

# **Resource Packet for Churches Seeking Pastoral Leadership**



**Compiled by**

**MINISTRY SERVICES/CREDENTIALS DIVISION**

**Church of God in Western Canada**

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# STOP, WATCH AND PRAY

Before you go any further in this booklet,  
please take time to be with the Lord!

As you begin the pastoral selection process, here are some very important words of encouragement:

*Philippians 4:6 NIV, "Do not be anxious for anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God."*

## **Key Focus In Your Prayer Time**

1. Pray that God will give you the Spirit and mind of Christ in working on the Pulpit Committee.
2. Pray that God will unite the congregation and keep lines of communication open between the Church, the Search Committee, and the Executive Office.
3. Pray that God will begin to prepare the congregation and the new pastor for the Holy Spirit to lead, direct, and bring about the needed change.
4. Pray that God will give the Church the person He has called to serve in this position at this time for this hour of ministry.

## **Plan Specific Prayer Times**

1. The Church and the Search Committee need to plan specific times to unite in prayer for God's direction and leadership.
2. Here are a few suggestions: Prayer Breakfasts, Mid-Week Study Groups, before Sunday School at the altar, special time very day, prayer vigil.
3. It is essential that you keep prayer before the congregation and provide opportunities for the church to sincerely seek the Lord's guidance.



**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN WESTERN  
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Dear Search Committee,

Greetings from our staff at the Executive Offices of the Church of God in Western Canada.

Let me take this opportunity to assure you of our prayers and support in this time of pastoral search and transition for your congregation. This indeed becomes a major assignment for you as a Search Committee. As Executive Director of Ministry Services, I want to extend an invitation for you to call me for any help during your search process.

The following are recommendations for you to consider:

1. Inform the Executive Office of any particular needs the Search Committee or church has during the time of transition.
2. Use the Credentials Division and Executive Offices as a resource for help in finding pastoral leadership.
3. Contact the Executive Director of Ministry Services or Credentials Division to help check references of candidates.
4. It is very important for the church to call as pastor a person who is a minister in good standing in the Church of God or from the communion from which they are being called.

I have included several pieces of information that will help you as a Search Committee in your search process. Please let us know if there is any other way we can assist you. Be assured that I am praying with you in your quest for pastoral leadership. May the Lord richly bless and guide you in these days.

Sincerely in Christ,

Ken Wiedrick  
Executive Director of Ministry Services

KNW/wi

# **GUIDELINES FOR SEARCH COMMITTEES**

## **I. CELEBRATE YOUR PRESENT MINISTRY**

1. Celebrate and honor the ministry that you have shared.
2. Be positive and affirming.
3. Be as generous as possible.
4. Enter a new chapter of your history with reverence.

## **II. THE ROLE OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

1. Know your bylaws! Abide by them!
2. Remember that you are servants of the whole church. The key is to unify the congregation in a search for God's will.
3. Maintain uplifting and challenging worship services.
  - a. Pulpit supply ministers are available.
  - b. Interim ministers are often beneficial.
4. Proceed with the selection process.
5. Your task continues after the pastor arrives.
  - a. Plan an induction service with the new pastor.
  - b. Build relationship bridges to effective ministry.
6. Communicate with the Board on budget, moving costs, salary package and other financial details. Don't promise more than you can deliver.
7. Seek assistance from the Credentials Division and the Executive Director of Ministry Services. They will give guidance and information.

## **III. STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL PASTORAL SELECTION**

1. Congregational assessment is essential.
  - a. A congregational profile is helpful.
  - b. A mission statement and ministry goals are the context for what the church expects to accomplish for God.
  - c. A brief self-study should focus on present needs and opportunities for ministry.
2. Keep the congregation involved continuously.
  - a. A vote of ratification may be necessary to form a basis of trust.
  - b. Plan for a service of dedication for the Search Committee.
  - c. Find creative ways to enlist prayer support.
  - d. Provide for congregational input as to what individuals see as important qualities needed in a pastor.
  - e. Report at each step of the process. An outline of the process is often

needed. Confidentiality is necessary.

3. Keep the church-at-large informed.
  - a. The Executive Director of Ministry Services.
  - b. The Credentials Division.
  
