

## THE PASTORAL TRANSITION PROCESS

The calendar of events for the Pastoral transition is unique for all congregations. It is wonderful to observe how God leads during the period between pastors. The following calendar of events summarizes the intended process. Our purpose and prayer for the interim period is to strengthen the congregation and respond to God's will and leading to fulfill the Great Commission. The main focus during this period is to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to God's choice for the new pastor and for the congregation to affirm and deploy their gifts in ministry. The process also strengthens the relationship between the new pastor and congregation and provides for a strong transition into effective ministry. During this interim period, the leaders of the congregation should maintain a high profile with the congregation. Through the many leadership situations with the congregation, they have the wonderful opportunity to demonstrate "faith-full" resting in the leadership of Christ.

*Note:* When presenting the schedule to the church board and key lay leaders, it should be emphasized that it represents a *projected* schedule. The actual schedule may not be exactly the same as the projected schedule. Frequently but not always the schedule is longer than projected. This is especially true for the events following week 10.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Schedule Notes</i>
1	Pastoral Resignation	The Pastor's Resignation is presented to the Church Board and the District Superintendent. Both accept the resignation. The pastor is informed he should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) meet with Board Secretary and review membership.</li> <li>b) Fill the responsibilities that will be vacant when the pastor leaves.</li> </ul>	
<b><i>Preparing for the Interim Period</i></b>			
2	Board meeting. Either week one or two. <b><i>Done by MAF.</i></b>	Outline the process and the time line for a new pastor. Discuss Supply Pastor, the community/congregation analysis material should be assigned. To be completed within four weeks.	
3			
4	Exit interview	During the week <i>Mission Area Facilitator</i> conducts Exit interview with Board and present pastor.	
4	Farewell for Present Pastor		
5	Assistant DS preach in the church	Afternoon board meeting. In consultation with Church Board, recommend to DS the Appointment of a Supply Pastor.	

**Comment [DRG1]:** At this meeting the Church board will be informed that it will be a busy time for them. They should select the preferred meeting night and keep it open every week of the month. If no meeting is required it can be a free night for them! The more quality time they can invest, the more likely it is they will both be prepared for their new pastor and be led to their new pastor.

**Comment [DRG2]:** Along with providing a summary of the church and community for a pastoral prospect, this project helps board members understand their congregation in relationship with the community. It is best to assign portions of the analysis to board members, then meet as a board for reporting on assignments and competing the report.

**Comment [DRG3]:** In order for the profile seminar to be "valid", concerns for the future should be minimized and the present pastor should have left. Thus, if the Supply Pastor could be appointed by this time, some concerns should be minimized. This should still provide opportunity for the Supply Pastor to address the interim needs.

6	Complete Community/Congregation Analysis		
---	--	--	--

<b>Profile Seminar</b>			<b>Dates:</b>
7	Profile Seminar	Friday Evening, Saturday Morning and Afternoon. DS, AssisDS, MAF, SP present.	
		Develop Initial Written Understandings	Sunday Afternoon

**Waiting on God and Preparing the Congregation**

	<b>DS Events</b>	<b>Explanation</b>		<b>Assist DS Events</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
	<b>Selecting the New Pastor</b>	<b>Prepare the Congregation</b>			
10	Develop Potential Prospects			<b>Interim Program Design</b>	3 Streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect with Faith Projections</li> <li>• Pick-up Pastor's responsibilities</li> <li>• Implement new Ministries</li> </ul>
11	<b>Candidates Contacted</b>				
12					
13					
14					
15				<b>Worker Training</b>	
16	Receive Profiles				
17	Process Profiles			Program Implementation	
18					
19	Meet Board				
20	Board Prioritizes List				
21	Contact Prospects			First Report	
22					
23	Arrange for Interview	Usually two weeks between Agreement and the Interview			
24					

25	First Interview			Second Report	
26					
27	Candidate accepts Nomination				
28	Complete and confirm WU	<i>In consultation with Board, DS, Candidate</i>			
29	Congregation Votes, or appointment is made.				
30	Pastor Accepts Election				
31					
32					
33					
34					
35		<i>De-Briefing and farewell with the Supply Pastor.</i>			
<b>Welcoming the New Pastor</b>					
36	New Pastor's First Sunday				
				<b>Confirm Project Planning in WU</b>	
37					
38				WU Planning (within first Month)	Meet with Pastor and Board for Project Planning
39	Installation Service				
40					
41					
42					
43					
44					
45					
46					
47					
48					
49					
50					
51					
52				WU Complete and sent to DO	Project Planning Competed
60	<b>Alignment Interview</b>				

**Comment [DRG4]:** It could be helpful to have some kind of de-briefing meeting with the DS, Supply Pastor, MTC, MAF and the church board. It would be similar to an exit interview for the interim pastor.

Goals for the Seminar:

1. Develop a clear vision statement of the board's understanding of God's will for the church. The Assistant DS will work with the mission statement to develop principles for ministry.
2. Clear understanding of:
  - a. Where they currently are in relationship to that vision.
  - b. What needs to be done between now and fulfilling the vision.
  - c. What the board expects from the incoming pastor.
  - d. What the board can and will do and an appreciation for their role in ministry.
3. The District Superintendent will want to know:
  - a. The kind of pastor needed; that is, the core contribution the pastor will make to achieving this goal.
  - b. How the board (and then the congregation) can and will partner in achieving the goal. *In this we will promote the team idea; they are actually defining a leadership role, but in actuality it is a team effort, not a one person effort.*
4. Assistant DS will:
  - a. Guide the congregation to see they are the key workers and leaders in achieving the vision.
  - b. Have an "open door" to work with them in developing a six-month plan of action.
5. The supply pastor needs to see clearly how he/she fits and what ministries need to take priority.
6. Helping the board come to the place where they have a stronger place of their role.