

Here's Help

Guidelines for Seeking a Pastor

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*Please feel free to make as many additional copies
that you need for your own pastoral search committee.
This booklet may also be downloaded from our website:
www.VentureNortheast.org*

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PREFACE

Dr. Leith Anderson in his book, *A Church for the 21st Century* (1994), warns that “a clergy dearth is coming.” He observes that this shortage is “predictable just in terms of those approaching retirement and the greatly reduced number of ministerial candidates.”

There are additional reasons for the scarcity of competent pastors. In many churches the minister’s compensation is not economically feasible for raising a family. There are unrealistic expectations on the pastor and his family leading to burn-out. There is a general disrespect for pastoral leadership. Many capable pastors are no longer in the ministry and spiritually sensitive young people avoid that vocation when they do not see the pastor valued in their local church.

Dr. Anderson concludes, “All these factors point to a coming shortage. There will be a switch from the recent buyer’s market to a seller’s market. Churches will have a much more difficult time finding pastors, will probably expend more time and energy to find effective pastors, and will work much harder to retain those they have.”

A wise church family will humbly and prayerfully seek a new pastor, commit themselves to a supportive relationship with him, and offer as generous compensation as they are able. In spite of the trends, the Spirit of God continues to graciously gift His Church with capable pastoral leadership.

Jesus said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37-38).

Our communities are part of the harvest field!

Beginning the Pastoral Search Process with Venture Northeast

Thank you for your interest in the pastoral referral service of Venture Northeast. We have a great opportunity to serve the Lord Jesus Christ through His Church. We are here to serve you!

This guide has been prepared to assist you in this strategic moment in the life of your church. To be charged with the responsibility to discover the next pastor the Lord has to lead your church is an awesome responsibility. Although your faith will be stretched through this process, you can trust our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, to guide you as you diligently seek Him. We want to come alongside and assist you in this journey.

After your Pastoral Search Committee is formed and you have studied this manual, the next step which enables us to serve you is the completion of the **Church Information Form**. This form is available for download from our website at www.VentureNortheast.org under the “resources” menu. Instructions for completing the form and a schedule of fees are included. The *Church Information Form* is sent to a potential pastor when we send his form to you. These forms need to be completed on a computer so that they can be processed electronically. Sending these forms via email has expedited the exchange of information between the church, Venture Northeast, potential pastors and the members of the Pastoral Search Committee. Please contact us if you have any questions or difficulties in completing the form. It is best completed with Microsoft Word (Venture Northeast has obtained special pricing for licensing of Microsoft products that we can provide for those involved in the ministry of our churches at a substantial savings. See our website for details).

In addition to this manual, we hope to assist you in the search process in the following ways:

- We provide a detailed **Pastoral Placement Form** about each candidate. This form provides a consistent look for each resume and gathers the same information for each person. This form has been adopted by each of the regions of Venture Church Network providing consistent information on candidates from other regions. You may also use this form for individuals who do not come through our referral process. The *Pastoral Placement Form* is available on our website.
- We have a network of resources to assist you in the time of transition: area pastors, pulpit supply, interim pastors, and ministry specialists.
- We provide counsel for the committee in interacting with potential candidates. We are often a reference for the church when a pastor wants to know more about the church.
- We provide help with interviews, compensation issues, etc.
- We communicate regularly with search committees and pastors regarding the search process through phone calls and email.
- We provide a *Church Health Assessment* tool to help you understand your church better as well as communicate your ministry needs with the new pastor.

We look forward to serving you!

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PHASES IN THE PASTORAL SEARCH PROCESS

A church that loses its pastor usually begins a journey through five stages of change. Each phase is normal and should be accepted as part of the process of moving from what was to what will be. This time of transition can be an opportunity for spiritual growth within the church family.

1. The Anxiety Phase

The termination of a pastor's ministry raises some natural questions such as: Why did our pastor choose to leave our church? What changes do we need to make in our lives? Who will replace our pastor? Who will perform all the services he did? How can we help serve the church family in this time of transition? Where do we turn for help in the preaching responsibilities? Will people lose interest while we are without a pastor?

All the anxieties of a church family, like all the anxieties of an individual, need to be committed to the Lord. He is the Head of the Body and cares for it. *Do not be anxious about anything*, Paul admonished, *but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God* (Philippians 4:6). Some churches challenge their people to seasons of corporate prayer and fasting concerning the needs of the church and the search for a new pastor. When you do this, God's transcending peace exceeds all your questions and concerns.

2. The Adjustment Phase

As the initial impact of a pastor's departure subsides, a church begins to adjust. Individuals and, when available, other pastoral staff share responsibilities that need to be done. Visiting the sick and newcomers can be accomplished by the board and delegated to those who will assist in this service. A neighboring pastor can be called for funerals or weddings. Other adjustments can be made that will boost a church's confidence that God will enable them to make it through this transition time. Getting used to other voices in the pulpit may be the biggest adjustment of all, but that is essential for the time when a new pastor arrives to be God's spokesman.

3. The Assessment Phase

Between pastors a church should assess where it is spiritually, organizationally and financially. A committee's initial task is to address this question: "What does the Lord want our church to become?" Out of serious reflection and interaction on this matter will come specific guidelines regarding the kind of leadership that needs to be sought in the new pastor. A church should assess its weaknesses as well as its strengths; its facilities as well as its activities; its opportunities as well as its difficulties. Be careful, however, that you do not spend inordinate time on the negative. Look back long enough to evaluate honestly and confess seriously, then look ahead to the biblical expectations God has for the church.

Venture Northeast offers several assessment tools to assist the church in evaluating its ministry and direction. These tools provide valuable feedback on key areas of a church's ministry. See Supplement #3 in the appendix for more information.

4. The Anticipation Phase

In Acts 13, Paul reviews how Samuel located David who was God's choice for Israel's leadership. The Lord's confirmation of that choice was: *I have found David . . . a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do* (verse 22). God will supply the man after His own heart to do His will in your church. It may involve extensive searching and intensive praying – but God will meet the need of a serving and obedient people (Philippians 4:19)!

5. The Acquisition Phase

The day will come when a pastor senses the call of the Great Shepherd, the eager invitation of a congregation and the tug of his own heart and will join the shepherding team of your flock! Be united and excited for that new chapter in the life of your church.

When you acquire your new pastor, love him, pray for him, respect him, generously support him, and cooperate with him. God's Word is clear:

Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13).

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you (Hebrews 13:17).

And don't forget to thank God for how He led and sustained you through the phases of transition.

The following pages offer a step-by-step plan for arriving at that joyful day of a new beginning. Of course, a church has to adopt and develop procedures it prefers, but consider these suggested guidelines. At the outset the church will need to select a committee to direct the process of finding God's man for pastoral leadership.

Here are some suggestions on . . .

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR COMMITTEE

“A committee,” goes the humorous old definition, “is a group of the unfit, chosen by the unwilling to do the unnecessary.” The committee in your church that is commissioned with the responsibility of locating a pastoral candidate should be the fit, chosen by the supportive to do what is very necessary. In creating your committee you will need to . . .

1. Determine purpose

The purpose of the search committee is to discern God’s will for a pastoral candidate to present to your church family. This man is God’s servant to help you grow to maturity in Christ and equip you for effective ministry. Pastor-teachers are gifted *to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ* (Ephesians 4:11-12). This means that the primary task of the committee is to discern God’s will through the principles of His Word, the persistent prayer of God’s people, the perspective of godly leadership, providential circumstances, the persuasion of God’s Spirit and the peace of God.

2. Determine size

The number on the committee should not necessarily be a matter of church size. A committee can be too big to meet easily and to function smoothly. It can also be too small to be adequately representative of the congregation. A committee of five to seven seems ideal. Some suggest that an odd number is important in case of tie votes. It is to be hoped that the committee will enjoy a sweet spirit of pulling together to find God’s man and not need to break ties by a single vote. If the group is much larger, bear in mind the factors of reproducing resumes, listening to tapes and contacting members for special meetings.

3. Determine representation

Who should be represented on the committee? Your constitution may decree the makeup of the committee. It may even specify that the deacons or elders become the committee. If it doesn’t, it is wise for the boards to be represented as well as the membership at large.

Since a pastor’s ministry must also be responsive to the spiritual needs of women, it may be appropriate that the female perspective be represented. If the deacons or elders function as the committee, some ladies – perhaps deacons’ or elders’ wives – could meet as advisors when a couple is being interviewed. The prospect’s wife would probably be more at ease having other women present.

4. Determine tasks

A chairman who is spiritually and emotionally mature should be elected by the committee, unless chosen by the congregation at the time of appointments. The significant nature of this task points to choosing a godly man who is respected as a spiritual leader within the congregation. A secretary to keep accurate minutes of each meeting is necessary. This person also may handle correspondence, or the chairman may prefer doing it. Prompt and courteous correspondence is crucial for representing Christ and your local church to prospective pastoral candidates. Choose a contact person to receive resumes and give updates to the Regional Ministry Center. This person should be familiar with email and have regular access to it.

Travel is usually involved to hear prospective candidates. Certain members of the committee should be available for this purpose, if the whole committee does not do it. It is usually beneficial for mates to join their spouses on trips to hear men, if the committee does not go as a unit. Going as couples, where possible, gives a more normal appearance in the church visited, and it allows for a dual reaction to be brought back for evaluation.

5. Determine meeting schedule

Each who serves must commit priority time to this priority task. Meetings of the committee should be agreed upon for everyone's convenience. Meet regularly on a specified day even if no major decisions will be made. Prayer and discussion about your goals is important for fusing together divergent personalities and infusing each with the sense of God's will. Of course there may be occasions for special meetings as well. Agree on a concluding time for each session. A late-night marathon tends sometimes to elicit more sharp tempers than sharp thinking.

6. Determine costs

Postage, phone calls, travel expenses – perhaps copy machine fees – should be projected costs for carrying out your responsibilities. Members of the Search Committee should not be expected to absorb these costs themselves. You should also plan on reimbursing the candidate for any travel expenses as well as an honorarium for preaching or teaching. That reimbursement might involve air fare, motels and meals.

The reason for anticipating these costs at the outset is so that all the normal salary and pastoral costs are not consumed in other church projects. When there is a healthy, growing fund, a committee can reach out further in its quest for a quality pastor. Also encourage a fund to be established for moving expenses, which could be substantial.

7. Determine procedures

Is the committee responsible for obtaining pulpit supplies or securing an interim pastor? This must be determined by the church at the time the committee is formed. It is usually desirable for this to be the committee's task, so preaching engagements can be easily coordinated.

The value of an interim pastor is that he is able to provide a more balanced spiritual diet for God's flock. The right man can sense special needs and develop his pulpit ministry to be of maximum help. It also avoids the constant change of personnel in the pulpit. Generally, the man you ask to be interim is not to be a potential candidate. If a number of people want him to be permanent, this could work at cross purposes with the efforts of the committee. Essentially, the role of the interim is to prepare the congregation for its new pastor. A retired pastor may be an ideal interim pastor.

There is increasing emphasis today on the role and value of an intentional interim ministry.

8. Determine accountability

The pastoral search committee should regularly inform and consult with the spiritual leadership of the church (that is, the elders or deacons). Their spiritual insight and oversight should be an integral part of the search process. The congregation should receive regular updates concerning the pastoral search process. Their prayer and participation are important. The more they are involved in the process, the more likely they will be supportive of the conclusion.

Questions for the committee to decide also need to include: What steps will be followed with each name presented? How will interviews with prospective candidates be conducted? See sample questions in Supplement 4.

Now let's consider suggestions for the committee members . . .

HOW TO CARE FOR BASIC MATTERS

Your first need is not to gather a pile of resumes but to begin a process of self-study in which you identify church mission, vision, and values, assess needs and secure basic information.

The first step in determining the path to any destination is knowing where one is currently. When staring at the big map in the mall, before you can determine how to get to your favorite store you need to find the "You are Here" arrow or dot. The same is true in the journey to discover your next pastor. Without clarity on your church's hopes and dreams and how you will accomplish the mission Christ has for you it is impossible to discover the type of leadership needed from the next pastor. In addition to knowing the condition of your flock (Prov. 27:23), it is also important to understand the community in which the church is located. Communities and neighborhoods are constantly changing. We often fail to notice these changes when we are living in the middle of it. If we are going to be faithful and fruitful to the mission God has given to us to make disciples we need to understand the mission field in which God has placed us.

Venture Northeast has a number of tools to assist you in understanding both your church and community. Contact us to let us help you find the right tool for your church's needs.

1. Clarify mission and ministry

What is going well in the church ministry? What areas need improvement? What are your hopes and dreams for the future of the church? The answers to these important questions begin to shape the profile of the pastor you need to lead your church. Conducting a church health assessment as noted earlier will pinpoint areas of strength and areas that need improvement in your church's ministry (see Supplement 3).