4. The Selection Process Takes Patience and Time!
  - a. Write to those you wish to inform.
  - b. Receive resumes from the Executive Director of Ministry Services.
  - c. Screen all resumes carefully especially those which are unsolicited.
  - d. Narrow the field to 4 or 6 possible candidates according to the criteria and needs which you have established.
  - e. Immediately check on the candidate's availability. Proceed to investigate by phone, letter and personal interview.
  - f. After prayerful deliberation, select one candidate that your spirit and mind tells you is God's will.
  - g. As much as possible, keep all candidates informed.
  
5. Assessing a candidate is a difficult task.
  - a. Check personal references.
  - b. You may want to double check with the Credentials Division and the Executive Director of Ministry Services.
  - c. Inquire of other trusted sources.
  - d. IMPORTANT: If the candidate is from outside Western Canada, call the Executive Office to request assistance in getting necessary references and background checks.
  - e. Request a recording of service in which the candidate is preaching or leading in worship. Or you may make a visit to the candidate's church. You are looking for compatible style.
  - f. Written response to specific questions or a statement of philosophy of ministry may be desirable.
  - g. A personal interview should be mandatory. Prepare well for this occasion.
  
6. Present the candidate thoroughly preparing the congregation.
  - a. Respect the integrity of the process by making it a mutual decision at each step.
  - b. Prepare informational material for the congregation.
  - c. The visit to the congregation should include leading worship, preaching, meeting with leaders and informal social events.
  - d. Plan an exit interview.
  - e. Call for a vote of the congregation according to the bylaws if there is mutual agreement.
  - f. Report the result of the vote to the candidate and give time for prayerful response.
  - g. Celebrate when the church extends a call to the new pastor.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN WESTERN CANADA  
Credentials Division

**MINISTRY  
SELF-EVALUATION FORMS**

1. How did God confirm your call to the ministry? Have you ever deeply doubted this call?
  
2. The role of vision in ministry leadership is of the highest priority. Briefly describe your ministry vision. How do you best communicate that vision to the congregation?
  
3. Most people resist change initially. How do you prepare your congregation for change and help them during the process of making changes?
  
4. How does your personal spirituality relate to your work in the ministry?
  
5. How do you facilitate the expression of unity among church leaders and congregation members?
  
6. Jesus took His disciples to a deserted place to rest after a period of intense ministry. How do you experience “rest” in the Lord, and what value is it to your ministry?
  
7. What concerns do you have about opening yourself up to others in the leadership team or in the congregation? How does this affect the way you tend to share responsibility and authority in your ministry?

## Self-Perception/Evaluation

### *Essential Functions of Ministry*

There is general agreement that the following functions are essential to pastoral effectiveness. Using the five-point scale that follows, rate yourself for each of the functions by circling the appropriate number.

5. Very effective (top 5%)
4. Quite effective (significant achievement)
3. Effective (more effective than ineffective)
2. Somewhat effective (some instances of achievement)
1. Minimal effectiveness (limited competence or achievement)

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. <i>Preaching</i> : Preparing and delivering of clear and convincing sermons that help hearers grow in the knowledge of God and apply His word to their daily lives.                                               | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. <i>Worship</i> : Planning and designing worship experiences that lead the congregation to express praise, gratitude, devotion, and service to God.                                                                | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. <i>Teaching</i> : Understanding the learning process and using creative methods to teach in the way people learn.                                                                                                 | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. <i>Evangelism</i> : Communicating God’s good news about Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, in ways that are relevant to the hearers, with the intent that people embrace Him as their Savior and Lord. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. <i>Pastoral Care</i> : Exhibiting a “shepherd’s heart,” showing by word, action, and presence an understanding of people and their needs, and providing assistance when appropriate and feasible.                 | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6. <i>Visitation</i> : Being among the people, members and non-members alike, in their homes and work settings, to develop relationships and meet needs.                                                             | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 7. <i>Equipping</i> : Encouraging, training, and mobilizing people in the discovery and use of their gifts and talents for ministry in the context of daily living and the church.                                   | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 8. <i>Leadership Development</i> : Recognizing leadership potential in others and providing opportunities for developing those leadership skills.                                                                    | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 9. <i>Counseling</i> : Providing constructive help personally or by directing those in need to specialized, trained professionals or other care-givers.                                                              | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 10. <i>Administration</i> : Managing the church’s day-to-day operations as well as the human and financial resources.                                                                                                | 5 4 3 2 1 |



