704 638-5644

#### **Texas Baptist Universities**

• Baylor University, Waco, TX	254 710-3755
• Dallas Baptist University, Dallas, TX	214 333-7100
• East Texas Baptist University, Marshall, TX	903 935-7963
• Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, TX	915 670-1227
• Houston Baptist University, Houston, TX	281 649-3450
• Howard Payne University, Brownwood, TX	915 646-2502
• University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton, TX	254 295-8642
• Wayland Baptist University, Plainview, TX	806 296-5521
• Hispanic Baptist Theological School, San Antonio, TX	210 924-4338

#### **Other Schools with local or regional accreditation**

• Luther Rice Seminary, GA	770 484-1204
• Mid-America Seminary TN	901 751-8453
• Moody Bible Institute, ILI	312 329-4000

3.6 Other schools are accredited by regional accrediting agencies. Some schools have aligned with one another to accredit themselves. Your committee may want to determine the integrity of the accrediting process and by whom.

3.7 The following information will assist your committee in understanding more about the educational degrees most often held by ministers.

## Degrees Related to Pastoral Ministry

All degree programs offered by Southern Baptist seminaries are not included here. However, those that normally appear on resumes of Baptist pastors and other staff ministries are included.

The best known degrees are bachelor of arts (B.A.), bachelor of science (B.S.), master of arts (MA), master of science (M.S.), Doctor of Minister (Dmin) and doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.)

A.Div. or DipTh.	Associate of divinity or diploma in theology. Requires two full years of study for the student Who is over 30 years of age and without a college degree.
B.D. or M.Div.	Bachelor of divinity or master of divinity. Requires college degree plus three years of seminary training.
Th.M. or S.TM.	Master of theology or master of systematic theology. Requires college degree, master of divinity, and one more year of graduate work.
D.Min.	Doctor of ministry. Requires college degree, master of divinity, and one more year of graduate work.
M.A.RE. or M.RE.	Master of arts in religious education or master of religious education. Requires college degree and two years of seminary work.
Ed.D.	Doctor of education. Requires college degree, master of arts, master of religious education, or master of divinity and two more years of graduate work.
M.C.M. or M.M.	Master of church music or master of music. Requires college degree and two years of graduate work.
S.M.D. or D.C.M.	Doctor of sacred music or doctor of church music. Requires college degree, master of sacred music or master of church music, and two more years of graduate work.
D.D.	Doctor of divinity. This honorary degree is conferred to recognize outstanding service rather than academic achievement.

1. *Directory of the Association of Theological Schools, 1997-98.* 2. I am indebted to Henry L.

Chennault, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, for this information.

# Step 4: Prioritizing Contacts

- 4.1 The committee receives resumes until an established cutoff date. Using the information from your church's self-studies and findings of future needs, establish a priority order in which ministers will be considered.
- 4.2 Work with only one person at a time. Why is it important to work with only one candidate at a time?
- This is not a popularity contest. Your goal is to discover the person you sense the Holy Spirit has prepared to serve your church.
  - Considering several candidates at the same time creates the possibility of your committee members' supporting different candidates and dividing the committee.
  - Emphasize that the minister is being "called" not "hired."
  - Expect the minister to work with only one prospective church. Extend the candidate the same courtesy.
- 4.3 Your committee should agree on a way to sort through the resumes received. The goal is for everyone to have a sense of involvement in the process. Committee members should prayerfully seek and be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Here are three suggestions for how to sort and prioritize:
- Ask each committee member to rate each resume for suitability from one to ten with ten being the lowest. Total your scores on each candidate and place resumes in priority order.
  - Divide the resumes among subgroups of committee members. Ask each subgroup to choose three resumes warranting consideration by the entire group. When the resumes from the subgroups are compiled, ask each member to rate as suggested in the previous section. Place names in priority order.
  - The committee may study the resumes together and reach consensus on the order in which they will be considered. While a committee can consider resumes in the order

received, a better use of time is prayerfully to give priority to persons most matching the church's perceived needs.

- 4.4 Once a priority listing has been accomplished, contact the candidate of first choice by telephone. Initially, determine if this minister is still available and interested in considering the church.
- 4.5 If the candidate agrees, schedule your first personal contact. Note: this would also be an appropriate time to request an audiotape of a typical worship celebration, if pastor or minister of music. (Some might be able to provide the committee with a video of services.)
- 4.6 If you request a tape, please consider the expense incurred and return the tape when the committee is through listening to it. This is especially true if you received a video tape.

## Step 5: Setting Up Files

- 5.1 Only a small minority of ministers behave unethically or inappropriately in ministry. However, the search committee is responsible for protecting the church and the integrity of the committee. This is best done by doing adequate background checks and by documenting the committee's actions. This will protect the committee, the church, and the candidate.
- 5.2 Set up a personnel file on each serious candidate considered by your committee. This file should include copies of all written correspondence, signed authorization forms, evaluations, and personal reference forms. Also include any written findings that result from your information search.
- 5.3 You may consider several candidates before you extend a call to a particular one. All personnel files on candidates who are considered but not called should be destroyed.
- 5.4 The file on the candidate you call should be retained indefinitely in order to document that the committee followed a fair but thorough process in determining the suitability of the person to serve.
- 5.5 Because the files may contain sensitive information, the search committee chairperson may want to review file contents to see if it contains anything which should not be available to the candidate. If so, retain the file outside the church office, as a sealed file with the clerk or in the church's bank security box.
- 5.6 The following warning notice (See Appendix 4: Warning Notice, p. 38.) should be placed in the closed and sealed file of the candidate who is called to serve your church.

## **WARNING NOTICE**

The contents of this file are confidential personnel information. This information was gathered for the sole purpose of helping the search committee make informed decisions about recommending this person to a position of ministry.

It is a violation of confidentiality and personal privacy to use this information for any other purpose. Violation of this purpose may result in significant legal repercussions.