The committee should also secure or develop a working description of the purpose for which the church exists. Sometimes this is termed "mission clarification." Either your committee or the deacons/elders should compile a realistic, exciting expression of your church's mission. You might cover the areas of worship, education, outreach, etc. Each working group within the church should be asked to convey in one or two paragraphs what it sees as the purpose of the church and its role in helping to fulfill that purpose. Specific objectives should be gathered from each source and condensed into a brief clarification of the church's mission in the world and in the community. Reduce that to a few pages, duplicate and have available as part of the packet for prospective candidates.

Yes, this project will take some valuable time but will be immensely helpful in evaluating each man you consider. You cannot know if a man is right for your church if you do not have a clear focus of what your ministry really is. A prospective candidate has a right to inquire about what the church sees as its function. He should not be expected to bring the goals and guidelines; he ought to be secured because he is challenged with what the church perceives her mission to be. A good pastor will be attracted and motivated by a well-conceived set of objectives that show vision and direction.

Many churches make the mistake of believing the new pastor should bring his own mission and vision to the church. This unfortunately only sets the church and pastor up to fail. This may be one of the primary reasons for short pastoral tenures today. When a new pastor begins to lead the church in a new direction in keeping with his vision, the resulting changes usually result in conflict and frustration if this vision is not shared by the congregation. A much better course of action is for a church to clearly articulate the mission and vision God has placed in their heart to reach their area for Christ and then find a pastor whose heart and passion resonates with their mission and vision.

2. Organize information into operating guidelines

When you have the pulse of the people, you can assemble the information needed to complete the Venture Northeast **Church Information Form**. This simple tool enables appropriate referrals to be offered. This allows for an initial exchange of information and for the potential candidate to be praying along with the committee for God's direction.

The **Church Information Form** is downloaded from our website and completed on a computer using Microsoft Word. It is then emailed to the Venture Northeast. Sending these forms electronically has expedited the exchange of information between the church, Venture Northeast, potential candidates and the members of the Pastoral Search Committee. Complete instructions are included with the form.

3. Develop a pastoral profile

As procedures and standards are adopted they should be listed for use in screening resumes. For example, there may be matters of doctrinal sensitivity that need to be taken into consideration. Or perhaps a style of pastoral leadership is the felt need of the majority. Certain skills or emphases may be preferred. Age and experience may be deemed important in the selection process. Significant factors should become checkpoints for appraising each resume. This will influence choices on the basis of predetermined expectations rather than momentary emotions.

4. Develop a ministry description

This is sometimes called a job description in the business world. It is essential that you think through and list specific responsibilities and policies regarding pastoral function. This will help to avoid later confusion and clashes. Built into this document ought to be a plan for performance review or ministry evaluation. A pastor should know, for instance, that annually the elders/deacons or a pastoral relations committee will share reactions to his ministry and allow for any mid-course adjustments that may be wise. Having this kind of prior agreement with a pastor can head off many of the ugly, damaging conflicts that so often scar a church.

The Ministry Description for this pastoral position should be adopted by the church leadership and the church so it has agreement and authority.

5. Prepare an adequate compensation package

You will need to have a clear grasp of what your church is prepared to invest in caring for your pastor and his family. This should include a meeting with the board responsible for this part of your budget. Working out a suitable financial package to offer the candidate may require overcoming the traditions of the past, the uncertainty of the future and the confusion that sometimes surrounds the pastor's "pay package". A pastor with the training and experience your church needs is worthy of generous support – even if it stretches your faith. Many churches are offering their pastors the opportunity to purchase their own homes. Consideration should be given to the need for the pastor to build financial equity in a home.

Consider the biblical responsibilities for supporting elders who devote time to preaching and teaching: *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching . . . The worker deserves his wages* (1 Timothy 5:17).

Trust in God's provision for your future and growth potential! God will honor a commitment to be generous toward His servants whose vocation is pastoral ministry!

In studying the whole financial picture, it is helpful to divide every expense regarding a pastor into two categories: *Personal Compensation and Benefits, and Professional Costs and Reimbursements*. To get an accurate picture of a pastor's compensation, these two categories must be kept separate.

Personal Compensation and Benefits. A base salary, fair rental value of the parsonage (or housing allowance, if he prefers to own his residence), utilities, Social Security Tax Assistance (because a pastor,

considered self-employed by the IRS for Social Security, has to pay more than the average employee), health and disability insurances, and a tax-sheltered retirement plan. These are items involved in personal compensation. With changing tax laws, these items should be regularly reviewed and configured for best tax advantage.

Professional Costs and Reimbursements. Auto expenses, telephone, computer, ministry expenses, book and journal costs, continuing education tuition, national and regional conference fees – these kinds of items are not salary. They are expenses that should be recognized as essential to maintaining pastoral service. They should not be paid out of a pastor’s salary. A car, for example, is as essential for ministry as a telephone. Check current tax rules to make sure that the alignment of expenses in this category are labeled and expended to the pastor’s tax advantage.

These two categories of financial provision for the pastor’s ministry are outlined in the *Terms of the Call* (see Supplement 7) and on the *Church Information Form*. Our website (www.VentureNortheast.org) has links to several helpful resources with pastoral compensation. *Stewardship Services Foundation* provides a free booklet that outlines pastoral compensation issues. Another good resource is *ChurchSalary.com*. ChurchSalary—and its parent company, Church Law & Tax—is committed to helping church leaders and pastors develop an atmosphere of healthy financial stewardship, especially in the area of church staff compensation.

As you review these matters, keep in mind the biblical principles of pastoral support, such as I Timothy 5:17-18 and I Corinthians 9:7-14. Most servants of God are reluctant to emphasize their personal needs, but their effectiveness in providing for their family releases them to focus on the ministry.

To arrive at an adequate salary you should know what the median income in your community is. Check with your local government for this information. Some churches also average the incomes of the leadership in the congregation. And, of course, you need to take into account what a pastor’s needs are based on his family situation. Be sure you are comparing apples with apples when considering compensation. For example, do not include the costs of health insurance and retirement in calculating a pastor’s take-home pay unless that is also included in the average incomes of your leaders.

There’s one more item that may need review . . .

Days off, Holidays, and Vacation. Are you offering an adequate amount of time for rest, recreation, and recovery? Actually, this is one of the least expensive and most appreciated benefits you can make available to a man considering your church. The unique demands of the pastorate can exact an enormous toll on the man of God. The stress and burnout casualties in ministry are mounting. Providing adequate time off and a generous vacation package, even if longer than the average member may get, seems wise when the following values are considered.

- *Emotional value* – to help a man cope with the drain of confronting all sorts of human crises in the lives of those he seeks to help.
- *Physical value* – to give time to renew the strength that has been spent in the hard work and long hours.
- *Spiritual value* – to recharge a man’s spiritual energy and allow him to be ministered to for a few weeks.
- *Family value* – to reward a family for those many evenings without Dad when they shared him with others through the year.
- *Church value* – to enable a pastor to bring back fresh perspectives gained from reading, praying and reflecting.

Four weeks vacation is what most churches provide. And be sure to allow him to divide his time away in a manner that fits his finances and needs best. If he chooses to spend some of that time home, do not bother him with church business. In fact, if you want a pastor’s vacation time to be of maximum value to the family and to the church, make it possible for him to vacate – to get away. Perhaps a recreational

vehicle or cottage on the lake can be loaned.

6. Check your Expectations for the Size of Pastoral Staff

Churches and pastors often struggle to have an effective, growing ministry due to a failure to have the right size staff for the size and demands of the ministry. Expectations of church members typically outpace the energy and giftedness of the pastoral staff.

Smaller churches who have been accustomed to having a full-time pastor often fail to realize that the changes in the economy and the changes in ministry expectations now make it unlikely for them to afford a full-time pastor and the type of ministry that will reach their community for Christ. In his book, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, Dr. Gary McIntosh explains how the changes in our society have impacted a church's ability to adequately provide staff and ministry.



The first step toward an adequate staff begins when a small church obtains the services of a full-time pastor. During the 1950s and '60s it was generally assumed that twelve tithing families could support a full-time pastor. I doubt that this was ever completely accurate, but several factors during those years made it more likely that a small church could afford a full-time pastor. Cash salaries and benefit packages for pastors were lower; there was less competition for church members' charitable contributions, so members contributed a higher portion of their income to their church; the generation that was in leadership accepted financial sacrifice due to the experience of the Great Depression and World War II; land and facility costs were fairly reasonable; and there were lower expectations concerning programs in the church.

Of course, this has all changed during the past half century. Pastoral salaries have increased and the rise in health care insurance costs have driven benefit packages higher; church members now demand a greater variety and higher quality of church programming; costs for purchasing land and building facilities have skyrocketed into the millions; numerous charitable organizations and causes now vie for church members' dollars; and the generation now leading churches has experienced a strong economy and isn't comfortable with financial sacrifice.

These and other changes mean it now takes about 150 adult worshipers to provide for a full-time pastor and to finance a church ministry that meets the expectations of today's churchgoers (91).

It is important to remember that these changes simply reflect widespread changes in our society. The rising cost of living has raised the expenses and salaries of everyone and the specialization and sophistication of our culture has raised expectations in all areas of life.

Larger churches must also review the size of their staff and the expectations they have for staff if they want them to be effective. Dr. McIntosh's book is very helpful in understanding the unique differences between small, medium, and large churches and the impact of staff and structure upon the size and growth of the church.

A church's expectation for staff must match the reality of their situation or the result will be ineffectiveness, frustration, and burnout. Churches must place a high priority on providing adequate staff for their ministry. "Many churches place their priorities in this order: facilities, programs, staff. However, you'll discover that churches with this priority list are often the declining or plateaued ones. On the other hand, churches that place their priorities in the order of staff, programs, facilities are usually the growing ones.... There is no guarantee that adding staff will produce church growth, but it is rare to find a rapidly growing church that is understaffed." (McIntosh, 95).

Let's think now about that big concern of . . .

HOW TO SECURE PROSPECTS

When a pastoral vacancy occurs names are often volunteered from various individuals. You will need to secure other names by diligent search. That's why it is a good idea to think of yourself as a "Search Committee." Of course, this entails both toil and time. If you were Methodists, for instance, the replacement would be simple. A bishop would assign your new pastor. Baptists, however, prefer self-government. The choice of a pastor must be yours. Make your autonomy work – even if it takes longer than you might desire. Venture Northeast staff does not seek to impose any pressures or preferences upon you, only to serve and assist in referring competent possibilities for your consideration.

1. Look to your association

Venture Northeast is prepared to serve you in referring capable men. Each Venture Church Network regional ministry center across the country also maintains a file of potential candidates who have completed the standard form. Your regional executive director may be able to offer personal insight about these men. He also knows some who may not be looking for relocation but whose fine ministries and length of service commend them for consideration.

The names and addresses of Venture Church Network ministry centers in other regions will be supplied if you request them. To avoid needless duplication, though, it is generally best to work through your regional ministry center and let it contact other regions if additional possibilities are needed.

The advantage of working through your regional ministry center is that their staff gets to know your church and your needs by personal contacts with you. The better they understand your desires, the better they can help you in your pastoral search. So keep them well-informed, and don't hesitate to call them whenever there is need for his assistance.

2. Plan on names from friends

Receive names that individuals may offer. Do not ask for them, but do not be indifferent to them. While this may not be the best logical method for name procurement, the sovereignty of God can certainly cause the name of His choice to be referred from any source. When names are offered, request as much information as possible. It is also a good idea to ask each who submits a name: "Why do you feel this person would make a good pastor of our church?" If the name submitted is a family member or relative, realize that honest objectivity may be colored by that fact.

3. Expect some to offer their own names

If pastors or those who desire pastorates volunteer their own names, be considerate but cautious. If a man graciously asks to be considered and does not have any referral service to make the contact, give him fair consideration and very thorough evaluation. Or you might refer him to the regional Venture Church Network ministry center and suggest that his name be channeled through that office. This allows the regional executive director to help in ascertaining his appropriateness for referral to your church.

4. Contact schools if you desire

Christian colleges and seminaries have referral departments. Contacting these schools can make available recent or pending graduates that might be suitable or older, experienced alumni.

A list of several Bible colleges and seminaries is in Supplement 9. One must assess the graduates on their individual merits and convictions and not exclusively upon the reputation of the school from which they were graduated.

When you start gathering names, you will need to know . . .

HOW TO HANDLE RESUMES

The resumes referred by Venture Northeast will give you enough information to acquaint you with a man's training, family and philosophy of ministry. When you are comparing a number of resumes at a time, it may be confusing as to which man is best for your church. If you have listed your expectations and qualifying factors as suggested earlier, then each resume can be evaluated in the light of these. Be careful though, that you are not so idealistic that you are not realistic.