- |                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 11. <i>Vision Casting</i> : Communicating a vision of what the people or congregation can achieve, and then setting goals accordingly.                                      | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 12. <i>Planning</i> : Establishing strategies and action plans to accomplish agreed-upon goals.                                                                             | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 13. <i>Motivating</i> : Sharing dreams, goals, and plans in such a way that people want to be personally involved.                                                          | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 14. <i>Evaluating</i> : Engaging in the process of comparing what is with what ought to be, for the purpose of determining direction for ministry or areas for improvement. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 15. <i>Conflict Management</i> : Managing or resolving opposition occurring as a result of differing viewpoints.                                                            | 5 4 3 2 1 |

### *Models of Ministry*

Studies have shown that pastors, by practice, fit into certain ministry models. Their preferred and predominant approach to ministry is expressed in discernible ways. Look over the following nine models and indicate the *one* that best describes your *primary* approach to ministry. Then, note your *secondary* approach to ministry.

#### *Pastor-Shepherd*

The minister spends the majority of his/her time visiting in homes and hospitals. He/she is known as a pastor who cares. Counseling has a high priority, as well as positive interpersonal relationships.

1. Believes ministry is primarily developing right relationships with God and with other people.
2. Purpose in preaching is to help people develop and mature as individuals so that their relationships can become increasingly more satisfying.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a counsellor in the secular world.

#### *Preacher-Teacher*

This is an educational model. This person understands his role primarily as a teacher of the truths of Scripture, helping people to apply them to contemporary life. This person is more satisfied in the pulpit and the study than anywhere else.

1. Believes ministry is primarily serving God by being a “servant of the Word” who teaches correct biblical truth.
2. Purpose in preaching is to impart correct biblical knowledge that will provide Christians with the resources they need to live in obedience to God’s Word. Sermons are generally expositions of extended passages of Scripture.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a teacher in the secular world.

#### *Worship Leader*

This minister’s primary concern is with personal and corporate worship. He/she finds great satisfaction in planning meaningful services and leading his/her congregation to experience the awesome holiness of God in worship.

1. Believes ministry is primarily leading the congregation in worship that is pleasing to God.
2. Purpose in preaching is to enrich the congregation's experience of God in worship, so sermons often deal with the nature and actions of God.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a director of drama in the secular world.

#### *Evangelist*

The primary concern for this person is to win the lost to Christ and assimilate them into the church. He may do this through personal visitation and his pulpit ministry. He will be very concerned about the numerical growth of the church. He will also have a high degree of interest in missions.

1. Believes ministry is primarily winning people to Christ and building His church.
2. Purpose in preaching is to motivate people to make decisions for Christ and join the church; sermons, therefore, are generally evangelistic.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a sales person in the secular world.

#### *Equipper*

This model of ministry has a high commitment to the ministry of the laity. This person often sees himself/herself as a coach and the church members as players on the team. He/She will derive satisfaction more from the accomplishments of people he/she has trained than from "hands on" ministry of his/her own.

1. Believes ministry is primarily helping people develop their spiritual gifts so they can engage in ministry themselves.
2. Purpose in preaching is to recruit and develop Christians for ministry. Sermons generally deal with the nature and ministry of the church.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a player-coach in the secular world.

#### *Church Manager*

The pastor sees himself as similar to a corporate executive. He manages the resources of the congregation well. The life of the congregation is carefully organized and lines of authority are well defined.

1. Believes ministry is primarily managing the varied resources of the church with effectiveness and efficiency.
2. Purpose in preaching is to build the church of Christ. Sermons generally deal with the nature and structure of the church.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a corporate executive in the secular world.

#### *Prophet*

This person will be concerned to challenge the unrighteousness he/she perceives in society. Righteousness and justice will be dominant themes in his/her ministry. Sermons will compare the contemporary social scene with prophetic biblical truth.

1. Believes ministry is primarily confronting individuals and institutions with the demands of God's Word for justice, mercy, and holiness.
2. Purpose in preaching is to expose personal and corporate injustice and unrighteousness with the light of biblical truth.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a social worker/activist in the secular world.

### *Spiritual Director*

This minister sees his/her major role as providing an example for the congregation. His/Her life is a model, not only of what the Christian life is like, but also of how it can best be lived. He/She is the guide church members use in developing their Christian lives.

1. Believes ministry is setting an example of a simple life of holiness and devotion.
2. Purpose in preaching is to help Christians develop a more meaningful relationship with Christ. Sermons often deal with the personal and devotional aspects of life.
3. This model does not compare to any secular occupation, since this person sees ministry as a unique spiritual service.