The information in this file is for use only by the search committee in determining a person's suitability to serve as a minister and cannot be used for any other reason.

3. Lynn Robert Buzzard and Susan Edwards, *Risky Business*

## Step 6: Contacting the Prospective Candidate

- 6.1 First contact-Ask the candidate and spouse to meet with you for a friendly, get acquainted session. This should be in neutral territory. You may want to gather at a restaurant for a meal. Cover the candidate's travel and meal expenses.

Ask the candidate for permission to check references given on the resume. Get the permission form for reference checks signed. (See Appendix 5: Reference Release Form, p.39.)

- 6.2 Check references provided. Also ask the references for names of other persons who can give you additional information. (See 6.5.) Please note that the various parts of the background check are separated so that the more sensitive checks come after a strong trust relationship is established.

- 6.3 You might wonder why it is important to check references on a candidate. Most ministers are trustworthy and committed to their calling. At the same time no minister is perfect. The goal for your committee is to make informed decisions based on all the information available. By completing the suggested background checks, you will learn more about the candidate. This should help you ask more informed questions as appropriate.

- You are doing this because you see the candidate as a person of integrity. If you did not, there would be no reason to pursue this information. Please assure the candidate that your purpose is affirmation of the candidate's calling and example.
- Other professionals in your congregation go through this kind of personal scrutiny every time they relocate.
- The media reports the misdeeds of ministers. Therefore, a background check will remove any concerns of the congregation. This will result in the minister and people beginning their relationship with a much higher relationship of trust.

- 6.4 The intent of your background checks may be tempered by the direct knowledge you have of the candidate's history. Also, you may have other credible contacts who can verify the information you have been given. In absence of this, it is best to do all of the recommended background checks.
- 6.5 Check references by mail and follow up with a telephone interview. Send a copy of the candidate's release form (See Appendix 5: Reference Release Form, p. 39.) and the reference letter (See Appendix 6: Reference Letter, p. 40.) to each reference.
- The letter states that the person named is being considered as a potential minister.
  - The letter informs the recipient that a member of your committee will call for a telephone interview.
  - Assure that this is being done with the knowledge and approval of the minister.
  - The telephone call should be made as planned.
  - The caller should complete the reference form (See Appendix 5: Reference Release Form, p. 39.) and ask additional questions, as appropriate.
  - Extensive notes should be taken of the phone interview on the form indicated. The notes should be placed in the minister's permanent file.
  - The person(s) making the reference calls should sign the reference questionnaire.
- 6.6 *Subsequent contacts.*-Contact and ask the prospective minister and spouse to meet with the committee additional times. One of these visits should be to the church community. Each time, pay all of the expenses incurred in coming to visit with the committee. Have a meal together as possible and appropriate.
- Use the day on your church field to acquaint the prospective minister with your church facilities, the community, the school system, the parsonage or prices of homes, etc.
  - Use these meetings as an opportunity to build relationships as well as to gather more information.
  - Give attention to personality traits, personal demeanor, and behavioral tendencies. Both congregations and ministers have personality distinctives. Consider now how well these mesh.
- 6.7 As the relationship develops, seek to ask appropriate questions in order to increase your

## Sample Questions

- Please tell us about your early years-birthplace, place among siblings, parents, family history, etc.
- Please tell us about your conversion experience
- Please tell us about your sense of call to the ministry.
- What three things do you enjoy the most about being a minister?
- What three things do you like least about being a minister?
- How would you describe the ideal church situation?
- What gifts do you sense God has given you for ministry?
- For what three things will you be remembered where you now serve?
- Tell us about your most meaningful ministry experience.
- How do you define and understand ministerial authority?
- How do your spouse and children feel about being part of a minister's family?
- What do you consider to be the role of women in the church? What is your opinion of the WMU?
- (Ask the committee) What are the traditions that we would want the minister to continue in the life of the church? (Share these with the candidate.)
- What traditions of the minister would be introduced to the congregation?
- Ask the minister about resolving various scenarios. The goal is to determine the leadership style of preference.
- The minister's core beliefs and personal distinctives should match well with the congregation.
- What is your thinking about the church's ordinances of Baptism and The Lord's Supper?
- What do you believe about stewardship and tithing?
- What local, state, and national entities does your present church contribute to financially?

- 6.8 Other contacts.-Seek multiple opportunities to meet with the candidate and spouse. Use this time to discuss matters of mutual concern and to secure answers to questions similar to those listed above.
- 6.9 After the candidate returns home, give the candidate adequate time to pray about the potential relationship. Ask the candidate and the committee if they are willing to continue the process.
- 6.10 If all agree, begin work on a minister-church covenant (See Appendix 12: Sample Minister Church Covenant, p. S1.) The purpose of this document is to clarify expectations in the relationship between the minister and the congregation.

The covenant should include the congregation's expectations of the minister and the minister's expectations of the congregation. Other matters of mutual interest should be included. Appropriate concerns include working guidelines, employment and financial agreements. The goal is to clarify as many areas as possible in order to reduce the likelihood of major conflict erupting later. The covenant should be mutually agreeable to the church and to the minister. It should take into account the minister's unique gifts in ministry and reflect the congregation's primary concerns. It should not be written ahead of time and merely handed to the minister.

The covenant process is putting into print many of the decisions and commitments made in the previous step. By doing so, the possibility of misunderstanding or misrepresentation is limited. The goal is clear, appropriate, and concise communication that inspires the development of trust for a long-term relationship.

# Step 7.- Completing Background Checks

- 7.1 After completing all interviews and as a final selection criteria, do several pertinent checks.