Perhaps a pastor's preaching is not as forceful as you would like, but his pastoral skills are strong. You may prefer a younger man, but a certain brother meets all other standards. Maybe a good man has a physical factor that overshadows an otherwise promising capability. Somebody once pointed out that a man in trouble with the law, run out of town, suffering a serious physical malady, unmarried and over fifty would not check out very well with most committees today. Therefore the apostle Paul, were he alive today, would be bypassed!

Here are some orderly steps for processing resumes

1. Adopt a standard form

Our *Pastoral Placement Form* provides a consistent look for each resume and the gathering of the same information on each pastoral candidate. Do **not** create your own form asking for the same or similar information that is already available on our form. Our pastors have already expended a great deal of time preparing this form. If you find there are issues not addressed on our form, these may be explored in the interview process. Although not recommended, you may create a supplement to our form that asks a few questions not already addressed. But keep it very brief! Please send a copy to us; we may include some of them in the next revision of our form.

If you receive a promising resume that is not on the Venture Northeast form, you may want to send him a copy of it and explain that this is the body of information needed to make a fair assessment. This enables you to have the same data on each person being considered. It also has the additional value of determining the man's doctrinal and functional alignment with Venture Northeast. *In all cases be sure that a candidate has signed the four signature pages in the Pastoral Placement Form before recommending him to the congregation.*

Experience has revealed that it is wise to discuss names under serious consideration with your regional association ministry staff, especially if he has not referred them. Sometimes he is aware of something you might need to know.

2. Be courteous

Each resume represents a man's life and ministry. Give it both consideration and courtesy. Timely communication is greatly appreciated! Write a brief note to those you do not wish to consider further at this time. Sometimes a committee is led back to a person not initially preferred.

3. Ascertain availability

Send a letter of inquiry to those you wish to consider further and ascertain whether they are interested in being considered (note sample letter in Supplement 5). Circumstances change in the course of time, and the person may not choose to move or may have already determined a move. Make your letter personal. A form letter does not convey a high level of interest. You might include a bulletin or brochure, but explain that other information will be sent if the man becomes a viable, suitable consideration. Ask for a reply within a week or two. Don't let men who fail to answer their mail promptly delay the arduous task of pastoral search.

4. Keep looking

Do not feel discouraged if none of the original group of resumes seem to pinpoint the man you seek. Request other resumes. Additional names come in regularly, and perhaps the right one for you will be in the next batch of possibilities sent to you. Often many names and many months are required to locate the pastor gifted and called to serve the Lord among you.

Be sure, however, that you give more than casual consideration to the selected resumes sent to you from the Venture Church Network regional ministry center. These are capable men, whom if you knew personally – even through a phone conversation – might create appeal.

5. Respect confidences

One further caution needs to be stressed. Be very careful that you do not divulge confidential names and information outside the committee. A man's present position could be jeopardized if word got to his present ministry prematurely that he was being considered elsewhere. This might create needless unrest in the church he serves. Also, if any negative evaluations are made or references secured, keep them tightly classified so as not to hurt a man and his ministry. Do not leave resumes, references or minutes lying around the church or a home where they can be read by non-committee personnel. All Pastoral Placement Forms, resumes, reference forms, and notes containing personal information should be deleted from computers and physical copies shredded to protect the personal information of each candidate.

During the process you need to know . . .

HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULTIES

Not weary in well-doing (Galatians 6:9) should earmark your search for a shepherd. The devil may discourage you in many ways, and you may be tempted more than once to “throw in the towel.” Sometimes months may go by with little progress evident. Some in the church family may grow discouraged, become critical of the committee and even leave. This may not only threaten the survival of the committee but delay the arrival of a pastor.

What should you do if some of these symptoms arise? Immediately pursue four courses of action.

1. Commit yourselves as a committee to renewed conviction that God promises to provide a shepherd for His flock (Jeremiah 23:4).
2. Claim the gracious promise of Psalm 27:13-14: *I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord: be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.* And in Jeremiah 31:16 we read: *“Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,” declares the Lord.*
3. Call the congregation to an intense week of prayer, honestly stating that limited progress has been achieved and that a significant spiritual breakthrough is needed. Meditating on a passage like Jeremiah 33 may set the tone for this period of prayer and heart-searching: *Call to me and I will answer you . . . I will bring health and healing . . . I will cleanse . . . They will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide . . .*(verses 3-9). In preparation for a new day of ministry, urge that everyone seek forgiveness where needed (I John 1:9) and fullness as needed (Ephesians 3:16-19). God may be waiting to get His people ready for the man as well as the man ready for the people.
4. Contact the Venture Church Network regional resource center and discuss the impasse that you may have. Perhaps a review of procedures and some redirection will enable you to go on to your goal. *Plans fail for lack of counsel* is the word of wisdom in Proverbs 15:22. Avail yourselves of the resources available to you.

Consider next the crucial state of . . .

HOW TO SELECT A CANDIDATE

1. Make a Personal Contact

The phone can be a valuable timesaver. Place a call to a man you desire to know better. This important phone visit can be pre-arranged for a time when all parties can participate. Use a speaker phone to allow several to talk with the couple. The call should involve at least three committee members (including one woman) and the prospect and his wife. Make this a friendly conversation in which you discuss your church, parsonage, community and vision. Let them ask questions. Do not pursue heavy doctrinal matters at this point. Keep it casual and friendly. This phone visit will create a positive or negative impression of their personalities, attitudes and responses. This is much more effective than if one member of the committee does the phone interview, and it gives a broader basis of evaluation. The call need not be longer than 30 minutes to accomplish its purpose. Technology like Skype will make this initial personal contact even better by adding video. Just be sure to practice using this beforehand and make sure your internet speed is sufficient.

2. Request a copy of a sermon

Far wiser than prematurely visiting a man's church is to ask him for a copy of a sermon that is typical of his preaching. Some churches post their pastor's messages on their website. In some cases, videos may be available, which afford an additional dimension of evaluation. Listen for content, interest, delivery and style. Maybe even the length is important to you!

3. Prepare a packet

Prior to a personal interview, assemble a packet of information. Include material that will give the recipient insight into your church and community. Also include a church constitution, statement of purpose, annual report, church newsletter, pictures and description of church and parsonage facilities. Information on schools will be of interest to those with school age children.

A letter at this point might also pose any specific doctrinal or practical questions that need clarification. Ask if the salary package is adequate and clear.

In corresponding with a potential candidate, it is usually wise to mail everything to his residence and mark it "confidential." It may also be his preference that you phone him at home rather than at the church office.

4. Interview personally

If after the personal contact and the sermon evaluation, you desire to get better acquainted with a prospect, invite him to meet with your committee. In situations where this is not convenient, exchange information through mail or email.

If you interview personally at this point or at a later time, certain essential questions need to be asked. List what you feel is important in determining the choice of a man. Supplement 4 suggests some items you may want to cover in an interview, using the "TEAM" approach.

5. Check references

In the process, now is a good time to check references. Please do not bother people with the task of giving a reference until you are impressively interested in a man. Write to or phone those whose names have been given in the resume. If you pursue secondary references, be sure not to jeopardize the pastor's confidentiality. You do not want to jeopardize his present ministry.

Don't prepare too lengthy a reference form (note the sample reference letter in Supplement 6, which may also be used for phoning). Those who give sensitive information often would rather give it verbally than in

writing. It also allows for some discussion. If you mail a form, always enclose a stamped and addressed envelope for the reply.

6. Visit and observe

The committee should determine the most promising candidate from among the prospects considered and carefully checked. Give adequate time for discussion, prayer and unity. When one man seems to be the best choice, plan to visit his church to hear him preach, if possible. (If a student or minister not presently pastoring, perhaps he can be heard at a church willing to let him preach for that occasion.)

Visiting a man's place of ministry will offer an impression of the congregation, the impact of the service, the man's appearance and effectiveness in the pulpit. It is best for not more than two to sit together so as not to be too obvious a visiting delegation. If someone asks where you are from, give your home community and state that you are in the area on personal business.

It is usually not wise to interview people in the congregation and attempt to get evaluative information from them about the pastor. The risk is that you could either receive jaundiced perspective from an embittered person or confront a devoted member who would scalp you if he thought you were there to lay claim to a beloved shepherd.

Should the pastor know that a delegation from your committee is coming? Definitely! It avoids any possibility of getting there only to discover a different speaker. Yes, it may allow the pastor to prepare his best. But if he does not impress you at his best, then what he might have sounded like if you had not informed him doesn't really matter. Some committees choose to request a list of the Sundays within the span of a month that would be appropriate Sundays to visit. The specific date of the planned visit is not indicated, but you have provided the pastor opportunity to prepare his board, if he chooses. You certainly do not want to create embarrassment for a pastor by popping in and causing his board to wonder what is going on.

Scheduling a definite date with the prospect and his wife for your visit allows for a planned interview. If given a choice, opt to meet with the pastor in his residence so you can become acquainted with his family and observe his home.

Ascertain his level of interest in pastoring your church. Offer any additional information about your church and community. Inquire if the salary proposal sent earlier needs discussion or clarification – or even negotiation. Be particularly sensitive to the housing preference – private housing or church owned parsonage. Learn how soon he could relocate, if God led him to your church. Assure him that your committee will be in prayer and discussion regarding his availability, and he will be notified of your decision following the next meeting.

7. Evaluate and decide

If the visiting committee members have had adequate time to compare evaluations and the full committee senses agreement that this is "the man," he should be invited to candidate at a mutually suitable date. A man may prefer to come first as a pulpit supply so he can better determine his feelings about the church before becoming a candidate. You may also prefer it this way, feeling that a double exposure is better than a single visit.

While this may seem to be desirable, be aware of some disadvantages. If the distance is significant, this represents additional costs. You will also have to decide whether to defray the cost of bringing in his wife, if it is not a candidating occasion. Also, in this situation people would be evaluating only a man's pulpit ministry without due regard for his other pastoral skills, which would be considered if he were to be voted on as a candidate. Furthermore, most pastors would find it difficult to be away two Sundays within a short period. Generally, just one Sunday is used.

When you have sensed God's leading to one man, here's . . .

HOW TO PRESENT A CANDIDATE

1. Plan the candidating event

Carefully work out the schedule of activities for the candidate's visit. Invite his wife to accompany him, and his children, if feasible. Having the children present if they are very young may serve no valuable purpose. Older children usually would want to be part of the major decision they may face. It is understandable if they would like to see the community and schools.

Some churches prefer a Wednesday through Sunday visit; others have a week long candidating experience to enable the church to get to know the pastor better. The longer candidating enables members of the church family to set up personal appointments with the potential new spiritual leader.

Friday through Sunday seems to be the most popular format. Friday evening might be used as a public get-acquainted occasion – either at a dinner or a dessert setting. The candidate and his wife would be introduced and asked to give brief testimonies of their conversions. The man could tell of his call to ministry and churches served. General questions of interest could be asked by the people present. Keep this to a reasonable length so that it does not drag on exhaustingly.

Saturday can be used for visiting the community, looking at potential housing or the parsonage and perhaps a meeting with combined boards and leaders. You might schedule your guests into two key homes for lunch and supper. Allow the couple to get a good night's rest for a strenuous Sunday.

If the visiting candidate is expected to teach a class in Sunday School, be sure to notify him of this assignment in adequate time to prepare. In order to observe his leadership in worship, request that he read the Scripture lesson and offer the pastoral prayer. If it is a communion Sunday, the deacons should preview with him the procedures and his part in them. Most candidates would prefer not to conduct the entire morning service in a new situation. Let him know how and when the service usually ends.

A Sunday afternoon meeting with the visiting brother may be used to cover any matters not yet discussed. If there is an evening service, the candidate usually is expected to preach again. He will be interested in knowing if it is less formal, held in a different room and if the style of ministry is usually more teaching-oriented.

2. Be sensitive to the children

If the children accompany the visiting pastor, introduce them to the congregation but do not expect them to speak or to feel comfortable with much public exposure. This scrutiny is difficult for children. Let them stay in the background. Perhaps arrangements can be made for them to be cared for during any sessions that their parents need to attend on Saturday or Sunday afternoon.

3. Reserve adequate accommodations

Your special guests will appreciate being lodged in facilities that allow them privacy for personal discussions and rest. A good motel should be reserved for this occasion, if at all possible. It will create an impression of sensitivity and consideration. Be sure to make arrangements regarding the bill when you reserve the dates.

4. Publicize the schedule

The candidating schedule should be announced at least two weeks in advance (check your constitution or bylaws in this regard). The date and time of the business meeting for extending a call may also be announced at the same time. In the publicity be sure to give a profile of the pastor, his family, training and churches served. The people need to know as much as possible about him.

5. Arrange reimbursement

All expenses and an honorarium should be paid to the candidate before he returns home. Arrange with the treasurer in advance for this check to be presented. This kind of thoughtfulness communicates your concern for the potential pastor's financial well-being.