### *General Practitioner*

This minister is a combination of the other models. His/Her image will be in flux as he/she changes to meet what he/she perceives to be the varying needs of the congregation. The members of his/her church will not share any single image of his/her work.

1. Believes ministry is meeting the needs of individuals, groups, or the church by using appropriate skills and abilities that he/she has developed.
2. Purpose in preaching is to help meet congregational needs that are perceived as most acute at that time. Sermons may vary in style and content as the need indicates.
3. To some degree, could be compared to a general practitioner in medicine.

Based on this brief overview of models of ministry, I would say

- My primary approach to ministry is:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- My secondary approach is:

(These materials were adapted from Dennis Baker's unpublished D.Min. project from Talbot School of Theology, 1992.)

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM: "*Confirming the Pastoral Call*" (*A Guide to Matching Candidates and Congregations*) by Joseph L. Umidi.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN WESTERN CANADA  
Credentials Division

**SAMPLE REFERENCE CHECK FORM**

*Note:* This is a confidential form that will only be used by our Search Committee during the process of seeking a candidate for a position. It will be destroyed after our search process is completed and will not be used for any other purpose.

**Candidate's Name:**

---

1. What is your relationship to the candidate and how long have you known each other?
  
2. What do you consider the candidate's greatest strengths and ministry skills?
  
3. In what areas do you think the candidate most needs to improve?
  
4. What is the candidate's greatest accomplishments in his/her present ministry?
  
5. How would you describe the candidate's character and ministry?
  
6. Is there anything negative about his/her personal life that could harm the candidate's next ministry?
  
7. How would you describe the candidate's marriage and family life?
  
8. Briefly describe this person's leadership style.
  
9. Would you want him/her as your leader? Why or why not?
  
10. What has not been asked here that might be important for us to know as we consider him/her as our next leader?

## REFERENCES

Please supply five references. Each should be able to assess the way you function in ministry, your ministry style (model), and your spiritual giftedness. List full addresses, phone numbers, and a brief description of your relationship. These references will be contacted. Do not list any references to whom you are related to by marriage or birth. Indicate by an asterisk (\*) those from your current church. Indicate by a check in the box preceding the name if you must be reached personally before the church contacts these references. There should be at least one woman within the list of references. They should include:

- At least one, no more than two, pastors who know you and your work
- An active elder/leader in your current (or most recent) church
- Two additional lay persons in your current (or most recent) church
- A business person who knows you well
- No more than one seminary professor

*Note:* All pastoral search committees will ask for references from additional persons to contact about you and your ministry.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ P.C. \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ P.C. \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

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Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ P.C. \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ P.C. \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM: *"Confirming the Pastoral Call" (A Guide to Matching Candidates and Congregations)* by Joseph L. Umidi.

## THE SEARCH AND CALL PROCESS

1. Conduct the congregational self-study.
2. Gather essential information on the congregation and the community:
  - a) Bylaws
  - b) Two years of Annual Reports
  - c) Minutes of leadership team
  - d) Community demographics/promo
3. Gather names of prospects from a wide source
  - a) Church Service
  - b) Your assembly office
  - c) Volunteer sources
  - d) Your own "dream list"
  - e) Job description
4. Discard those names that obviously are not right for you because of questionable ability or character.
5. Discard those names that obviously are not right for you because their interests and abilities do not fit results of the congregational self-study.
5. Arrive at a working list of eight to ten names (smaller congregations will find it difficult to secure that many viable candidates; larger congregations will find it difficult to narrow their list to that limit).
6. Call no less than three of the references provided by each candidate on the Ministers Information Form. Inquire about such things as the minister's character, doctrinal beliefs, professional abilities (preaching, administration, pastoral care, etc.) and leadership style. Also inquire about his/her cooperativeness with the church at large, family situation, and personal health.
7. Re-evaluate all of the remaining candidates based on information gained by your phone calls. Now narrow your list to no less than two and no more than four candidates.
8. Call the remaining candidates, being careful to identify yourself and the nature of your call. Explain the process which you have followed and inform the minister that he/she is one of several in whom you have serious interest. If the minister agrees, arrange to bring the candidate and spouse to your community for a confidential meeting with the pulpit committee. Try to schedule a interview with at least two candidates. At this point strict confidentiality is essential.
9. Decide which of the persons whom you have interviewed is your first choice. Notify him/her and arrange for the following:
  - a) Notify the Executive Office of your decision.
  - b) Have background checks done through Executive Office.
  - c) Candidating weekend.
10. In a duly-called business meeting of the congregation, vote on the candidate. If results of the vote satisfy bylaws requirements, inform the candidate and begin making arrangements for his/her arrival.
11. Throughout the entire process make periodic progress reports to the congregation.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN WESTERN CANADA  
CREDENTIALS DIVISION

