



## **Assisting Churches Seeking To Fill The Pastor Position**

Recognizing the autonomy of each congregation, but realizing that many Churches are looking for assistance with this very important process, the Baptist Convention of Iowa gives the following suggestions and offers the following services. It is our prayer and desire that each congregation have the tools needed to locate and call the leader whom God has prepared for their unique context. May God Bless each congregation in this very important endeavor.

### **1. Where Do We Begin?**

- a. Form a prayer team/plan for the whole process, and then saturate it in prayer from the beginning to the end.**
- b. Take Steps to insure that the ministries of the Church are able to continue while the Pastor Search Process is taking place.**
  - i. Who will be responsible for what? May be determined in By- Laws, etc.
  - ii. Make a plan for pulpit supply. (See Pulpit Supply request link below)
- c. Determine The Church's Process For Selecting Search Team**
  - i. Constitution
  - ii. By Laws
  - iii. Policy Manual
  - iv. Etc
- d. Decide On Makeup Of Search Committee If Not Set In Church Documents.**
  - i. Men/Women
  - ii. Young/Old
- e. Determine Need For Interim**
  - i. Determine process/ and type of arrangements including compensation, amount of time commitment expected, etc.
  - ii. Contact BCI for possible Options
    - i. Intentional Interim

- ii. Transitional Pastor
- iii. Experienced Pastor
- iii. We suggest 1 year maximum and resignation if interim desires consideration as pastor.

## **2. How Do we Proceed ?**

- a. Discover The Resources Available To Search Committees And Collect What Is Needed In Your Setting.** ( See information and links listed below)
- b. Select Search Committee According To Church Guidelines.**
- c. Determine Financial Plan For Search Committee Work.**
- d. Determine Financial Package Which Will Be Offered To The Candidate**
  - i. Will he be full time or, Will he need to be bi-vocational
  - ii. What will the total salary package be and what will it include
  - iii. Answer whether it will include housing, insurance, retirement , expenses/travel
  - iv. Present this clearly to candidate during final stages of discussions
- e. Determine “Ground Rules” For Committee Processes.**
  - i. Suggest 5 to 7 members (odd number for voting)
  - ii. Suggest operating on majority vote on decisions prior to selecting candidate, but unanimity on candidate to be presented to Church.
  - iii. Agree upon other needed processes and procedures
  - iv. Select Candidate ( according to guidelines and agreed upon procedures)
- f. Prepare, Or Review/Revise As Needed, The Pastor Position Description**
- g. Determine Minimal Requirements/Qualifications For Candidates.**
  - i. Education
  - ii. Experience
  - iii. Skills
  - iv. Previous ministry tenures
  - v. Other (based on Church Situation)
- h. Set Timeline And Schedule For Search Committee Process And Presentation**
  - i. Start Date
  - ii. Meeting schedule
  - iii. How will resumes be received?
  - iv. If and/or how and where the job opening will be posted
  - v. How long will resumes be received?
  - vi. Suggest:

- i. Reviewing resumes as they are received in order to expedite the processing of currently available candidates and ranking of potential candidates.
- ii. Ranking of Top 3 candidates and do preliminary processing
- iii. Deciding how will you handle the potential candidates –
  - a. Deal with 1 through 3 one at a time, not all at once.
  - b. Meet with and Interview them as needed
  - c. Review References ( 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation references)
  - d. Do Credit and Background check (by written permission)
  - e. Provide the candidate with a clear and honest representation of the church
    - i. History
    - ii. Ministries
    - iii. Congregational profile
    - iv. Denominational Affiliation and Commitments
    - v. Financial Condition and Salary Package, Benefits, etc.
    - vi. Plans for expenses for field visit, etc.
    - vii. Housing Allowance and/or Prepare house, etc if applicable.
- iv. Review the Position Description thoroughly with the candidate
- v. Determine and Agree as Committee upon the candidate to be presented to the church for approval.
- vi. Prior to presentation
  - a. Review Constitution and Bylaws for procedures
  - b. Review Process to be sure all requirements and criteria are met
  - c. Plan for proper notification to the congregation
  - d. Quorum
  - e. Percentage required
  - f. Who can vote.
  - g. How the vote is to be taken.
  - h. Plan for Presentation

**i. Extend An Invitation For Candidate Field Visit And Presentation To The Church.**

- i. Arrange details for visit
  - a. Travel and Housing
  - b. Expenses – what is covered and how.
  - c. Preaching Schedule
  - d. Etc.
- ii. Set up interactive meetings with various church entities and generational groupings.