6. Review the weekend

Though a business meeting may have already been slated, the committee needs to review the candidating event and determine a final "go" for the big vote. If something detected in the weekend's encounter is cause for alarm or if the committee is not unanimous about proceeding, then the business meeting should be cancelled or used to give a report to the people. It is better to withdraw a recommendation than to proceed with misgivings. Your unanimous endorsement is weighty with the people. They would not want to vote to call a man if there were reasons for the committee's lack of confidence.

If the committee is in agreement to recommend that the candidate be invited to pastor the church, here's . . .

HOW TO EXTEND A CALL

1. Schedule the Membership Meeting

Normally the Membership Meeting is as soon after the candidating as feasible. Everyone, including the candidate, is anxious to know what the action of the church will be. Often the meeting is held the Sunday night the man candidates and after he has left. If this is planned, the committee needs to do its final review prior to the meeting. Some churches prefer to make the decision the following Wednesday night, which allows some time for reflection and interaction among the church family. Still others feel that the next Sunday morning, after the service, is best because of maximum participation in the decision process. It is not the best procedure to vote on the candidate after the morning service at which he preaches, unless the church is very small.

2. Consult your constitution

Determine how the Membership Meeting is to be conducted and who is to moderate it. Find out from your constitution what number constitutes a quorum. Be clear about the percentage of vote required to extend a call and the age requirements for voting.

3. Conduct the Vote

Begin the Membership Meeting with prayer. The committee chairperson should state the recommendation of the committee and move that the attending members vote to invite the candidate to become the pastor, with the terms clearly indicated (see sample terms in Supplement 7). This is usually termed "the call." Actually, of course, it is acknowledging what a church senses may be God's call to a man to come and serve as pastor.

The motion should be seconded and then discussion allowed. A vote should be a secret ballot so as not to pressure conformity to the will of the majority or of the leadership. The vote should be taken in accordance with the stipulations of your constitution regarding eligibility for voting and percentage of vote needed to issue an official call. Be sure that people understand how to mark their ballots. "Yes" indicates a vote to call the candidate; "No" is a vote not to issue a call. "Abstention" should be written on the ballot by those who choose not to register a vote. Make certain that pencils are available for marking the ballots and that clerks are appointed to tally and report the result, including any abstentions.

4. Seek united support

If the tally of the ballots is sufficient for a call to be extended, but there are some negative votes, ask if there can be a unanimous vote of support if the man accepts the call. This may be done by raising hands or standing. This assures the man being invited to shepherd the church that all expressed willingness to cooperate with him and support the majority decision. The chairperson of the meeting should announce that the pastor will be contacted promptly and given the results of the vote.

Appreciation should be expressed to the committee. A motion to adjourn is then in order.

5. Notify the candidate

The candidate should be notified of the vote promptly. His decision may be asked for at that time. If he requests time to consider the matter, ask him to notify you within a week, preferably in time to announce it at the next service. If the motion did not carry to call the pastor, let him know the vote as graciously as possible and thank him for his availability and prayer.

6. Mail official terms

The official action of the church and the terms of the call, including all financial and living arrangements, should be mailed quickly to the pastor (see sample "Terms of the Call" in Supplement 7). This becomes a binding agreement and it should be absolutely clear.

7. Announce the good word

As soon as the candidate has indicated his acceptance of the call, release the happy news to the congregation and to the community. An arrival time should be announced. Give to your local newspaper a write-up. Be sure to promptly notify Venture Northeast too.

One final concern of the committee has to do with . . .

HOW TO WELCOME YOUR NEW PASTOR

1. Plan his moving

The cost of this will have already been agreed in the negotiations, but let him know that he is now free to make moving arrangements. Offer to line up volunteer help upon arrival as may be needed.

2. Prepare the parsonage

If your church has a parsonage, make sure all is in readiness for the new occupants. Any fixing up, painting or cleaning should be cared for so that you are proud to turn over the home to your new pastor and family.

3. Hold a food shower

An old-fashioned custom that is still very much in order is to stock the cupboards with food prior to the pastor's arrival. A week or two of contributing food items can be a great welcome treat for the new family who has probably depleted their pantry prior to moving.

4. Arrange arrival help

It would be very thoughtful to send in dinner for their first evening in the parsonage. Child care during unloading might also be most helpful. Perhaps assistance with making beds and settling essentials for the first night would be appreciated, too. And, of course, help may be needed in moving in the furniture.

5. Schedule an installation

It is customary and meaningful for the church to host an installation service as soon after arrival as possible. It probably ought to be planned prior to arrival and in consultation with the pastor-elect. Since it is appropriate to invite neighboring pastors and churches to attend, it usually is held on a Sunday afternoon or weekday evening. Several nearby pastors may be asked to participate by bringing greetings, a charge to the church, a word of prayer and a welcome into the local pastors' fellowship. The chairperson of the committee usually speaks briefly, recounting the process and rejoicing in the cooperation received. Perhaps it would be possible for a regional Venture Church Network staff person to be present to share in this happy event (a sample installation service is in Supplement 8).

A reception after the service with simple refreshments is customary. It is always a nice touch when a large, attractively-decorated cake in the middle of a table welcomes the new family. A love gift is sometimes given to help with the costs of settling into a new home.

May God reward your hard efforts with a beautiful on-going relationship with your new shepherd. And may you marvel at the blessing of God upon your church! Thanks for the privilege of helping and be sure to let Venture Northeast know how it can serve you further.

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Supplement 1

Completing the *Church Information Form*

Step One: Download the Church Information Form from our Website

The *Church Information Form* is available for download under the “Resources” menu on our website at www.MissionNortheast.org.

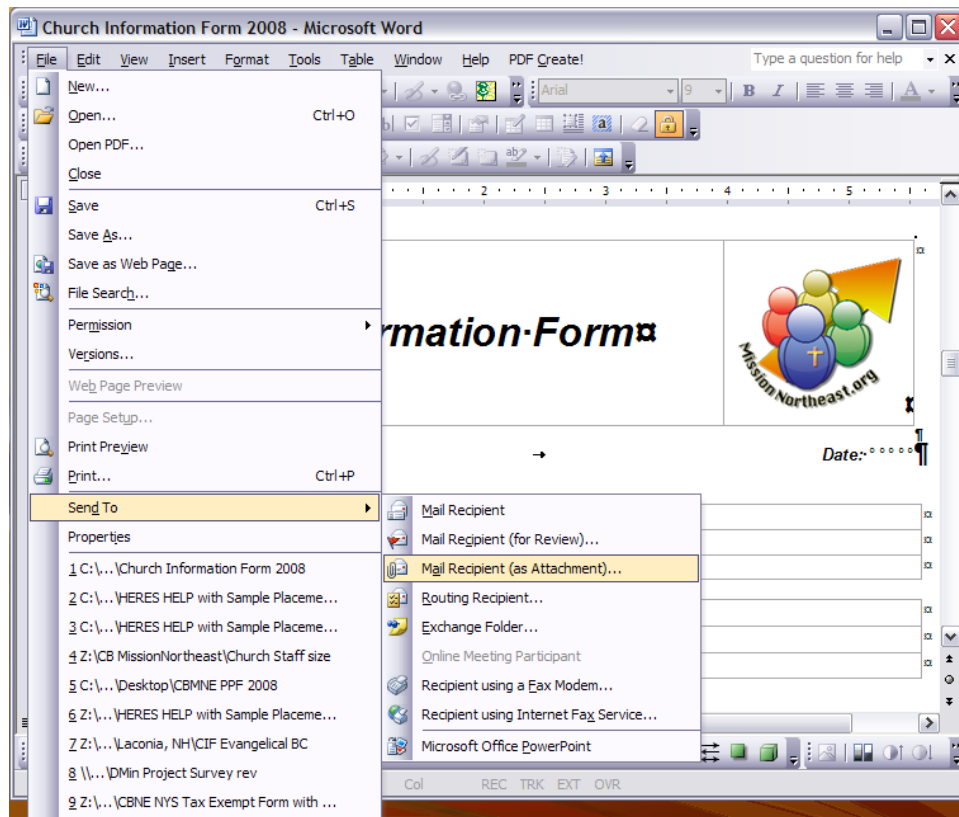
Instructions for completing the form and a schedule of fees are included. This form is best completed using one of the later versions of Microsoft Word (Venture Northeast has obtained special pricing for licensing of Microsoft products that we can provide for those involved in the ministry of our churches at a substantial savings. See our website for details). If you do not have a computer we encourage you to find someone on your committee or in your church to assist you in completing this form electronically. The local library is another option to consider. Please note: unfortunately because this is a fill-in form, the spell checker does not function. Check your work carefully. We hope Microsoft fixes this some day.

Step Two: Save your *Church Information Form*

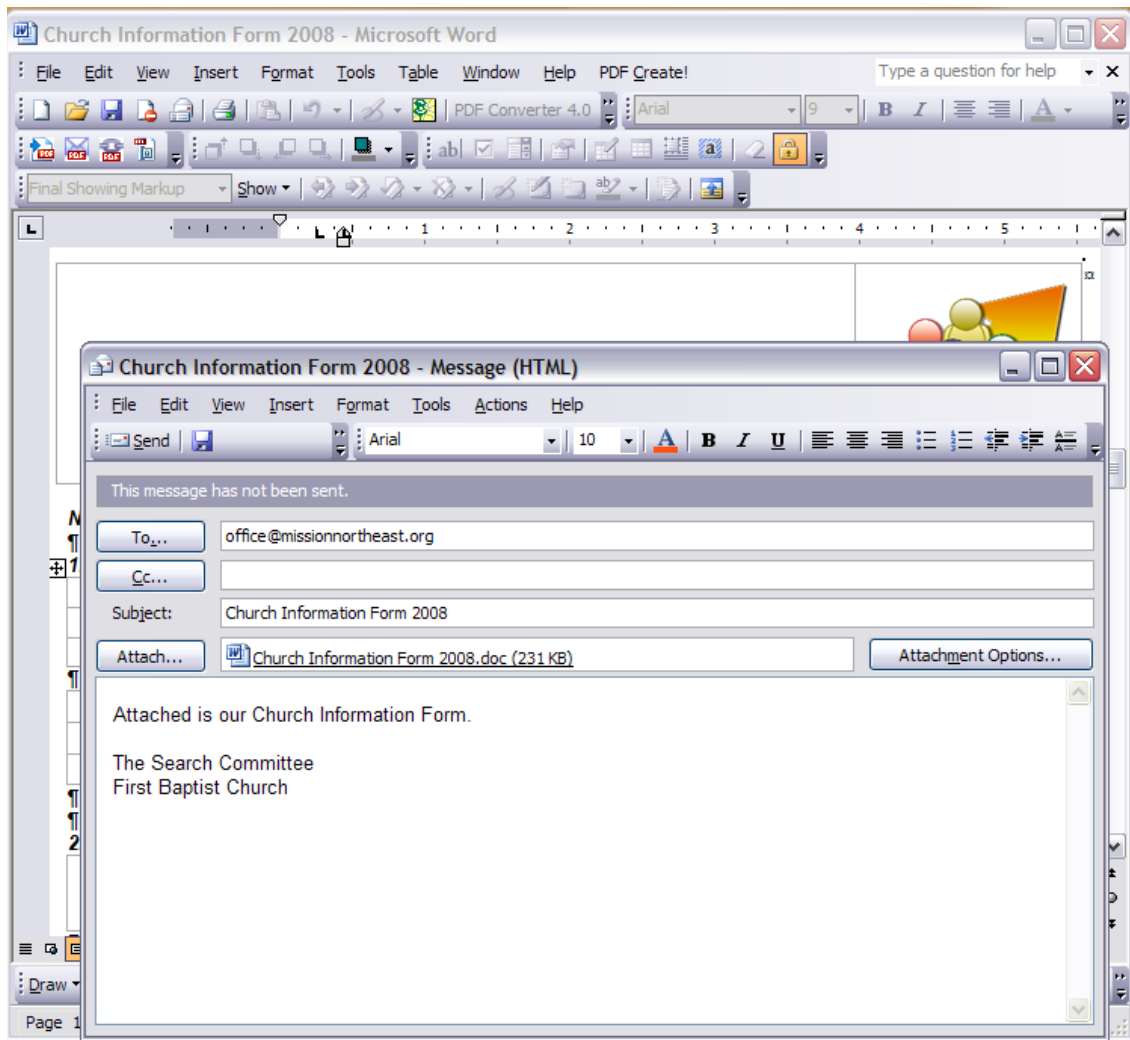
Remember to save your work often. When you save your work the *first* time, choose “Save As” from the “File” menu so you can name the document with the name of your church. Remember to note the folder you are saving it in. Usually it is saved in your “My Documents” folder.