**CALLING THE RIGHT SENIOR PASTOR**  
**(Screening Out the Wrong Ones)**  
**A Step-by-Step Process**

**Senior Pastor Potential Candidate List**

When the resumes and names start to come in, this list will be your “best friend.”

**Senior Pastor Search Questions**

(As a committee, customize this form emphasizing the questions that you believe are “must know” and adding any others.)

Briefly describe in short phrases on a separate sheet of paper answers to the following:

*Core Values*

1. What are the three to five core values that give you the greatest passion in ministry?
2. What should be the core values of the church you would want to pastor.
3. Describe the content of a worship service that fulfills your core values.

*Ministry Preferences*

1. What do you see as the role of music in worship, and what range of styles do you think are appropriate?
2. What are your views on church growth and planting? (for example, becoming a mega church or spawning several smaller churches)
3. What criteria do you tend to use to evaluate success in ministry?
4. In outreach and missions, what is the correct balance between meeting physical and spiritual needs?
5. What do you feel should be the balance of the church’s involvement in local/cross-cultural outreach?
6. What approaches to evangelism do you feel are most effective? What are you doing presently to cultivate relationships with non-believers?
7. How often do you think a church should celebrate a communion service? What is your preferred method?
8. On what social and moral issues do you feel the church should take a stand? How is this properly expressed?
9. Is your teaching style more topical, expository, or narrative? What do you feel the correct balance is between these?
10. In what ways can leaders best communicate their vision for the church?
11. What is the place of the small group in the life of the church? What is the ideal structure and content of a small group?
12. What emphasis should the church have with youth and children?

### *Doctrine*

1. What is your view of the church government (elders, line of authority, congregational government, and so on)?
2. How do you view the role of elder(s) in the church? Describe the relationship between the senior pastor and the elders. What scriptural passages support this view?
3. How do you view the role of deacon(s) in the church?
4. Do you or have you worked with deaconesses? Your views?
5. What are your views on a woman in ministry leadership positions in the church?
6. What do you believe and practice in charismatic gifts such as tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, and so on?
7. What do you believe and practice regarding the ministry of healing?
8. How do you relate to those within your church with a different view of spiritual gifts?
9. What is your view on the “spiritual warfare” movement?
10. What are your views on demonic activity in the lives of believers and non-believers? What should the church do to minister to these needs?
11. What is the significance of the virgin birth?
12. Was Christ’s death on the cross absolutely necessary? Why or why not?
13. What does Christ’s resurrection mean for us?
14. How does a person become a Christian?
15. What are the motives for church discipline?
16. Give your understanding of the inspiration, authority, and inerrancy of the Scriptures.
17. Give a biblical view of baptism and explain its purpose.

### *Personal*

1. What do you feel are your spiritual gifts? How have they been affirmed and confirmed?
2. What are your personal strengths? Weaknesses?
3. What do you like most about the ministry? Least?
4. How would you describe your temperament? Your social style? How do you use this “style” to build teamwork?
5. How have you handled bouts of anger, depression, and anxiety?
6. If there has been a time when you were hurt deeply, please describe. What did you learn from this experience?
7. Describe your personal prayer and devotional life.
8. How do you organize and prioritize your week’s work (study, sermon preparation, counselling, etc.)?
9. Name some Christian leaders or thinkers, past or present, who have had the most influence on your ministry life.
10. What sports, hobbies, or spare-time activities do you participate in regularly? Which of these activities include your family?
11. Which magazines do you read regularly?
12. What are your favorite TV programs?
13. Give the titles and authors of three Christian and three non-Christian books you have read most recently.
14. What books have influenced your views on leadership?
15. Have you ever left a ministry position due to problems? If yes, please explain.
16. Referring to the Church Profile, how has God prepared you with a vision and gifts for this work?
17. If you were to move to our area, would it create too great a separation from your extended family?
18. What is the order of your priorities regarding your responsibilities to the church and your responsibilities to your wife and children?
19. Describe the “quality” time spent with your family and your family devotional life.