Ask the candidate to sign a release form (See Appendix 8A: Credit and Legal Information Release Form, p. 43.), allowing the committee to secure the needed information. (See 7.4 for additional assistance.) If the committee desires, they may choose to ask the candidate's spouse to sign a similar form (See Appendix 8B, Credit and Legal Information Release Form, p. 44.) PLEASE NOTE: If you elect to use one of the credit reporting agencies, they will require use of their own release forms.

- 7.2 The intent of your background checks may be tempered by the direct knowledge you have of the candidate's history. Also, you may have other credible contacts who can verify the information you have been given. In absence of this, it is best to do all of the recommended background checks.  
Background check should include:

- A credit search through a credit bureau.
- A check for any police record.
- A driver's license check.
- A check of educational and/or specialized training credentials based on the institutions listed on the candidate's resume.

- 7.3 Provide the candidate with the letter and questionnaire (See Appendix 9: Letter to Candidate Regarding Questionnaire and Appendix 10: Candidate Questionnaire, pp. 45-46.)

This form, answered and signed by the candidate, becomes a part of the minister's permanent record. (Answering the questions in print should be less threatening than being asked the questions directly.)

All of these background checks and questions asked are for the protection of the church. If any answers concern the committee, they should discuss these directly with the candidate. There may be acceptable reasons for the given report. Either way, the committee can make informed decisions about its recommendation to the congregation

7.4 Consider these suggestions on ways to do background checks:

- Persons on your committee may have access to this information. Confidentiality is essential.
- The committee may contract with an employee screening agency which will make the appropriate checks for a fee.
- If you decide not to consider a potential candidate because of information received, you should inform the minister of the information and its source. The outside agency itself will work with the minister to correct any data that is untrue. If you gather your own data, you must accept responsibility to verify that your data is correct.

7.5 Listed below are three outside agencies that do background checks for a nominal fee. They are not listed as recommendations of the Baptist General Convention of Texas or of the Office of Church Personnel Information Service. There are several companies that will perform these background checks for you. They are listed in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory under the area of "Employment Screening." You should negotiate directly with them by telephone or by mail. One such company here in the Dallas area that is used by some of our associations as well as the Baptist General Convention of Texas is:

BTI Employee Screening Services, Inc.  
8150 North Central Expressway, Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75206  
214-363-0444  
800-658-5642

- 7.6 At the next scheduled meeting, prayerfully determine if this person might become a minister in your church. If all agree, continue the process. If anyone on the committee concludes otherwise, write the candidate saying that the committee is still looking.

# Step 8: Visiting the Minister's Church Field

- 8.1 If the committee and the candidate are still in agreement, the committee may then arrange a visit to the candidate's church to observe a worship service.
- 8.2 Remember that the candidate is still serving a congregation. Do not do anything to hurt the continuing ministry there.
- 8.3 Talk with the candidate again in a formal interview. At this point, no question relative to personal faith and practice is off-limits.

## Questions for Reflection After the Visit

- If you visited the minister's home, what does it suggest about the minister's family?
- What did the personal appearance of the minister and family suggest to you?
- Was the worship, observation, sermon, etc. appropriate, understandable, and meaningful?
- Would this minister and family fit into your community?
- Is the current place of service theologically in line with your congregation?

Already you may have realized that ministers and churches have individual personalities. Recognizable behavioral tendencies will assist you in matching the right church to the right minister. There is not a preferred style of minister or church that is better than another. The important concern is that the tendencies of each match. For example:

### **Type D**

Leader is assertive and leads by telling the people what they should do. This would be called "strong" leadership by some. Church is aggressive and responds to goals, challenges.

### **Type I**

Leader is people oriented and inspires people to follow leadership. Church prefers services that express feelings and emotions; places strong emphasis on fellowship.

### **Type S**

Leader is reserved, leads by example, and is an excellent listener. Church emphasizes caregiving, compassion, sensitivity. Church protects status quo; is slow to change.

### **Type C**

Leader emphasizes quality and proper organizational structure; is reserved. Church focuses on maintaining excellent organizational structure with emphasis on - doing what is right.<sup>4</sup>

- 8.5 Come to an agreement on matters relative to employment such as salary package, vacation, sick leave, and moving and housing arrangements.

4. These brief summaries indicate the reality of differences in churches and ministers even though each example is appropriate. Information is based on terminology from "DISC: Personal Profile System," Carlson Learning Company, Minneapolis, MN

## Step 9: Calling the Minister

- 9.1 Complete work on the Minister-Church Covenant. (See Appendix 12: Sample Minister Church Covenant, p. 51.)
- 9.2 Decide on the weekend the minister will come and participate in worship.
- 9.3 Develop a brochure on the candidate, including highlights from resume.
- 9.4 Mail and/or provide a copy of the covenant and brochure mentioned above to each resident church family two weeks before the weekend.
- 9.5 During the weekend visit:
  - Be responsible for all expenses, including travel, that are incurred.
  - If the candidate's family includes small children, plan for child care.
  - Consider having a time for the candidate to meet on Saturday morning with full- and part-time staff.
  - Consider a meeting of the candidate with the deacons, Leadership Council, and other appropriate groups.
  - Plan for the candidate to share testimony or to preach or lead for the morning worship service as appropriate.
- 9.6 Vote on extending a call for the candidate to serve as a minister of your congregation.
  - Seek to follow fully the requirements for calling a minister as spelled out in the church's constitution/bylaws or as understood by the church's tradition.
  - Recommend that the candidate be called by your church based on the terms spelled out in the newly written covenant agreement.
  - Consider voting by secret ballot unless your bylaws or traditions suggest differently.