Step Three: Send the form to us as an email attachment

After you have completed the form and saved your work you are ready to send it to us as an email attachment. Although there are several ways to send attachments, here is one of the easiest ways. Go to the “File” menu, Choose “Send To” “Mail Recipient (for Review)” as in the illustration below. Be sure to choose “Mail Recipient (for Review)” and *not* “Mail Recipient” or “Mail Recipient (as Text)”:



3. On the next screen enter the email address **Placement@MissionNortheast.org** in the “To:” section and then click the send button.



4. Open the mail program you use to check your mail (Microsoft Outlook or Outlook Express). Look in your “Outbox” and/or your “Sent Items” to see if an email was just sent to **Placement@MissionNortheast.org**. If it is in your Sent Items, you’re finished. If it is in your Outbox, Click the Send and Receive Button to send the email.

Sending these forms via email has expedited the exchange of information between the church, Venture Northeast, potential candidates and the members of the Pastoral Search Committee.

Please contact us if you have any questions or difficulties.

Supplement 2

SEARCH COMMITTEE PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

ORGANIZING

- Committee tasks determined
- Meeting times established
- Committee costs arranged
- Interim pulpit arrangements made

DATA-GATHERING

- Complete Church Health Assessment
- Church Mission Clarified
- Church Information Form* returned to Venture Church Network Ministry Center
- Screening guidelines adopted
- Financial package projected
- Vacation to be offered

SECURING NAMES

- Schools contacted
- Decide content of Letter in Inquiry
- Provide safe filing and handling systems

SELECTING CANDIDATE

- List phone questions for prospects
- Prepare personal interview items
- Compile information packet
- Arrange for playing cassettes
- Duplicate reference form
- Plan travel and visit procedures
- Choose candidate

PRESENTING CANDIDATE

- Schedule date and details
- Reserve accommodations
- Publicize schedule
- Arrange reimbursement
- Review weekend

EXTENDING THE CALL

- Plan Membership Meeting
- Consult constitution for details
- Prepare motion and ballots
- Notify candidate of vote
- Mail terms of call
- Announce his decision

WELCOMING THE CANDIDATE

- Make moving arrangements
- Prepare parsonage
- Hold food shower
- Arrange arrival help
- Plan installation

Supplement 3

CLARIFY MISSION AND MINISTRY: Assessing Our Situation

Venture Northeast makes available a variety of tools to help a church understand their current needs and direction. This is an essential step in knowing the type of leader you should be looking for in your next pastor.

These tools range in cost, in ease of use, and in the length of time required to complete. However an investment here is critical to helping a church find a pastor that shares the same values, mission, vision, and philosophy of ministry as the church. Failure to complete this step usually leads to frustration, ineffectiveness, and a short pastoral tenure down the road.

The following pages highlight some of the tools to help in assessing a church's situation. Contact Mission Northeast for help in determining which tool is the best one for your church. We can also provide you with contact information for those who have used these tools in the past.

MINISTRY MAPPING

Moving your church forward by...

- Exploring your uniqueness,
- Examining biblical principles,
- Envisioning your next steps, and
- Engaging in Christ's mission.

A map is a great tool. It can help us understand where we are and help us discover how to get to where we want to go whether across the mall, across town, or across the country. Like any journey, ministry is most fruitful when we have a clear destination in mind and understand the resources we have and the steps needed to get there. Ministry Mapping is a process to help a church discover where they are and where Christ is leading them.

Ministry Mapping brings *clarity of direction, courage to move forward, and hope in Christ who builds His church.*

Speaking to His disciples on the necessity of counting the costs in following Him, Jesus appeals to the common wisdom of a builder carefully estimating the cost of a project or a king evaluating his military strength before going to war (Luke 14:25-33). In the same way a church needs to periodically take stock of where they are, where they are heading, and the costs in following Christ in His mission.

Ministry Mapping brings alongside the church a trained team to assist in navigating the entire process and to provide perspective, insight, and guidance to strengthen the church for the journey.

Ministry Mapping will help move your church forward by: exploring your uniqueness, examining biblical principles, envisioning your next steps, & engaging in Christ's mission.

- **Exploring Your Uniqueness:** When standing at the map in the mall it is equally important to know not only the location of the store where you want to shop, but it is also important to find the big red "You Are Here" arrow. Ministry Mapping identifies your current location through the review of vital stats, documents, surveys, and focus groups all in an effort to understand how God has uniquely equipped the church to join Him in His mission.
- **Examining Biblical Principles:** Although the Scriptures do not provide a roadmap for the church, they do provide principles for ministry that are vital for the health and fruitfulness of a church in any cultural setting. Healthy churches intentionally apply these principles to their own unique setting in order to faithfully carry out the mission God has given to them. Ministry Mapping provides mile markers of progress in living out these principles as the church takes steps toward their vision.
- **Envisioning Your Next Steps:** Healthy churches are united by a singleness of mission and a unified vision of how the Lord wants to accomplish His work through them. "Going off in many different directions" characterizes the various ministries in unhealthy churches. Ministry Mapping assists a church to align their ministries to their values, mission, and vision resulting in clarity of focus, unity, and synergy in accomplishing Christ's mission. Ministry Mapping highlights major roadblocks that must be addressed so the church can accomplish their mission. It will also guide the church in formulating the practical steps to move forward to engage Christ's mission.
- **Engaging Christ's Mission:** At the heart of Ministry Mapping is the conviction that Christ is still on a mission in this world to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). The church joins Christ in this mission as outlined in the Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18-20). This is the mission that Christ has for every church. The faithful church will seek to understand how Christ has equipped them to join Him in this journey. That is what Ministry Mapping is all about.

Yes, the church does have a mission. But it is better to say that God's mission has a church.

— Dr. Ed Stetzer

Every journey begins by taking the first step. Contact CB Mission Northeast to learn more about Ministry Mapping and how we can join you on your journey in following Christ and His mandate to make disciples of all nations. It's a journey worth taking!

CB Mission Northeast • Dr. Randy M. Keeley, Executive Director
Connecting churches together to multiply disciples, leaders, and congregations.
PO Box 441, Nassau, NY 12123 • Phone: 518.935.4619
Connect@MissionNortheast.org





Transformational Church

Creating a new scorecard for congregations

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The church, that is. And how are we doing it? Congregations have long measured success by “bodies, budget, and buildings”—a certain record of attendance, the offering plate, and square footage. But the scorecard can’t stop there. When it does, the deeper emphasis on accountability, discipleship, and spiritual maturity is lost. Ignoring these details, we see fewer lives transformed, Christian influence wane, and churches thin out—a situation that is all too familiar across North America today.

It is time to take heart and rework the scorecard.

According to Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, the authors of *Transformational Church*, “Too often we’ve highlighted the negative realities of the declining American church but missed the opportunity to magnify the God of hope and transformation.”

Based on the most comprehensive study of its kind, including a survey of over 7,000 churches and hundreds of on-site interviews with pastors, *Transformational Church* takes us to the thriving congregations where truly changing lives is the norm.

Stetzer and Rainer clearly confirm the importance of disciple-making through active biblical engagement and prayerful dependence on God alongside of ever-increasing, intentional participation in mission and ministry activities. As the church engages these issues, the world will see the change:

- More people following Christ
- More believers growing in their faith
- More churches making an impact on their communities.

THE TRANSFORMATION STARTS NOW.

Randy Keeley, Director of Mission Northeast, is a trained consultant to guide a church through the Transformational Church process including the Transformation Church Assessment Tool.

the Natural Church Development **Process**



How healthy is your church?

- ♥ Is the ministry of the leaders focusing on equipping other Christians to serve?
- ♥ Are the tasks in the church distributed according to the spiritual gifts of the individual?
- ♥ Is the spiritual life of the members characterized by prayer, enthusiasm and boldness?
- ♥ Are the forms, and methods of the church designed according to the criterion of what is demonstrably the most useful for the development of the church here and now?
- ♥ Is attending the worship service an inspiring experience for church members?
- ♥ Are the small groups dedicated to answering the true questions and meeting the real needs of its members in a holistic way?
- ♥ Are the forms of the evangelistic activities related to the needs of those you are trying to win?
- ♥ Are the relationships of the members of this church characterized by a high degree of love and affection?

A person could hazard a guess to each of these questions in determining the health of the church. But is that the type of analysis you'd want from your physician — a gut-level guess? Most of us prefer our doctor to use a variety of instruments that have been proven to accurately diagnose our health.

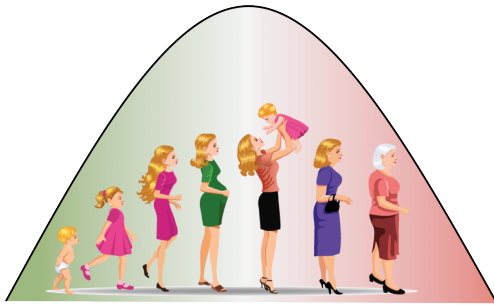
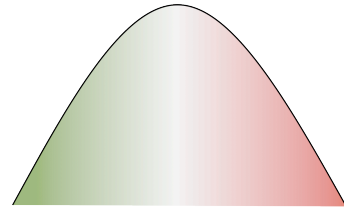
Such an instrument exists for diagnosing church health. Through careful research, Christian Schwarz developed a ninety-one question survey that accurately measures the health of a church. The research results confirm what many leaders have known intuitively — healthy churches are growing churches, making more and better disciples in loving obedience to Christ.

The *Natural Church Development Survey* is an effective tool you can use with the leaders in your congregation. It will help you examine the eight essential quality characteristics of a healthy church. By determining the minimum factor (weakest characteristic), you and your leaders will discover the greatest obstacles to growth and health in your church body. Improving the quality in this minimum factor often results in quantitative church growth.

NCD is not a model to copy but solid biblical principles you can implement in your own unique setting. It is a process to help you improve your church health. It is not a new program to copy, a quick fix for all ills, the latest fad, or a checklist to follow mechanically. It is designed to release the potential God has already put in place to accomplish the work He intends for your church to do to be healthy, to grow, and to multiply disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus said: **"...I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prove stronger than it"** Matthew 16:18 (NIV translation notes).

- Empowering leadership
- Gift-oriented ministry
- Passionate spirituality
- Functional structures
- Inspiring worship
- Holistic small groups
- Need-oriented evangelism
- Loving relationships

Creating a NEW LIFE CYCLE FOR YOUR CHURCH



All living things have a life cycle. Some creatures like the fruit fly have a relatively short life cycle of about two weeks, while other creatures like some turtles can live two hundred years.

We are all familiar with the life cycle of human beings. Although we try our best to slow the aging process, there is still a predictable pattern all people follow in life.

The same is true for churches that are by nature living organisms. The apostle Paul uses the human body as an illustration of how the church, the body of Christ, lives and accomplishes God's mission and ministry. As churches pass through the different stages of their life cycle, they exhibit common characteristics.

Creating a New Life Cycle for your church examines these characteristics. A questionnaire will also help a church discover where it is on its life cycle. The workshop will present the principles that enable a church to create a new life cycle.

Each year 3,500 to 4,000 churches across America come to the end of their life cycle and close their doors. In addition, 80 to 85% of churches in America are plateaued or in decline. This means they are on the downside of their life cycle. It is important to understand the principles of creating a new life cycle and to begin to implement them as early in the process as possible. The further down the life cycle the more difficult it becomes.

The seminar includes a discussion guide to assist leaders in applying the principles presented to their unique context and develops action steps for implementation.

Presenter: Randy M. Keeley, D.Min. was the pastor of churches in the Northeast and the Northwest for over twenty years. He has also been a church consultant for the past fourteen years. He completed his Doctor of Ministry degree at Talbot School of Theology in "Growing and Multiplying Churches in North America."

For more information contact:

CB Mission Northeast
Dr. Randy M. Keeley, Executive Director
PO Box 441, Nassau, NY 12123 • Ph: 518.935.4619
Email: Connect@MissionNortheast.org



Why Choose MissionInsite?

“I have found the versatility and usefulness of MissionInsite to be very helpful in our ministry of starting new churches. As our local churches use it, they are amazed at the information which is available and the helpful way in which it is presented.”

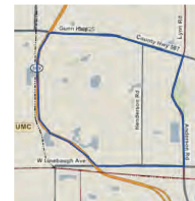
Dr. Mont Duncan
Executive Director, New Church Development, The Florida
Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church



Introducing MissionInsite:

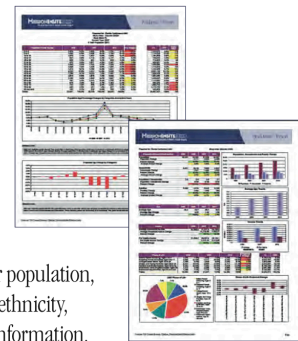
Discovering your church's ministry opportunities has never been easier. MissionInsite provides instant access to community information for your church via The MI System. You'll get desktop, web-based access to demographic data for a variety of geographic levels. When you log-in to The MI System at www.missioninsite.com, a number of resources will be available, including:

Dynamic Area Analysis Tools. Choose from preset geographies such as zip codes, census tracts, cities or counties or from your own custom geographies to create “real time” demographic reports.