- iii. Provide community demographic information and if possible arrange visits with some community leaders while on site.
- iv. Determine schedule for voting on candidate ( Suggest one week later)
- v. When a Pastor has been called and has accepted the call, notify BCI with name and contact info for inclusion in BCI events, mailings, etc.

### **3. Resources Available To Church Pastor Search Committees:**

#### **Baptist Convention of Iowa:**

##### **Pastor/Church Support Staff:**

Western Iowa – John Shaul – Phone 515-250-1685 Email [jshaul@bciowa.org](mailto:jshaul@bciowa.org)

Eastern Iowa – Ed Gregory - Phone 515-868-7510 Email [egregory@bciowa.org](mailto:egregory@bciowa.org)

**BCI – Speaker Request** - for Churches seeking a guest Preacher or Pulpit Supply

<http://bciowa.org/speakerrequest/>

**BCI Resume Service** – for Churches Seeking a Pastor and Pastor’s Seeking a Church

<http://resume.sbcworkspace.com/home.aspx?sid=b142e19a-20de-499f-b022-78bf6b63ce88>

Call the BCI Office if assistance is needed in using this resource.

**Demographic Research for Iowa** – for Churches and Pastors seeking to better understand the people and conditions of their communities.

<http://bciowa.org/reachingiowa/>

#### **LifeWay Christian Resources**

Suggest that the Church obtain a copy of the following resources:

**“Pastor Search Committee Handbook,** <http://www.lifeway.com/Product/pastor-search-committee-handbook-revised-P005035459>

Author: Bob Sheffield

Bob Sheffield is a LifeWay Pastoral Ministry and Transitional Pastor Specialist.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Church Leadership

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION: The *Pastor Search Committee Handbook, Revised Edition* helps churches smooth the trying but all-important process of searching for a new pastor. It identifies dozens of essential checkpoints to help expedite the work of the committee. Part 1 focuses on

the elements of committee organization, while the second section outlines steps the committee should take to accomplish its goals. This resource will help your pastor search committee plan action steps, such as; select committee officers; identify biblical qualifications for a pastor; develop committee guidelines; develop, evaluate, and rank profiles of applicants; conduct interviews; and present the prospective pastor to the church and orient him when he arrives. A set of reproducible forms is included in print and on a newly added CD to help committee members gather information and compare candidates. LifeWay Price 14.99

### **Pastor Search Committee Handbook Toolbox - Free Download**

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/bhpub/edoc/005035459\\_SUPP.zip?AWSAccessKeyId=1FAF154W9TVZ6M3REZG2&Expires=2099573655&Signature=JTqjCRrjMmB3nY6bKXArYqM%2BeWA%3D](https://s3.amazonaws.com/bhpub/edoc/005035459_SUPP.zip?AWSAccessKeyId=1FAF154W9TVZ6M3REZG2&Expires=2099573655&Signature=JTqjCRrjMmB3nY6bKXArYqM%2BeWA%3D)

### **Pastor Search Committee Congregational Survey**

<http://www.lifeway.com/Product/pastor-search-congregational-survey-p005491435>

### **Southern Baptist Convention**

#### **SBC Job Openings –**

Link to location to post job openings for SBC Churches

<http://www.sbc.net/jobs/login.asp>

Link to SBC Net sample letter for posting or mailing for church looking for a pastor at

<http://www.sbc.net/jobs/12040/lead-pastor--bivocational>

### **Thom Rainer**

#### **Article on trends in pastor search process**

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/seven-new-trends-in-the-pastor-search-process-72653/>

### **Google Search For Pastor Search Process**

Lists links to several Baptist State Conventions Documents on this subject

[https://www.google.com/?gws\\_rd=ssl#q=pastor+search+committee+process](https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=pastor+search+committee+process)