# Step 10: Following Up After the Call

- 10.1 As soon as possible, inform the prospective minister of the vote. Give the candidate adequate time to respond to the call of the church.
- 10.2 Notify your local Baptist association of the call.
  - Provide them with brief biographical information on the new minister  
Make sure the director of missions knows the minister's arrival date and first Sunday.
- 10.3 Notify the Research and Information Services of the Baptist General Convention of Texas of the new minister.
  - If possible, give them the minister's old church and new church addresses.
  - You may also contact by mail or e-mail  
Research and Information Services  
333 N. Washington  
Dallas, TX 75246  
riley@bgct.org
- 10.4 Make the minister's family arrival a matter of celebration.
  - Fill the minister's pantry with food.
  - Ask children to draw "welcoming" pictures.
  - Ask members to write "welcoming" letters.
  - Provide first day's meals while the family is busy unpacking and getting oriented.
- 10.5 Be sensitive to the family's pain over leaving another place of service. They left behind friends and many memories. Give them time to make the transition to their new friends and church family.

- 10.6 Plan an installation or special service. (See Appendix 14: Installation Service, p. 55.)
- 10.7 Ask the search committee to meet with the minister quarterly the first year. Initially, you will be the best persons to affirm and encourage the minister. These meetings also give you an opportunity to interpret to the minister how the ministry there is progressing. (If the church has a council on caregiving in place; this may not be necessary.)
- 10.8 Rejoice!



6. \_\_\_\_\_ *Current Housing Situation*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Own (Buying)      \_\_\_\_\_ b) Renting (Leasing)      \_\_\_\_\_ c) Neither
7. \_\_\_\_\_ *Place a number by the highest education level of each family member.*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Preschooler at home.      \_\_\_\_\_ f) Trade or Technical school  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) Kindergarten.      \_\_\_\_\_ g) Junior College  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) Elementary School.      \_\_\_\_\_ h) Senior College  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d) Middle School.      \_\_\_\_\_ i) Post-graduate Work  
 \_\_\_\_\_ e) High School
8. \_\_\_\_\_ *Length of Time Each Family Member has Been a Christian*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Not a Christian.      \_\_\_\_\_ d) 3-5 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) Less than one year      \_\_\_\_\_ e) 6-9 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) 1-2 years      \_\_\_\_\_ f) 10 or more years
9. \_\_\_\_\_ *Length of Time Each Family Member Has Been a Member of This Church*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Not a member      \_\_\_\_\_ e) 6-9 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) Less than a year.      \_\_\_\_\_ f) 10-19 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) 1-2 years      \_\_\_\_\_ g) 20-29 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d) 3-5 years      \_\_\_\_\_ h) 30 or more years
10. \_\_\_\_\_ *In a typical four-Sunday month, how often does someone from your family attend the following activities? (If 4 times, enter a 4; if never, enter a 0.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Sunday School      \_\_\_\_\_ e) Prayer meeting  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) Morning worship      \_\_\_\_\_ f) Church visitation  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) Discipleship Training      \_\_\_\_\_ g) Missions organizations  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d) Evening Worship      \_\_\_\_\_ h) Age-group activities
11. \_\_\_\_\_ *Type of Home Dwelling*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Single-family house  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) Apartment/condominium with 2-4 units  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) Apartment/condominium with 5-49 units  
 \_\_\_\_\_ d) Apartment/condominium with 50 or more units  
 \_\_\_\_\_ e) Mobile home/manufactured housing
12. \_\_\_\_\_ *Length of Time Your Family Has Lived at Present Address*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Less than 2 years      \_\_\_\_\_ d) 10-19 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) 2-5 years      \_\_\_\_\_ e) 20-29 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) 6-9 years      \_\_\_\_\_ f) 30 or more years
13. \_\_\_\_\_ *Approximate Distance You Live from the Church Building*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a) Less than 1 mile.      \_\_\_\_\_ d) 6-9 miles  
 \_\_\_\_\_ b) 1-3 miles      \_\_\_\_\_ e) 10-19 miles  
 \_\_\_\_\_ c) 4-5 miles      \_\_\_\_\_ f) 20 or more miles
14. \_\_\_\_\_ *Number in Your Family Born in:*  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Texas      \_\_\_\_\_ This community





- A. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A gifted teacher who enables persons to learn and understand deep spiritual truths.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A community volunteer who cooperates in community and interdenominational activities/programs.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A regular visitor to the sick, dying, and bereaved.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A leader who works through existing committees.
- B. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A church office administrator, giving attention to bulletins, correspondence, newsletters, etc.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ An effective communicator of well-prepared sermons.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Active in reaching out to new families in the community.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A skilled counselor available to assist persons with personal and spiritual problems.
- C. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person active in associational, state convention, and denominational life.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person sensitive to the church's financial needs in budgeting skills and stewardship emphasis.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A regular visitor in the homes of church members.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who emphasizes evangelism and the importance of individual lifestyle witnessing.
- D. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is well read and can communicate on a broad spectrum of topics.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who understands how to work with diverse people.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who emphasizes counseling ministry.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who uses praise songs and/or drama in worship.
- E. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who enjoys shut-in visitation.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who believes it is important for the church to have a mission statement.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who has excellent pulpit presence.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who seeks scriptural applications to resolve life problems.
- F. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person with deep concern for those who have never made a profession of faith.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is an excellent listener and guards confidentiality.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who sets goals and develops strategies to meet them.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who celebrates the uniqueness and giftedness of people.
- G. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who desires to help people reach their full potential and use of personal gifts.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who enjoys the study of Scripture and its application to current lifestyles.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is motivated by challenges and growth.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who maintains excellent eye contact with persons when speaking to them.
- H. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is an articulate speaker and uses correct grammar/word pronunciation.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is an excellent organizer.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who has compassion on all in the church and community who are hurting.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who keeps records on the number of baptisms and new additions.
- I. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who is drawn to becoming better equipped with listening skills  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who has a deep sense of tradition and church history/tradition.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who has a personal vision and a vision for the future of the church.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who reads extensively on changing trends and cultural shifts.
- J. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who enlists the support of others in order to accomplish tasks.  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who provides multiple entry points into the life of the congregation's ministries.  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who encourages multiple ministries aimed at the great variety of human need.  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_ A person who understands the importance of a sense of drama and timing when speaking.