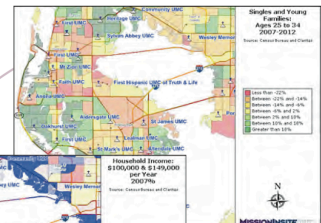
QuickInsite, FullInsite and ExecutiveInsite Reports.

One mouse click will produce user friendly reports. A four page QuickInsite Report provides just enough information for a first look at your area. A FullInsite report provides 18 pages of community demographic information integrating data, graphs and text analysis. The ExecutiveInsite Report provides a strategic analysis of your area around 12 “insites” that are essential for ministry planning.

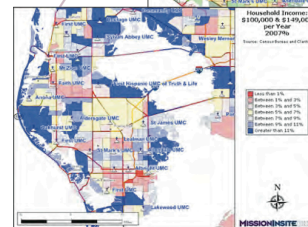


All data provided by MissionInsite contains current year updates for population, households and families in the study area, as well as age, income, ethnicity, phase of life (generational) and MOSAIC segmentation (lifestyle) information. Many variables integrating five year projections.

ViewPoint. New “Insite” into the Beliefs, Values and Lifestyle Preferences of the Communities Churches Serve. ViewPoint provides 120 current variables for Religious Practices, Lifestyle Preferences, Personal Preferences, Life Concerns and Well Being, Social Values and Charitable Contributions.



Optional Resources: Congregant Plotting. Plot your current church members/visitors on a custom map you create.



Names and addresses of recent new movers in your ministry area.

Get current names and addresses (Less than 30 days old) of potential visitors to your church.



For more information, contact
CB Mission Northeast
connect@MissionNortheast.org
www.MissionNortheast.org

Enjoy exploring your ministry
area and discovering new
mission opportunities!

Supplement 4

THE “TEAM” INTERVIEW

The spiritual qualifications of a pastor, listed in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 must guide you in evaluating a man’s fitness to be your candidate. Likewise, Ephesians 4; I Timothy 4; II Timothy 4; Hebrews 13 and I Peter 5 set forth some of the functions of a pastor. Study these Scriptures, then interview a prospective pastor regarding some specific matters. The “TEAM” concept gives you an outline of four areas of inquiry . . .

T – TESTIMONY

- When and how did you come to faith in Christ?
- When and how did you sense a desire to become a pastor?
- Is there anything in our doctrinal statement that you question?
- What do you believe are the marks of a Bible-believing church with baptistic convictions?

E – EXPERIENCE

- What ministries have you had and with what results?
- What education or special seminars have you had and how has this training strengthened your ministry?
- What are some special lessons God has taught you that would be helpful for our church?

A – AIMS

- What is your vision for local church ministry?
- What is your view of small group ministry?
- What is your view of seeker-sensitive services?
- How do you plan to develop leaders in the church?
- What personal goals do you have for your life?
- How would you seek to relate to the boards in our church?
- What method of preaching would you use?
- How would you aim to implement organizational changes?
- What is your burden for ministry to youth and senior saints?
- What would be your emphasis on evangelism, missions and stewardship?
- What is your plan for visitation?

M – MATE (Directed to the wife)

- When and how did you come to know Christ?
- How do you maintain the priority of the family?
- How do you view your husband’s ministry?

Supplement 5

LETTER OF INQUIRY

(Note: Be sure to adapt for your use and type personally. Do not use a form letter with blanks filled in.)

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Pleasant Town, USA**

Date

Dear Pastor Nicename:

Your resume has been referred to us by our regional VENTURE NETWORK ministry center as one who might be available for a new challenge.

Our church is located in a community of great opportunity in the western part of our state. Average Sunday morning attendance is 105, and our fine facilities have space for anticipated growth.

Are you interested at this time in exploring with us the possibility of pastoring our church? We realize that much prayer and much exchange of information are necessary in the process of determining God's will. We simply want to know if we may pursue the matter further with you.

Kindly let us know within two weeks of receipt of this letter if you are open to consider the possibility of becoming our pastor. We will then forward a packet of information and seek to become better acquainted.

Sincerely in Christ,

Mrs. Ima Asking
Secretary, Search Committee

Supplement 6

REFERENCE FORM

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Pleasant Town, USA**

Date _____

YOUR NAME . . . _____

has been given as one who knows Rev. John Nicename.

He is under consideration as a possible candidate for the pastorate of our church. Credibility for God's service is a serious matter. Would you, therefore, comment briefly on as many of the following areas as possible.

Your response will be accorded the highest confidentiality. Thank you for your help and promptness. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Ima Asking
Secretary, Search Committee

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. His reputation . . . | 6. Any cautions . . . |
| 2. His personality . . . | 7. Leadership style . . . |
| 3. His preaching . . . | 8. His wife's helpfulness . . . |
| 4. His past ministry . . . | 9. His children . . . |
| 5. His strengths . . . | 10. His activity with Conservative Baptists . . . |

Relationship to the above man:

Additional comments:

Other names to contact if they will not to jeopardize the pastor's present ministry:

Signed: _____

TERMS OF CALL

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Pleasant Town, USA

Date:

TERMS OF CALL

VOTE TO CALL: *Rev. John Nicename*

Yes votes: _____; No Votes: _____; Abstentions _____

TENURE:

The term of service is to continue indefinitely. Notification of termination is to be by thirty day notice and mutual agreement (be sure it matches what is in your church bylaws or constitution).

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS:

Personal Compensation and Benefits

Annual cash salary	\$
Housing allowance	\$
(parsonage or private home)	
Social Security allowance	\$
Health insurance	\$
Disability insurance	\$
Retirement plan	\$
Other:	\$

Professional Costs and Reimbursements

Automobile expenses	\$
Books and journals	\$
Office Expenses	\$
Continuing Education	\$
Conference Fees	\$
Professional Hospitality/Entertainment	\$
Business Phone	\$
Other	\$

HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS:

Many churches are encouraging their pastors to purchase their own home. Sometimes churches assist with the down payment. A housing allowance is provided for the expenses of the home.

Continued on next page

Other churches provide a parsonage with utilities and phone included. Repairs on parsonage should be cared for by the Board of Deacons/Trustees. The church should specify the responsibilities of the pastor for the lawn care and snow removal.

CHURCH CONFERENCES:

It is expected that the pastor attend the annual conference of the regional VENTURE NETWORK fellowship. Actual expenses of registration, travel, food and lodging to be paid by the church. If the pastor's wife is able to accompany him, her lodging and meals will be paid by the church. Time spent at VENTURE NETWORK conferences or church camping functions will not be deducted from vacation allowance.

TIME-OFF CONSIDERATIONS:

- Four weeks vacation with full salary will be granted within each twelve months. This time may be taken in two or more segments, if desired. Arrangements of time away and a schedule of suitable speakers are to be worked out with the leadership team.
- At least one day off each week is encouraged, and sufficient other time to give quality attention to the needs of the pastor's family.
- Two Sundays for ministry elsewhere will be permitted.
- Time off for medical needs will be granted up to thirty days within a calendar year. More time needed than that will be reviewed by the church leadership.

MOVING ARRANGEMENTS:

Trucking costs and family travel expenses (including lodging and meals) will be prepaid or reimbursed by the church in accordance with arrangements made with the Search Committee.

The above terms have been authorized by the congregation along with the invitation for you to become pastor. Please sign and return one copy of these arrangements, indicating your agreement. Please indicate, too, the date of your arrival in the parsonage and the first Sunday you expect to be in the pulpit.

Sincerely in Christ,
Mrs. Ima Asking
Secretary, Search Committee

I understand the above terms and agree to them,

(Signed)_____

(Date)_____

Supplement 8

INSTALLATION SERVICE

Plan this in consultation with your new pastor to be held as soon after his arrival as convenient. Someone other than the pastor should emcee it – perhaps the Search Committee chairperson.

Prelude

Song of Worship

Invocation (Guest pastor)

Scripture reading (Guest pastor)

Welcome to Pastor and Family (Chairman, Board of Elders/Deacons)

Presentations (Flowers may be presented to the pastor's wife. If a love gift has been collected, it can be presented here.)

Special Music

Welcome to Venture Northeast (Representative of the regional or local association.)

Charge to the church (Guest speaker)

Charge to the pastor (Guest speaker)

Response by the Pastor (A few words of appreciation and challenge.)

Closing song

Benediction (Guest pastor or new pastor)

Postlude

Guests are invited to a reception in the fellowship hall after the service.

(Information about the new pastor may be included on the facing page of the special bulletin for this occasion. Also, a "thank you" for the work of the Search committee is in order.)

Supplement 9

RECOMMENDED SCHOOLS FOR PASTORAL RESOURCES

When contacting a school, they will typically be interested in the title of the position you are seeking to fill along with a brief ministry description and the qualifications for that ministry. You will need to provide your address, a contact number and an e-mail for potential candidates. Schools will not only provide contacts with recent graduates seeking their first ministry but also with alumni who are seeking a change of ministry.

Bethel Seminary of the East

1605 North Limekiln Pike, Dresher, PA 19025
888.THE EAST
www.bethel.edu

Biblical Theological Seminary

200 North Main Street, Hatfield, PA 19440
800.235.4021
admissions@biblical.edu
www.biblical.edu

Columbia Biblical Seminary

P.O. Box 3122, Columbia, SC 29230
800.777.2227
sdeller@ciu.edu
www.ciu.edu

Dallas Theological Seminary

3909 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, TX 75204
800.992.0998 Ext. 3606
placement@dts.edu

Denver Seminary

PO Box 10,000, Denver, CO 80250
800.922.3040
info@densem.edu

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

130 Essex Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982
978.468.7111 Ext. 4013
placement@gcts.edu

Grace Theological Seminary

200 Seminary Drive, Winona Lake, IN 46590
800.54-GRACE
carlsost@grace.edu
www.grace.edu

Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary

1001 East Beltline NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505
616.222.1433
FAX 616.222.1529 Posting of Position
career@cornerstone.edu

Lancaster Bible College – Graduate School

901 Eden Road, Lancaster, PA 17601
717.560.8297
gradschool@lbc.edu
www.lbc.edu

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary

2810 Curry Road, Schenectady, NY 12303
518.355.4000
Email: info@mabts.edu
www.mabts.edu

New England Bible College

PO Box 2886, South Portland, ME 04116
800.286.1859

New York Evangelical Seminary

236 West 92nd Street, New York, NY 10023
212.595.8680
FAX 212.595.6642
Email: NYESfund@aol.com

Northeastern Seminary

2301 Westside Drive, Rochester, NY 14624-1997
716.594.6800
seminary@roberts.edu
www.nes.edu

Philadelphia Biblical University

200 Manor Avenue, Langhorne, PA 19047-2990
800.572.2472
www.pbu.edu

Davis College (Formerly Practical Bible College)

400 Riverside Drive, Johnson City, NY 13790
607.729.1581
admissions@davisny.edu
www.davisny.edu

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Career Placement
2065 Half Day Road, Deerfield, IL 60015
800.445.TEDS

Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

5511 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, OR 97215
800.547.4546
FAX 503.239.4216

Wheaton College Graduate School

501 College Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187
800.888.0141

SAMPLE PLACEMENT FORMS

- **Church Information Form**

- **Pastoral Placement Form**

These forms are available on our website: www.MissionNortheast.org

Please note:

These forms are included for your information. Please complete these forms using a computer and submit them to the Venture Northeast office via email or on a disk. Because they are fill-in forms, it is best to complete them with Microsoft Word. Thank you.

Church Information Form Processing Information

Thank you for your interest in the pastoral search process with Venture Northeast. We are here to serve you! May the Lord guide you as you seek His will!

We are committed to helping you discover how the Lord is working in your church and who He has to serve with you as your next pastor. The following outlines some of the ways we can help:

- We provide guidelines and practical steps for the pastoral search committee in our publication ***Here's Help, Guidelines for Seeking a Pastor***. You will want to provide a copy of it for each member of your search team. It is available for download from our website. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to open it. If you don't already have it you can download Adobe Acrobat Reader for free at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. Adobe Acrobat Reader is also needed for reviewing the profiles of the pastors we will send to you via email.
- We provide a detailed ***Pastoral Placement Form*** about each of the potential pastors. This form provides a consistent look for each resume and the gathering of the same information for each person. You may use this form for individuals who do not come through our referral process. The *Pastoral Placement Form* is available on our website: <http://tiny.cc/pastoralplacement>.
- We have a network of resources to assist you in the time of transition: area pastors, pulpit supply, interim pastors, and ministry specialists.
- We provide counsel for the committee in interacting with potential candidates. We are often a reference for the church when a pastor wants to know more about the church.
- We provide help with interviews, compensation issues, etc.
- We communicate regularly with search committees and pastors regarding the search process through phone calls and email.
- We provide a *Church Health Assessment* and *Ministry Mapping* tools to help you understand your church better as well as communicate your ministry focus and vision with the new pastor.