20. How has your wife influenced you in your personal and spiritual growth?
21. How do your wife's gifts complement your marriage?
22. What ministries is your wife currently involved with?
23. What geographical area do you consider to be your home? What geographical area does your wife consider to be home?
24. What are your personal, professional, and family goals over the next ten years?
25. What steps are you taking to achieve these goals?
26. What have been the greatest hindrances you have faced in reaching your goals?
27. What is your personal practice in regard to tithing? What is your view of tithes and offerings in the local church?
28. How would you evaluate your interpersonal skills?
29. What results have you seen in ministry in the last three years?
30. Have you ever led a church through a building program?

### **Evaluating Your Potential Candidate**

With these materials, conversations, and reference checks, you will be able to develop a pretty good profile on a candidate. Does this profile fit your church profile? Only after doing this foundational work should preaching ability be examined.

Poor preaching will subject the pastor to the kind of criticism that can discourage an otherwise good leader. It is best to hear the potential candidate preach on his own "turf" to truly sense if he is connecting with his congregation on a regular basis.

### **Reviewing the Basics**

You now have to make a decision. Is this the person that God wants you to invite to candidate at your church? Return to the basics and ask yourself questions like:

- Has he/she agreed to candidate if invited?
- Is he/she excited and challenged by your ministry opportunity? How do you know?
- Is he/she the right "fit"?
- Have we told ourselves the truth?
- Has the sovereign hand of God been evident in the "process"?
- Are we trying to talk ourselves into this particular person?
- Have we adequately clarified and identified his/her expectations of us?
- Have we adequately clarified and identified our expectations of him/her?
- Are these realistic?
- Do his/her social style and leadership gifts match our church at this stage of its history?
- Is he/she a producer? (Has he/she fostered growth in his/her former positions; has the growth remained?)
- Is he/she still a learner? Is he/she teachable?
- Is he/she likable? Respectable? Dependable? Authentic? Believable?
- How is his/her work ethic?
- Is he/she balanced enough?
- Is he/she a healthy person?
- Have we read his/her heart correctly?
- Are we comfortable with his wife/her husband and home life?
- Are we "sold"? Is this an exclamation mark (!) or a question mark ()?

- In the spirit of Luke 2:52, is he/she a “compelling person”?
- Is his/her mission our mission? If yes, then
- Are his/her operating principles our operating principles? If yes, then
- Are his/her techniques and approaches our techniques and approaches? If yes, then
- Does his/her personality match our personality? If yes, then
- Are his/her problems and challenges our problems and challenges?

### **Examining the Decision**

Once again consult the Lord in prayer. Then return to the following questions as honestly and objectively as possible:

- Have you defined the situation accurately?
- Have you looked at your ministry from the potential candidate’s point of view?
- Are you ready to trust this person as your pastor and give him/her your loyalty?
- Do you need more time to discuss and pray through the decision?
- Are you confident that your decision will be as right over a long period of time as it seems now?
- Do you have any nagging doubts or qualms about this decision?

Now you are ready to come to a consensus on your candidate!

### **Presenting the Final Choice**

Your next move is to phone the candidate and inform him/her of your decision. Assuming he/she says yes, *remember to be ethical*. You are still dealing with a person who may be serving in another place of ministry. Therefore, don’t fax the information around the country to all your prayer partners and Christian friends – yet.

Your second step is the final composition of the official letter inviting him/her to candidate. Also, maintain very close communication with your candidate at this stage of the process. Inform him/her of each step you take. The following very workable strategy is suggested:

Develop a packet from the pastoral search committee that presents the candidate to the church family.

- Inform them of the rationale for your choice.
- Write a summary page of your church’s needs to attach to this letter.
- Include your Position Description and Pastoral Profile. (A summary of the search process is very instructive for the congregation.)
- Send a brief biography with a picture of the family and some appropriate comments to share with the entire church. These can be gleaned from your extensive reference file.
- Attach a schedule of the candidating experience.

Arrange to have a church business meeting following the candidating period for the purpose of voting on our confirming the calling of the pastor in accordance with the guidelines of your church constitution and bylaws.

(These materials were adapted from Dennis Baker’s unpublished D.Min. project from Talbot School of Theology, 1992.)

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM: “*Confirming the Pastoral Call*” (*A Guide to Matching Candidates and Congregations*) by Joseph L. Umidi.