<b>Proclaim</b>	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____
	A1    B2    D1    E3    E4    G2    G4    H1    IZ    J4
<b>Lead</b>	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____
	A4    B 1    C2    D2    E2    F3    G3    H2    13    J1
<b>Care</b>	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____
	A3    B4    C3    D3    E1    F2    G1    H3    11 <b>J3</b>
<b>Growth</b>	_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____
	A2    B3    C1    C4    D4    F1    F4    H4    14    J2    _____

## Appendix 4

### **Warning Notice**

*The contents of this file are confidential personnel information. This information was gathered solely to help the search committee make informed decisions about recommending this person to a position of ministry .*

*It is a violation of confidentiality and personal privacy to use this information for any other purpose. Violation of this purpose may result in significant legal repercussions.*

*The information in this file is for use only by the search committee in determining a person's suitability to serve as a minister and cannot be used for any other reason.*

Place this as the first Item in your file.

## Appendix 5

# Reference Release Form

I hereby authorize Baptist Church of \_\_\_\_\_ to verify all information contained in my application or other written communications, including all former churches in which I have served as a minister, been a member, or been ordained.

I recognize that this verification process will include contacts with former church officers, members, ministry colleagues, association and state convention personnel, as well as other business and professional references.

I further authorize that any personnel at former places of employment, churches, or references may disclose any and all information regarding my work history, personal characteristics, salary, work habits, or other areas of importance to this organization.

Furthermore, I waive the right to take legal action against the aforementioned churches, their members and officers, or references for releasing such requested information.

I understand this authorization form and agree to the release and verification of the aforementioned information.

---

Minister's Signature

---

Date

Adapted from Lynn Robert Buzzard and Susan Edwards, *Risky Business*,  
63.

## Appendix 6

# Reference Letter

*Using church letterhead, send this letter to reference with pastor's release.*

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Your name has been given by \_\_\_\_\_ as a reference.

Our search committee is currently exploring the possibility of \_\_\_\_\_ coming to serve our church as a minister. As a part of our background screening, the minister agreed to sign a release form in order that all references might know that permission has been given for any and all information to be shared. You will find enclosed a photocopy of the signed permission form.

In order to save you time, we have asked , \_\_\_\_\_ who is a member of our search committee, to call you on the telephone. You will be asked a number of questions, but the entire interview should not take more than eight minutes. I hope that this will meet with your approval. Please pray for our committee as we continue our search process.

Sincerely,

Chairperson or Secretary

Enclosure

## Appendix 7

# Telephone Interview Reference Form

Minister's name \_\_\_\_\_

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long have you known this minister?
2. In what capacity have you known the minister? (Member/officer in church, professional colleague in ministry, coministry role in church, business associate, etc.)
3. Are you aware that this person is a potential minister for our church?
4. Are you aware of reasons there might be openness to a new call?
5. Do you have any information which would give you any reservations about this person's appropriateness for ministry? If so, what?
6. Are you aware of any disciplinary proceedings involving charges against this candidate by a church, any other church body, or other professional agency or body?
7. Have you had any personal experience or heard reports from others who have questioned this person's integrity, honesty, ethics, or conduct?

8. Do you know if this person has ever left a job or ministry position because of charges or accusations related to conduct or beliefs? What do you know of the circumstances?
  
9. Would you positively recommend this person for ministry at our church? Why or why not?
  
10. Have you heard any reports of sexual misconduct? What were those reports?
  
11. Have any questions been raised regarding the minister's personal finances or handling of church funds?
  
12. What is the minister's reputation among professional colleagues?
  
13. Based on your knowledge and the minister's reputation, is his/her marriage healthy and stable?
  
14. Do you know of any conduct of the minister's family members which would raise any serious questions about our church's consideration of this person for ministry here?
  
15. Do you have any confidential information you do not feel free to reveal to us concerning the minister's fitness for ministry?
  
16. Can you provide the names of other persons who worked closely with the minister or otherwise are well acquainted who would be helpful references to our church in assessing the candidate?

Adapted from Lynn Robert Buzzard and Susan Edwards, *Risky Business*, 65.

Appendix 8A

Credit and Legal Information Release

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church to check my credit and legal history with all appropriate sources. Such information may be obtained for the years of \_\_\_\_\_ to the present.

Minister's Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Other names minister has used, if appropriate: maiden name, prior married name, etc.)

Minister's Driver's license Number \_\_\_\_\_

Minister's Social Security Number \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ - \_\_ \_\_ - \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_

Minister's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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

Appendix 8B

## Credit and Legal Information Release

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church to check my credit and legal history with all appropriate sources. Such information may be obtained for the years of \_\_\_\_\_ to the present.

Minister's Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Other names spouse has used, if appropriate: maiden name, prior married name, etc.)

Spouse's Driver's license Number \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Social Security Number \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Spouse's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 9

# Letter to Minister Regarding Questionnaire

Dear

Thank you for your willingness to discuss with our committee the possibility of your coming to serve as a minister of our church.

We are grateful for the time you have given in order for us to become better acquainted with your ministry and your family. We certainly believe that this is the direction God would have us to move.

We recognize that we have a responsibility to be honest and open with you in order to build a strong, caring relationship of trust. We acknowledge, also, a responsibility to our congregation and expectations they have of us. Therefore, we request that you answer the questions on the enclosed sheet and return it to us for our files. These are questions we wish we did not need to ask, but we want to assure a strong relationship of trust for the future.

If you do not come to serve as our minister, the questionnaire will be returned to you; and no copies of it will be made. If you become our minister, the questionnaire will be placed in a closed file and used only to substantiate that the committee followed a thorough process in determining the suitability of the person called to serve as a minister in our church.

Unfortunately, we live in a time of infrequent but occasionally documented abuses from members of the clergy. We also live in a time when churches are not immune to litigation. Please understand that these questions are not meant to insinuate any negative thinking or distrust on our part. We simply sense a need to have this information on file for your and our protection. Should there be any response that is problematic, we can honestly report that it was discussed by the committee, dealt with, and an informed decision made to proceed.

You are asked to answer the questions and return the enclosed questionnaire to the chairperson of the committee. Thank you for your assistance in this matter!

Sincerely,

Search Committee Chairperson

**Appendix 10**

**Prospective Candidate  
Questionnaire**

Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of any offense other than a traffic violation?

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, explain the circumstances and dispositions

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

2. Please note the traffic violations for which you have been charged or convicted over the past three years.

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

3. Have you ever been a party in a civil lawsuit? If so, please explain.

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

4. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, please explain.

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

5. Have you ever been disciplined by any professional, private, or public agency?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you ever been dismissed by vote of the congregation from the employment of any church? If so, explain.

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

7. Have you ever resigned from any church position or employment in the face of charges of misconduct? If so, please explain.

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

8. Have you ever been treated for alcohol or drug abuse?

---

---

9. Have you ever been committed, voluntarily or otherwise, to a hospital for psychiatric care?

---

---

10. Have you ever been formally charged or convicted of spousal or child abuse?

---

---

11. Have you ever been abused sexually?

---

---

12. Have you ever been arrested, charged or convicted or had any allegation or accusation of any kind made against you? If so, please explain.

---

---

13. Have employees, staff, members, or others with whom you worked ever brought charges of sexual harassment against you before either a church body or any civil governmental agency or court? If yes, please explain.

---

---

14. Are you a lawful resident or citizen?

---

---

15. Are you currently under continuing medical care for any condition which would impact your ability to carry out the responsibilities of a minister? If yes, please explain.

---

---

16. How many times have you been married? How many times has your spouse been married?

---

---

17. In what states have you held driver's licenses in the past ten years?

---

---

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## Minister's Compensation

It is extremely important to analyze the components of the compensation and benefits received by a minister. Frequently a compensation package is put together in such a way that it gives a false impression of the person's true pay, which may not be as high as it appears. The minister's salary and benefits package can better be understood when it is formatted as a layperson's own income might be from his or her place of employment. Consider the overall compensation arrangement in three parts:

### 1. Base Salary and Housing

- **Salary**
- **Housing Allowance\***
- **Social Security Offset (employer's share)\***

This component is the real equivalent of what others would be paid in their normal course of work with another employer. The salary and housing allowance are equivalent to gross income on a paycheck. The Social Security offset is added in to compensate for the ordained minister having to pay "both sides" of Social Security under the status of being self-employed. (The minister is an employee of the church for income tax purposes but self-employed for Social Security only.) The minister has to pay the full self-employment tax where the non-ministerial employees only have to cover half. If the church does not provide an offset, the minister's true compensation, as compared to the regular marketplace, is already diluted by that extra percentage.

The church should concentrate on the amount to be paid as salary and housing. Several factors-such as education, experience, responsibilities, degree of supervision, cost of living, and related items-should be taken into account. You may wish to determine the salary/housing figure as one amount, then allow the minister to determine the split between the two. Whatever amount is designated for housing must be accounted for in providing housing and/or repairs, taxes, etc. Also, the minister must include all three items in this grouping when figuring Social Security taxes.

Whatever source you use, keep in mind that this first section is the part that matters the most since it represents cash income for buying groceries, paying the rent, dressing the children, and going out to dinner.

### 2. Protection Benefits

- **Health/Medical Insurance**
- **Life Insurance**
- **Disability Insurance**
- **Annuity/retirement**

These items should be considered as "over and above" the base compensation. These are expenses to provide for the ordained minister and family in the event of medical emergency, death or disability. Yes, the premiums can be expensive. However, if the minister is not covered, your church will probably feel some kind of obligation to provide for the minister and/or family. The cost of this could significantly exceed the outlay for basic coverage.

Normal recommendations for coverage are as follows:

**Health/Medical**-Coverage for individual and entire family with reasonable deductible.

**Life**-At least four times the salary/housing level for minister plus coverage for spouse and children. Spouse coverage could be half that of pastor and \$5,000 for dependents. The church can provide \$50,000 of term coverage to the minister as a tax-sheltered benefit. The additional insurance premium is taxable income.

Disability-Usually based on income (salary/housing). Annuity-Ten percent of salary/housing. You may also want to match the minister's voluntary contribution with an additional 5 percent. Also, if the church contributes \$1,260 per year, the Baptist General Convention of Texas will contribute another \$420 as long as the church is giving at least that minimum amount to the Cooperative Program.

These figures are recommended minimums and are pretty much in line with coverage offered to management personnel in most businesses. The Annuity Board offers all of these options and can help you with premium rates, or you may call the Annuity Board Office, 800-262-0511. If the church pays these premiums and contributions directly to the carrier, they are nontaxable to the employee. The only exception is for term life insurance over \$50,000 for the employee and \$2,000 for the dependents. These premiums are taxable, and you need to add this onto the W-2 form as income to the employee based on IRS tables published annually. There is no additional cost to the church; it is just a reporting item for the employee's taxes.

### **3. Ministry-Related Expenses**

- **Travel/Automobile**
- **Conventions/Conferences**
- **Books, Periodicals, Counseling Supplies**
- **Continuing Education and Training**
- **Hospitality**

All of the above items should be considered church expenses and not items to be paid from the minister's pocket. They are the church's cost of doing church business and should be shared by all of the members through the church's budget. The items shown above are like the minister's tools-necessary to do an adequate job. Yes, the minister may benefit from education, books, etc., but it is the church that is really reaping the benefit in the long run by having a well-equipped pastor who is able to carry out church tasks effectively and efficiently.