Let me know if I can be of service to you.

*In Christ's Service,
Venture Northeast*

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete all three steps:

- 1. Complete the entire form.** Please call 518-935-4619 if you need assistance. This fill-in form is for use with Microsoft Word. Fill out the entire form as answer all questions the best that you can. The gray form fields will expand as you type. You can tab between fields. Remember to save the form.

If you feel you need to give a more complete explanation for any question, please use the "Additional Comments" section on the last page noting the section and number of the question. You may submit other documents or photos you think will be helpful to a prospective candidate to us via email attachment. We will combine them with this document for you whenever possible.

*Please note: unfortunately because this is a fill-in form, the **spell checker does not function**. Check your work carefully. We hope Microsoft fixes this some day.*

This form is best completed using one of the later versions of Microsoft Word (Venture Northeast has obtained special pricing for licensing of Microsoft products that we can provide for those involved in the ministry of our churches at a substantial savings. See our website for details). If you do not have a computer we encourage you to find someone on your committee or in your church to assist you in completing this form electronically. The local library is another option to consider.

- 2. E-mail the completed form** as an attachment to Placement@MissionNortheast.org. If you are not sure how to do this, detailed instructions are available in Supplement 1 in the **Here's Help** book. If you are unable to send this file via email, save it to a disk and mail it with the administrative fee. Send electronic copy on disk only if you are unable to email the completed form.

To expedite the process we conduct as much of the referral process via email as possible. This recently resulted in a fifty percent reduction in the administrative fee. Please keep us up to date with a current email address where we can send you information on pastors receiving your Church Information Form. Please use an email address where the confidential work of the pastoral search process is not compromised. Be sure that the email address is also able to receive attachments. You may want to sign up for one of the many free email accounts available on the web. The files we send to you will be in an adobe acrobat format, so download the free adobe acrobat reader (hold down the control key & click the following link <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>). Sharing these files via email will help you distribute them to your pastoral search committee more easily too.

- 3. E-mail any other documents** as attachments to Placement@MissionNortheast.org that you want us to add to this form. This might include a job description, pictures, etc.

- 4. Mail appropriate Administrative Fee made payable to Venture Northeast:**

**Venture Northeast
PO Box 162
Auburn, MA 01501**

Administrative Fee:

Supporting Member Churches of Venture Northeast	\$50
Non-supporting Member Churches of Venture Northeast	\$175
Non-Member Churches	\$175

PLEASE NOTE!!! The easiest way to move from one question to the next is to use the **TAB KEY!!!**

Remember to save your work often!

After we receive this form and any other documents from you, we will revise the formatting (remove these intro pages and any extra blanks on the form) and convert it to an Adobe PDF. We will send you a copy of your profile that you can share with applicants you get from other sources. Applicants you receive from VENTURE NETWORK Northeast will receive the form directly from us.

Rev 9-2013

Church Information Form



Name of Church:

Date:

**Title of Ministry
Position:**

Full Time Bi-Vocational Part Time Other:

1. CONTACT INFO

CHURCH MAILING ADDRESS:

CHURCH LOCATION IF DIFFERENT FROM MAILING ADDRESS:

CHURCH PHONE: - - CHURCH EMAIL:

CHURCH FAX: - - CHURCH WEB PAGE:

CONTACT PERSON:

ADDRESS:

PHONE: - - EMAIL:

2. Brief paragraph describing our church:

3. OUR CHURCH'S MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES, AND MINISTRY STRATEGY

A. WHAT IS OUR CHURCH'S MISSION?

B. WHAT IS OUR CHURCH'S VISION?

C. WHAT ARE OUR CHURCH'S CORE VALUES?

D. WHAT IS OUR CHURCH'S STRATEGY TO ACCOMPLISH OUR CHURCH'S MISSION AND VISION?

E. IN WHAT WAYS ARE WE SEEING OUR CHURCH'S MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES BEING LIVED OUT CURRENTLY IN OUR CHURCH?

F. WHAT ROLE WILL THE PERSON IN THIS POSITION PLAY IN ACCOMPLISHING OUR CHURCH'S MISSION, VISION, AND MINISTRY STRATEGY?

G. TO REACH OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE GOSPEL OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS WE HAVE... (CHECK ANY THAT APPLY)

PLANTED CHURCHES, HOW MANY?

DESCRIBE:

STARTED NEW CONGREGATIONS WITHIN OUR OWN CHURCH, HOW MANY?

DESCRIBE:

ALLOWED OTHER CHURCHES TO USE OUR FACILITIES AS THEIR MAIN CAMPUS.

DESCRIBE:

OTHER OUTREACH STRATEGIES.

DESCRIBE:

4. Brief paragraph describing the Ministry Position:

Check here if a Job Description is attached

5. LEADERSHIP QUALITIES FOR THIS POSITION

A. WHAT QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIAL ABILITIES, OR EMPHASES ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN THE PERSON FILLING THIS POSITION?

B. WHAT EXPERIENCE LEVEL ARE WE CONSIDERING FOR THIS POSITION?

C. WHAT STYLE OF LEADERSHIP DO WE PREFER?

D. IF PREACHING IS PART OF THIS POSITION'S RESPONSIBILITY, WHAT TYPE OF PREACHING WILL BE MOST EFFECTIVE AND NEEDED?

E. ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL PROBLEMS OR ISSUES THIS PERSON WILL HAVE TO ADDRESS IN THIS MINISTRY OR CHURCH?

6. HISTORY OF THIS MINISTRY POSITION

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING WITH REGARD TO THE LAST FIVE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THIS POSITION?

NAME	DATES OF SERVICE	REASON FOR LEAVING

7. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS FOR THIS POSTION

A. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

ANNUAL CASH SALARY: (BASE RANGE BEING CONSIDERED EXCLUDING ITEMS BELOW: HOUSING, BENEFITS, ETC.)	
PREFERRED HOUSING PROVISION: <input type="checkbox"/> PARSONAGE <input type="checkbox"/> HOUSING ALLOWANCE	
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL COMPENSATION:	
HOUSING ALLOWANCE:	HEALTH INSURANCE:
PARSONAGE FAIR RENTAL VALUE:	RETIREMENT
UTILITIES:	GROUP TERM LIFE INSURANCE:
SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSET:	DISABILITY INSURANCE:
WEEKS OF VACATION:	OTHER:

B. PROFESSIONAL COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS (ANNUAL BUDGET LIMITS FOR THIS POSITION)

AUTOMOBILE:	PHONE:
BOOKS AND JOURNALS:	CONFERENCE/CONTINUING EDUCATION:
PROFESSIONAL HOSPITALITY:	OTHER:

8. OUR CHURCH STAFF AND MINISTRIES

A. CHURCH STAFF - OTHER PAID STAFF MEMBERS:

NAME	POSITION	LENGTH OF SERVICE

B. CHURCH MINISTRIES

LIST MINISTRIES WITHIN OUR CHURCH (E.G. MEN'S MINISTRIES, WOMEN'S MINISTRIES, YOUTH GROUPS, OUTREACH EFFORTS, WORSHIP TEAMS, SUPPORT GROUPS, BIBLE STUDIES, SMALL GROUPS, ETC.)		

C. MISSIONARIES & ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF OUR CHURCH:

D. ANNUAL BUDGET FOR:

GENERAL EXPENSES:	MISSIONS:	BUILDING:
-------------------	-----------	-----------

E. DENOMINATION AND ASSOCIATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

MEMBER OF VENTURE NORTHEAST: Yes No

PLEASE LIST ANY OTHER AFFILIATIONS:

F. MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP:	CURRENT NUMBER OF ACTIVE FAMILIES:
CURRENT AVG. SS ATTENDANCE:	CURRENT AVG. WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:
CURRENT AVG. PM SERVICE:	CURRENT AVG. MID-WEEK SERVICE:

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
NUMBER OF BAPTISMS											
AVG. WORSHIP ATTENDANCE											

Brief comments on known causes of major gains or losses above, please note date (for example: "church split in 2010" or "major employer closed in 2011" or "added 2nd service in 2012", etc)

NUMBER OF ACTIVE CHILDREN OR YOUTH IN		
NURSERY:	PRESCHOOL:	ELEMENTARY:
MIDDLE SCHOOL:	HIGH SCHOOL:	COLLEGE:

APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF AGE GROUPS IN CHURCH			
	GEN Z (0 TO 9 YRS OLD)		MILLENIALS (10 TO 29)
	SURVIVORS (30 TO 50)		BOOMERS (51 TO 68)
	SILENTS (69 TO 86)		BUILDERS (87 & UP)

APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN CHURCH			
	ANGLO		AFRICAN-AMERICAN
	HISPANIC/LATINO		ASIAN
	NATIVE AMERICAN & OTHER		

9. MINISTRY CONTEXT

TYPE OF COMMUNITY: Choose One:

SETTING: Choose One:

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF YOUR MINISTRY AREA (RADIUS AROUND THE CHURCH WHERE CURRENT ATTENDEES LIVE)? _____ MILES.

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING:

YOUR COMMUNITY:

YOUR FACILITIES:

YOUR CONGREGATION:

YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

YOUR MINISTRY STYLE: PLEASE PLACE A MARK ALONG THE CONTINUUM THAT BEST SHOWS YOUR CHURCH'S POSITION OR PREFERENCE:

		1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	
CHURCH MUSIC:	<i>TRADITIONAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>CONTEMPORARY</i>
WORSHIP STYLE	<i>FORMAL</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>INFORMAL</i>
SERMON STYLE	<i>EXPOSITORY</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>TOPICAL</i>
SERMON SERIES:	<i>FREQUENT</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>INFREQUENT</i>
THEOLOGY:	<i>CALVANISTIC</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>ARMINIAN</i>

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE CHURCH'S POSITION ON:

TONGUES AND SIGN GIFTS: Ceased Open, but cautious Normative for the church today

Explain:

DIVORCE AND CHURCH LEADERSHIP: UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES COULD A DIVORCED PERSON HOLD A LEADERSHIP POSITION? Never All the time Special Circumstances

Explain:

ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:

A. CAN A WOMEN TEACH A MIXED CLASS OF ADULTS? Yes No

B. CAN A WOMEN LEAD WORSHIP IN A SERVICE? Yes No

C. WHAT OFFICE CAN A WOMAN HOLD?

Comments:

10. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Venture Northeast

PO Box 162, Auburn, MA 01501
Web: www.VentureNortheast.org
Email: Info@VentureNortheast.org

Phone: 518.836.8873



Pastoral Placement Form

This fill-in form is for use with Microsoft Word. Fill out the entire form and answer all questions. The gray form fields will expand as you type. You can tab from field to field. Remember to save the form. If you feel you need to give a more complete explanation for any question, please use the Additional Comments section (last page of this document) and note the section and number of the question. Email the completed form as an attachment to the email address above. Print out the four signature pages, sign and mail with the \$50 processing fee to the address above.

Date:

Candidate's Name:

Position Desired (in order desired):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Setting Desired: *(rank using a scale 1 to 3 – Most at home=1)*

- Rural Small town Medium city Large City Suburban Inner-city Ethnic
 Willing to consider a bi-vocational setting

Geographical area(s) desired: *(indicate preference by 1st, 2nd, 3rd choice)*

- Venture Church Network Northwest:** Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington
 Venture Church Network Northern California/Nevada: Northern California, Nevada (except Clark County)
 Venture Church Network Southern California: Guam, Hawaii, Southern California
 Rocky Mountain Venture Church Network: Colorado, Montana, Northern Utah, Wyoming
 Southwest Venture Church Network: Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada (Clark County), Southern Utah
 North Central Venture Church Network: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North & South Dakota, Ohio, Wisconsin
 Venture Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont
 Mid-Atlantic Venture Church Network: Delaware, D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West VA
 Southeast Venture Church Network: Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina

Personal and Family Information

1. **Name:**

Email:

Street Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Cell (optional):** **Fax:**

2. **Marital Status:** Choose One:

Wife's Name: Date of Marriage:

Have you or your wife ever been divorced? Yes No

If yes, please explain the circumstances:

3. **Names and ages of your children:**

4. **Current housing:** Own Rent Live in Church-supplied housing
 Other:

5. **Would you be willing to provide a credit report if requested?** Yes No

6. **Do you have any disabilities that would prevent you from performing any of the essential job functions without reasonable accommodation?** Yes No

If so, please explain:

7. **Are you and/or your spouse fluent in a language other than English?** Yes No

If so, which one(s)?

Education and Credentials

8. **Academic Training:** List all education and special training above high school beginning with the most recent.

Dates Attended (MM/YYYY)	School Name and Location	Degree Earned
From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	
From: / To: /	Name: City/ State:	
From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	
From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	
From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	

9. **Are you:** Ordained Licensed Neither

If so, Date: By what body?