The church should reimburse the minister for the above items by requiring that receipts be turned in on a monthly basis indicating the amount, type of expense, business, purpose, and persons entertained (in the case of lunch, hospitality, etc.). The church should have a policy of reimbursing the minister at the IRS-approved rate per mile for church-related use of a personal automobile. Of course, commuting miles are excluded. The church may choose to obtain a credit card for the minister to charge certain budgeted items. In any case, expenditures for reimbursement should not be made unless approved receipts are provided to validate the expense and its business purpose.

To determine how much to allocate to these ministry-related items, the church should determine an estimate based on past experience plus projected need. The minister is in the best position to give direction on these projected costs.

When the above three areas have been considered, individual lines can be totaled to get a grand total. The question then arises as to what to do if the total does not seem to be an amount which can be handled by the church budget. One alternative is to scale back certain lines. This might be effective on some of the ministry expense lines, but it will have a dramatic impact if it means cutting the cash pay or protection sections. Rather than have the minister be the one to bear the brunt of a "cut," perhaps this should be spread out over the entire budget. Challenge each person and family to increase their giving to provide adequately for their minister. This is much more equitable and healthy for the church.

\* For ministerial type persons only.

## **Housing Allowance Vs. Parsonage**

There are obvious benefits to providing a parsonage for ministerial housing; however there are also major reasons not to provide a dwelling for the minister:

### **Benefits**

1. Minister has no need for concern about finding suitable housing.
2. Minister has no need for concern about selling house when leaving.
3. It may be initially more economical for the church but not in the long run.
4. Church members always know where the minister lives.

### **Detriments**

1. Minister builds no equity toward future retirement, and family has no guarantee of housing should death or disability occur.
2. Housing can be used as power ploy over minister when there is church conflict.
3. County (municipality) realizes no tax benefit from parsonage.
4. The church is responsible for maintenance and repairs.
5. Conflict can arise as to who can paint, landscape, or even hang pictures on walls of a parsonage.

### **Alternatives**

Churches are moving away from providing a parsonage for the minister and family. It is certainly not in the minister's best interest to live there; it is an ongoing financial burden on the church; and it prevents the ministerial family from having the pride of ownership.

When the church already has a parsonage, the congregation might consider selling the house to the minister at its current appraised value. This would mean, of course, increasing the housing allowance to cover the cost of making monthly housing payments. One possibility is to allow the church to finance the sell itself so that principal plus interest is paid back to the church. The minister would benefit by not having to pay a normally high down payment. When the pastor leaves the church, the church could agree to buy the house back at the then appraised value. Therefore, the church's "house" would remain ultimately under church control.

A second alternative is to provide a housing equity trust fund that would provide opportunity for money to accumulate for the ordained minister to use at some time in the future for a housing down payment. Ideally, it should be set up through the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation of the Baptist General Convention and, thereby, be portable when the minister moves.

# Appendix 12

## Sample Minister-Church Covenant

### **1. The Minister's Responsibility to the Church**

- 1.01 To proclaim the gospel with the goal of reaching persons for Christ and fostering academic, emotional, social, and spiritual growth.
- 1.02 To love and affirm persons and families within the fellowship without bias or prejudice.
- 1.03 To provide counseling to members and nonmembers and to keep confidential such communication.
- 1.04 To serve as administrator of church programs and ministries, where appropriate for the position, by facilitating communication and recommending appropriate ministries/programs to the appropriate persons.
- 1.05 To work with committees, organizations, and councils in the development and implementation of programs of ministry and mission. Chairpersons of committees, organizations, and councils are to have the responsibility of their offices with the counsel of the pastor and/or appropriate staff member as desired or needed. All committees, organizations, and councils are ultimately responsible to the church from which their authority is derived and their responsibilities are defined.
- 1.06 To be ex officio member of committees as assigned by policy or by administration. (The pastor's counsel shall be sought concerning other staff)
- 1.07 To give primary oversight and direct the church office, supervising the church secretary, overseeing that the church calendar is maintained, representing the church to visitors and other persons who might come in contact with the church, advising other church members of information they need to carry out their duties as church officers, and serving in other reasonable activities relative to the church office.
- 1.08 To establish church office hours and generally seek to maintain those office hours for the benefit of all church members and the related business of the church; in times of absence, the church secretary should be informed as to how to contact the pastor.
- 1.09 To visit the sick, the elderly, and the bereaved and to maintain contact with the membership as whole.
- 1.10 To be an encourager to persons, programs, and ministries of the church family.
- 1.11 To be actively involved in and supportive of the local Baptist association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the denomination in its work and ministries.

## 2. **The Church's Responsibility to the Pastor**

- 2.01 To show sensitivity to the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of the minister and family.
- 2.02 To pray for the minister's ministry, affirm efforts, and work with the minister toward the end of accomplishing God's will in the church and the community.
- 2.03 To allow the minister full responsibility for the preaching program of the church with privilege of calling on others for participation.
- 2.03 To allow the minister responsibility for the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper as shared in the fellowship and to receive new members and assist in their orientation.
- 2.05 To support the minister in the church's preaching ministry and to cooperate with the minister by suggesting programs and providing groups such as the deacons to act as a sounding board.
- 2.06 To acknowledge that we are all imperfect human beings seeking to serve a perfect God.
- 2.07 To be willing to inform the pastor of misunderstandings so that wrongs may be righted.

## 3. **Working Guidelines**

- 3.01 A call to serve as a minister will also include a signed covenant agreement that has been read and approved by the members and signed by the deacon chairman or moderator of the church.
- 3.02 The church shall be responsible for insurance on contents of the minister's office at the church and mal practice insurance as appropriate.
- 3.03 The church will lease a beeper for use by the pastoral family and the church secretary in contacting the Minister.
- 3.04 The search committee will meet with the minister quarterly for evaluation and feedback during the first year of service.
- 3.05 This covenant agreement shall be reviewed annually and renegotiated as necessary. The minister and congregation must concur on any change.

## 4. **Employment Guidelines**

- 4.01 The minister is directly responsible to the congregation or to the assigned supervisor in the performance of ministry. The minister shall meet annually with the personnel committee of the church for review and evaluation of ministry. The
- 4.02 If the minister is to be gone overnight from the church field, the minister shall inform the church secretary as to the location.
- 4.03 The minister is expected to give the church up to forty-eight hours of his time during the week and to be on call for emergencies twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week as needed.

- 4.04 If the pastor or ministers are to be away for more than thirty-six hours, church leaders should be told how to reach them. The minister will be responsible to provide a qualified person to serve during their absence.
- 4.05 When the minister is away from the church field for more than three days, the deacons should be made aware so that crises can be covered by other leaders.
- 4.06 The minister will give the deacons a monthly report on visits, membership and personal needs, and church activities. After particularly strenuous times that demand excessive work hours during the church year, The minister is encouraged to take time off for rest and relaxation.
- 4.07 The minister will be allowed three weeks vacation, including three Sundays
- 4.08 The minister is allowed thirty days per year as sick leave with full salary and benefits. For a prolonged illness, continued payment will be at the discretion of the church.
- 4.09 The minister is allowed two weeks per year for revivals or continuing education; the latter may be paid for from convention expense funds. One week of this may be used for additional vacation time if not needed for revival or continuing education.
- 4.10 The church will provide the pulpit supply in case of illness, bereavement, and vacation. The minister is responsible for the supply when preaching in revival elsewhere.

## **5. Financial Care**

- 5.01 The church agrees to pay for all moving expenses incurred, including a mover of the minister's choice. The minister shall obtain at least two competitive bids for this expense.
- 5.02 The church agrees to allow the minister to choose and purchase or rent a home or use the church-owned parsonage.
- 5.03 The church agrees to begin the pay period as of the last day of the pay period in the previous church; i.e., July 31/August 1; and the pastor agrees to begin new duties on that same day.
- 5.04 Regular pay periods will fall on the fifteenth and last days of each month.
- 5.05 In case of termination, care will be given to minimize harm to the minister's family and to the church's witness.
- 5.05 In case of termination, care will be given to minimize harm to the minister's family and to the church's witness.

## Council on Caregiving

### **Purpose**

The council on caregiving has a twofold purpose. **First**, it functions to offer encouragement to the pastor and staff. Every congregation has as many clients (possibly bosses) as it has members. These persons naturally contact the pastor and staff when they have a need or an expectation. However, no one is charged with the responsibility of offering encouragement to the ministers. The council would encourage the ministers to spend adequate time with family, to give attention to self-care, to develop one's spiritual life, to do continuing education, and similar items. Frequently, the ministers respond to the demands-ministry opportunities-of the congregation and neglect their own families. Second, the council can function as a means to foster good, clear, and open communication among the members of the congregation and between the church family and the pastor/staff.

### **Structure**

The number of persons serving on the council should be determined by the church's needs and expectations. Generally, there should be three on the council in a church averaging fewer than one hundred in worship. A congregation of up to three hundred in worship might desire a council of five members; a church with more than three hundred in worship might consider adding one council member for each additional one hundred in worship.

### **Responsibilities**

- 1. Encouragement of the pastor and staff.** The council should encourage self-care, family time, spiritual development, and continuing education. This can be accomplished by seeking information from the pastor and staff how to accomplish these and negotiating their completion within the church's polity. It would also be appropriate for the council to lead the congregation in remembering special days or special accomplishments of these who serve the church.
- 2. Provide for exit interviews to be held.** Seek the assistance of other appropriate lay leaders to do after worship exit interviews in order to solicit opinions of participants in what improvements might be considered. This information should be shared with the pastor and staff as appropriate.
- 3. Facilitate communication and resolve problems.** Church members frequently fail to communicate their expectations of the pastor and staff. Even though there may be a strong commitment to the life of the church, eventually church member and/or church staff will suffer from broken expectations. The broken expectation may be over something said or unsaid; it may be over something done or not done. Regardless, the person who experiences the hurt may harbor ill feelings toward the church. The council can function effectively by serving as the bridge to hear these concerns.

The Council should inform the congregation that any member of the council (Give names, addresses, and telephone numbers.) may be contacted about any concern a member has. The council member will either go with the person or take the person's concern to the appropriate staff person and will report back to the church member. The goal is clear, open communication. Even if a person's concerns cannot be remedied, at least an explanation of church policy can be given. While this may not resolve the issue, the reason for the decision can be given.

## Appendix 14

# Installation Service

Organ Prelude		
Scriptural Call to Worship		Member of Search Committee
Invocation		Member of Search Committee
Congregational Hymn		Congregation
Introduction of the New Minister's Family to the Church		Chairman of Search Committee
Worship in Music		Children's or Youth Choir
A Covenant for Ministry Together or Church Covenant		(Read Responsively)
Scripture		Member of Search Committee
Prayer of Dedication		The New Minister
Congregational Hymn		Congregation
Offertory Prayer		Member of Search Committee
Offertory		
The Doxology		
Worship in Music		Adult Choir
Introduction of the Church to the New Minister's Family		Deacon Chairman
Signing of the Covenant Agreement by Minister and Deacon Chairman		
Installation Message by the Pastor or a friend of the New Minister		
Invitation Hymn		
Presentation of Gift		Deacons Chairman
Fellowship Hymn as Benediction	"Blest Be the Tie"	Congregation

1. The chairman of the search committee introduces the new minister and his family to the church using biographical information.
2. In introducing the church to the new minister and family, the deacon chairman briefly recounts highlights from church history.
3. It would be most appropriate to present the new minister some tangible gift to mark the beginning of this new relationship.