10. **Are you seeking your first pastorate with no experience in an official capacity?** Yes No

Church Experience

11. Please list past and present ministries, beginning with the most recent:

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Church:	City/State:
Position:	Years: to
Type of Community: Choose One:	Setting: Choose One:
Morning Worship Attendance:	Number of full-time staff:
Denomination:	
Reason for leaving:	
Comments on the ministry:	

Non-Ministry Work Experience

12. Please list past (and present) employment beginning with the most recent:

Position	Dates (MM/YYYY)	Company Name and Location	Responsibilities
	From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	
	From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	
	From: / To: /	Name: City/State:	

13. How do your wife and family feel about the pastoral ministry?

14. In what ways have you seen God working in your life this past year?

15. Describe the growth of your church during your ministry.

16. What particular area of your ministry seems to be most effective in bringing about response and growth in your congregation?

17. What do you consider to be your strengths in your pastoral ministry?

18. What area of your pastoral ministry do you feel needs the most growth?
19. Define the role of a senior pastor as you interpret it to be.
20. List any material you have read on Conservative Baptists or their history.
21. Comment on your personal devotional life.
22. What is your current denominational affiliation?
23. If you desire a senior pastor, solo pastor, or church planter position, rank your *three* strongest areas (1=strongest):
- | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> Motivator | <input type="checkbox"/> Pulpit |
24. If you desire a staff pastor position, indicate your areas of interest. Rank your *three* strongest areas (1=strongest):
- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship | <input type="checkbox"/> Music-Performing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music-Directing | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Missions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Evangelism | | | |

Philosophy of Ministry

Briefly explain your scriptural understanding of the following:

1. **Your view of Scripture.**
2. **Your plan of evangelism.**
3. **Your view of church government (elders, line of authority, and congregational government).**
4. **Your plan for church growth (local church growth and church planting).**
5. **Your plan for developing leaders.**
6. **Your preference of worship style.**
7. **Your practice of church discipline.**
8. **Your plan of pastoral care and visitation.**
9. **Your plan for support to the:**
 - a. **Family:**
 - b. **Senior Adults:**
 - c. **Youth:**
 - d. **Children:**
10. **Your convictions regarding local church engagement with world missions.**
11. **Your convictions regarding local church engagement with the poor of the community.**
12. **Your convictions on tongues and sign gifts.**
 Ceased Open, but cautious Normative for the church today
Explain:
13. **Your convictions and pastoral practice relating to divorce and remarriage.**
 - a. **Under what circumstances could a divorced person hold a leadership position?**
 Never All the time Special circumstances
Please explain:
 - b. **Under what circumstances would you perform a marriage for divorced people?**
 Never All the time Special circumstances
Please explain:
14. **Your convictions on use of alcoholic beverages.**

15. Your convictions concerning eschatology.

Choose One:

Comments:

16. Your view of the role of women in the local church.

a. Can a woman teach a mixed class of adults? Yes No

b. Can a woman lead worship in a service? Yes No

c. What office can a woman hold?

Comments:

17. Your understanding of God's plan of salvation.

Explain:

a. Do you hold to: limited atonement unlimited atonement?

b. Your view on the security of the believer.

18. Your practice as it pertains to personal and family worship.

19. Please indicate the number on the continuum that best shows your position or preference.

		1	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	
Church Music:	<i>Traditional</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Contemporary</i>
Worship Style:	<i>Formal</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Informal</i>
Sermon Style:	<i>Expository</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Topical</i>
Sermon Series:	<i>Frequent</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Infrequent</i>
Theology:	<i>Calvinistic</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Arminian</i>

20. Your self-evaluation of your spiritual gifts (check no more than three).

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prophecy/Preaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Exhortation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Mercy | <input type="checkbox"/> Discernment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelist | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith |

Personal References

Please list references below including full addresses, phone numbers, and a brief description of the relationship. These references will be contacted. Do not list any references that you are related to by marriage or birth. There should be at least one woman within the list of references. They should include:

- No more than two pastors who know you and your work
- An active elder or deacon of the church where you have served
- Two additional lay persons in the church
- A business person who knows you well
- No more than one seminary professor

1. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

2. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

3. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

4. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

5. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

6. **Name:** **Relationship:**

Address:

City: **State:** **Zip:**

Home phone: **Email:**

Do you want the Search Committee to contact you before they call your references? If you indicate "No" your references would be contacted by the Search Committee. If you say "Yes" you will be called before they are contacted.

Yes No

Criminal and Civil Liability For Legal Purposes

The questions in this section are designed to help a pastoral search committee make an informed decision concerning your application for ministry. These questions assist a local church's leadership in the effort to be responsible for the care of their church family. It is regretful that we live in a time when it is essential to ask these kinds of questions. False or incomplete answers will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

1. **Have you ever been accused of, engaged in, or investigated for any sexual misconduct involving a minor or adult, including but not limited to child abuse, child molestation, indecent liberties with a child, incest, adultery, sexual harassment, rape, assault, battery, murder, kidnapping, child pornography, sodomy, or sexual contact with a counselee?**

Yes No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify when and where each accusation was made and how each accusation was resolved).

2. **Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or "no contest" to any criminal offense?**

Yes No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each conviction or plea of guilty, when and where each incident occurred, and the sentence received).

3. **Have you ever been found liable, or participated in an out-of-court settlement as a defendant, for any offense in a civil lawsuit?**

Yes No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each case, when and where each incident occurred, and the outcome).

4. **Has any employer with whom you have been employed at any time in the past ever been sued as a result of your conduct?**

Yes No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each case, when and where each incident occurred, and the outcome).

5. **Have you ever been subject to discipline by a religious body?**

Yes No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each case, when and where each incident occurred, the religious body involved and the outcome)

6. **I give permission to Venture Northeast or a church interested in calling me to a staff position to complete a background check including my police record.**

Yes No

I certify that all of the information and responses in this application, including the Criminal and Civil Liability form, are true and complete.

Signed _____ Date _____

VENTURE NORTHEAST STATEMENT OF FAITH

THE WORD OF GOD

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters to which they speak.

THE TRINITY

We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humanity, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son, and has precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only true God, but true human, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible return from heaven.

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, His personality, and His work in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost and empowering the believer for godly living and service.

HUMANITY

We believe God created humanity, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. We further believe all people are sinners by nature and choice and are therefore spiritually dead. We also believe that those who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

SALVATION

We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, and was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received through faith, apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. We further believe salvation results in righteous living, good works, and proper social concern.

THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. We believe that the true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies whose members have been immersed upon a credible confession of faith and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism, and for service. We believe the ordinances of the local church are believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. We also believe in the interdependence of local churches and the mutual submission of believers to each other in love.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

We believe that each local church is self governing in function, and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. We further believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life, and that each should be free to worship God according to the dictates of his or her conscience.

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that the supreme task of all believers is to glorify God in their lives; that their conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves the full stature of maturity in Christ.

LAST THINGS

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost, the eternal existence of both in either heaven or hell, in divine judgments, rewards, and punishments.

I have read, subscribe to, and endorse wholeheartedly, without any reservation, the Venture Northeast Statement of Faith.

Signed _____ Date _____

AFFILIATION WITH VENTURE NORTHEAST

Autonomous churches, without regard to other affiliations, may affiliate with Venture Northeast if they meet the following criteria.

Membership Requirements:

- The church shall have by vote declared their agreement with the convictions expressed in the Preamble and Declaration of Faith of Venture Church Network Northeast, and who agree to abide by our Bylaws.
- The doctrinal statement of the church shall be consistent, though not necessarily identical, with our doctrinal statement.
- The congregation shall have the final authority in legal and constitutional matters.
- The church shall practice believer's baptism by immersion as a requirement for membership.
- The church's practice is to call and ordain only biblically qualified men as elder/pastors.

Additional Expectations:

- Venture Northeast derives its support primarily from affiliated churches and individuals. Therefore, each church and each individual is expected to contribute regularly.
- Pastors and churches are expected to participate in their Area Fellowship. Area or Ethnic Fellowships have been established for the clustering of churches for mutual prayer, encouragement, study, vision casting, and accountability. These Fellowships also seek to hold (by themselves or in cooperation with other fellowships) meetings, retreats and/or seminars that would be of mutual benefit and further the work of God's Kingdom.

Preamble to Venture Northeast Bylaws

In obedience to God and His Word, Venture Church Network Northeast (formerly the Conservative Baptist movement) has demonstrated an historic commitment to the Great Commission.

Venture Church Network Northeast exists

to facilitate the partnership of churches working together in fulfilling the Great Commission with a Great Commandment passion as they bring the diverse peoples of our region to new life and maturity in Jesus Christ.

Through this partnership our churches will seek to

- plant culturally-relevant churches,
- link together in ministry,
- assist one another in crisis,
- network resources for each other, and
- strengthen each other through prayer, encouragement and accountability relationships.

If interested you may download a complete copy of our Bylaws from our website: www.MissionNortheast.org.

I have read, subscribe to, and endorse wholeheartedly, without any reservation, the convictions expressed in the membership requirements and additional expectations of churches affiliated with Venture Northeast. As the pastor of a church affiliated with Venture Northeast I will lead and encourage my church to be faithful to these requirements and expectations.

Signed _____ **Date** _____

VENTURE NORTHEAST MINISTERIAL CODE OF ETHICS

We believe it is important in this day of questionable practices in public ministry to affirm our commitment to godliness and Christian ethics.

In recognition of the high calling of God upon an individual to public ministry in the local church, I am firmly committed to and in agreement with the following principles of Christian ethics, and will endeavor to faithfully practice such as a minister of the Gospel and a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Church:

I. MY PERSONAL LIFE

- Establish & maintain personal habits & disciplines of spiritual, mental, & physical growth & health that are consistent with Scriptural principles & with expectations I would have for members of my congregation.
- Faithfully provide for the physical, emotional & spiritual needs of my family according to Eph. 5 & I Tim. 3.
- Demonstrate personal purity & holiness in my relationships with others & in my personal habits.
- Be faithful in prayer & study of God's Word.
- Demonstrate honesty & integrity in the use of my finances & personal resources as a steward of God, & promote a healthy expectation by others in my profession.
- Cultivate a lifestyle that is honoring to Christ & presents a positive witness for the Lord Jesus Christ & His church among the unchurched and other believers.

II. MY MINISTRY

- Strive always to conduct myself in ways that are appropriate for a man of God & a minister of Christ including my relationship & actions toward the opposite sex that might be viewed as questionable or suspicious.
- Respect confidentiality as sacred trusts, careful to not disclose information that would hurt others, unless in so doing I must protect the greater good (i.e. crime, abuse, personal danger).
- Perform my duties & responsibilities as a pastor with careful diligence, not slothful or using my position to take advantage of others or to solicit special favors.
- Safeguard the pulpit from which I am privileged to speak for God, being diligent in my preparation, carefully guarding against false teaching or intemperate attitudes that may dilute truth, & giving credit to the authors of any extensive material I use in my preaching/teaching ministry.
- Guard the relationships within former ministries where I have served, seeking to remove myself from involvement, issues or concerns that may impact a former church or the ministry of its current pastor.

- Minister as a servant, not lord of the church I serve, without selfish motivation, striving for unity at all times, refraining from any word or action that would divide the church, wholly committing myself to loving & impartial leadership that will build up, nurture, equip & encourage God's people toward growth, productivity & personal ministry.
- Guard the dignity & worth of former pastors in my speech, conduct, & attitudes.
- Work to build positive, constructive ties with other Bible-believing pastors & churches in my area based upon our common faith & purpose in the work of the kingdom of God, & to avoid territorial attitudes that would hinder the Spirit of God in this purpose.
- Honor in spirit the constitutional procedures of my church, preserving the participation of the congregation in important decisions, & providing for effective systems for doing business. When changes to the constitution need to be made, I will do so within established guidelines & with sensitivity.
- Solicit input & opinions of others with a teachable spirit so I may learn & grow in my leadership of the church.
- Candidate at only ONE church at a time, dealing fairly & without deceit with that church as well as the one I presently serve.

III. MY DENOMINATION/ASSOCIATION

- Treat the Conservative Baptist Association as important in the history and preference of the church I serve, & therefore, worthy of my respect & participation.
- Encourage my church to financially support the various works & agencies of the Association.
- Offer my resignation if I am unable to affirm the doctrinal positions of the church I serve or the statement of faith of the Conservative Baptist Association.
- Submit willingly to the directives of my Board or congregation if I fall morally or ethically, & be willing to work with my CB brethren in whatever disciplinary processes they deem wise & necessary, including the possible surrender of my ordination credentials if required.

I have read, subscribe to, and endorse wholeheartedly, without any reservation, the Venture Northeast Ministerial Code of Ethics.

Signed _____ Date _____

Additional Comments:

If applicable, please reference the section and question number for each comment: