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## Words of Encouragement

God is in control and He is not surprised. He knew your former pastor was going to be leaving before the former pastor knew. The Lord also knows who will serve as your new pastor. Right now, as God is working in your hearts to prepare you for your next pastor, He is working in the heart and circumstances of another minister, preparing him to lead your church. This is not a crisis. This is an opportunity to find new direction from God for the future of your church.

Your church belonged to God before your former pastor arrived and continues to belong to Him now that he has transitioned. God wants to bless your church, and He will, as long as you are committed to the Great Commission and to the Great Commandment. Trust Him! As leaders, live a life above reproach, exercise high standards in holiness and righteous living, and....trust Him. He will be faithful.

Please keep in mind that this is a spiritual task and a spiritual decision, therefore, the process must be bathed in prayer. Encourage the church to pray daily for the Search Committee and for God's direction in finding a new pastor.

It is very important that the servant-leaders of the church remain positive, sensitive to people's fears and questions, cooperative and harmonious, and committed to the spiritual, financial, and psychological welfare of the church. The attitude of the leaders will have a direct impact on the rest of the church.

Don't panic and scramble to get a new pastor as quickly as you can. If you truly believe God is in control and Jesus was telling the truth when He said, He would build His church, then the loss of your pastor is not a problem that is too big for God to handle. This is a wonderful opportunity to discover as a church "what you are made of" and a tremendous opportunity to prepare for an even brighter future.

It is our hope that this material will help you and your church turn a time of anxiety into a time of growth.

Please know that we in the District Office are praying for you, and ready to help you in any way you need or want our help. As the Superintendent for the Kentucky District Council, part of my ministry is to help churches when there is a transition in the pastorate. My phone number and email address are listed on the cover page of this manual. In cases where there may be serious issues of concern, such as official charges being brought against a pastor, divisive issues that threaten a church, or the moral failure of a pastor, churches, and/or credentialed ministers, by way of the bylaws, are subject to the General Council coverings and intervention.

For His Church,

*Joseph S. Girdler*

## Summary – Guidelines to Finding a New Pastor

1. The purpose of the Guidelines is to help the church get beyond the résumé and make an informed, Spirit-led decision regarding the selection of a new pastor.
2. Help the church determine what they need and want in a new pastor. This will help them decide which candidates to pursue beyond the résumé. A decision should also be made regarding the components of the remuneration package, and this information should be shared with candidates early in the search process.
3. After the church board/search committee reviews résumés, they should send the questionnaire to candidates they want to pursue, and request 2 sermon tapes be returned with the questionnaire.
4. Upon receiving the questionnaire, the church board/search committee review the questionnaires and listen to the sermons, and select 6-8 candidates to interview via a conference call.
5. Following the conference call interviews, the church board/search committee selects 2-3 candidates to:
  - 1) go and listen to and observe in their current ministry,
  - 2) schedule a personal interview with all of them, or some of them.This interview is with the church board/search committee only. If the church has not already done so, they should at this time disclose the remuneration package to the candidate.
6. Following the personal interviews the church board/search committee selects one minister to bring in and candidate for the pastoral position. The church should not try to schedule more than one applicant at a time to candidate for the pastoral position.
7. The candidacy weekend: It is very important that the candidate and congregation have as many opportunities for dialogue and evaluation as possible. The following are suggested events to schedule for the candidacy weekend.
  - 1) Meeting with all the leadership of the church.
  - 2) A meeting with the pastoral staff of the church, if the church has a pastoral staff.

3) An informal gathering with the congregation (dinner) in which everyone has an opportunity to meet the candidate and his family, and ask questions.

4) An opportunity for the candidate to tour the community.

5) Ministry opportunity for the candidate:

Wednesday (Mid-week) services:

Sunday School

Sunday Morning Worship

Sunday Evening Worship

6) A final meeting with the board and candidate prior to the congregational vote in order to ascertain if the candidate wants to be voted on, and if the candidate feels he/she would accept the pastorate if elected.

8. The election/appointment. A representative of the District Office must preside over a business meeting to elect/appoint a pastor of a District Affiliated Church. Pastors of District Affiliated churches are officially appointed by the District Superintendent, or his designated representative, in conjunction with the expressed will (vote) of the congregation. No set percentage is required for an election. It is not required that a District representative preside over the business meeting to vote on a pastoral candidate in a General Council affiliated church.

9. If a pastor is not elected/appointed, the church may consider one of the two other candidates interviewed, or they may begin the search process over and consider new résumés.

## General Guidelines for the Church

1. Contact the District Office and request résumé's of pastoral candidates, and to obtain references for candidates. Reference checks need to be made only for those applicants the church is considering to interview by phone, or in person.
2. Complete the Open Church Profile and send it to the District Office right away. This will help the District Office to better direct prospective pastors your way. The Open Church Profile can be sent by postal mail, email [jsgirdler@kyag.org](mailto:jsgirdler@kyag.org), or by fax (502) 241-7112.
3. District Council churches must inform the District Office of applicants they are considering, and obtain the permission of the District Office prior to scheduling applicants for interviews, or to candidates as Pastor.
4. Select a credentialed Assemblies of God minister, in good standing with the Kentucky District Council, to be an interim pastor/speaker. It is not recommended that this ministry be delegated to lay people within the church. It is not an approved practice to invite a minister who is not credentialed with the Assemblies of God to serve as the interim pastor, nor to be considered as a pastoral candidate. Please feel free to contact: Supt. Joseph Girdler at the District Office, if you need help in this area. Establish an honorarium schedule For pulpit supply and have committee members assist in arranging accommodations and entertainment for guests.
5. The Church Board needs to appoint, or elect from their body, someone to serve as the Chairman of the Board during the pastoral vacancy. The Chairman of the Board does not have more authority than other board members, nor does his voice or vote matter more than that of other board members. The Chairman of the Board has the responsibility to chair the meetings of the board in such a way as to insure accepted standards of parliamentary procedure are followed during board meetings. Your new pastor will assume the position of Chairman of the Board upon his election.
6. Form a Search Committee to manage the process of receiving and reviewing résumé's, and make recommendations to the Church Board. In some churches, the Church Board also acts as the Search Committee.
7. The Church Board and/or the Search Committee should communicate every week to the congregation on the status of the pastoral search. However, names of applicants should not be mentioned, until one applicant has been selected to candidate for the pastoral position.

8. Do not schedule more than one minister at a time to candidate to be your pastor. Some churches have tried to line up three ministers to candidate on successive weekends, and then vote for one of them. This doesn't work well for the following reasons:

- 1) It slows down the process. It's hard enough to schedule one candidate. Scheduling three on successive weekends is much more difficult.
- 2) It confuses and divides the congregation. People will disagree over personalities.
- 3) It makes it harder to elect one person as your pastor. The vote will not be for or against one candidate. It will be divided between three candidates.
- 4) It's not fair to the candidates, nor to other churches. Would you want each of three candidates to tell the church, "Don't take a vote until I can candidate at three churches?"

9. Review and update the church membership list. Review your Constitution and Bylaws, and familiarize the Pulpit Committee with details of the pastor's term of office, method of election, and process of notifying the congregation of business meetings.

## How to Form a Search Committee

Every church is unique, and needs to do what works best for them. Below are some ideas on how to form a Search Committee.

1. The Church Board, or a portion of the Church Board, can serve as the Search Committee. This works well for smaller churches.
2. Larger churches may want to appoint a Search Committee. If such is the case, the following are a few suggestions for the composition of the Search Committee.
  - 1) Some members of the Church Board should serve on the Search Committee, such as;
    - \* The Secretary to the Board
    - \* The Church Treasurer
    - \* One or more deacons
  - 2) Other people in positions of leadership could be appointed to the Search Committee, such as;
    - \* Departmental Leaders (Men's Ministries, Women's Ministries, etc.)
    - \* Spiritually mature "at large" members of the church
  - 3) Any appointed Search Committee is amenable to the Church Board
3. Members of the Pastoral Staff should not serve on the Search Committee: however, the committee may want to consult with the pastoral staff to receive input that will help the committee in their deliberations.
4. The committee should not mention the names of applicants, until an applicant has been selected to candidate for the pastoral position.
5. The Search Committee should communicate with the church weekly regarding the status of the pastoral search. Below are some examples of announcements that could be shared.

*At this time we are still receiving résumés and checking references.*

*We are no longer receiving résumés. We are interviewing applicants, and will let you know when we have selected an applicant to candidate.*

*We have selected (name of applicant) to candidate as our pastor. He will be ministering in our church on (share dates & times of services).*

## The Process of Searching for a New Pastor

The items on the next few pages are provided to help you in the process of selecting a new pastor. Please feel free to modify them to fit the needs and desires of your church.

**Answering the following questions will help you determine what qualities in a minister will best suite the needs and desires of your church.**

- 1) What ministries are very strong in your church at this time?  
Music \_\_\_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Children \_\_\_\_\_  
Elderly \_\_\_\_\_ Young Adults \_\_\_\_\_ Christian Education \_\_\_\_\_  
Evangelism \_\_\_\_\_ Discipleship \_\_\_\_\_ Other (            ) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) What ministries would a new pastor need to improve on, or develop within our church?  
Music \_\_\_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Children \_\_\_\_\_  
Elderly \_\_\_\_\_ Young Adults \_\_\_\_\_ Christian Education \_\_\_\_\_  
Evangelism \_\_\_\_\_ Discipleship \_\_\_\_\_ Other (            ) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Does the church have other paid staff? If so, and depending on the number of paid staff, you may want to look for a new pastor with experience pastoring churches with multiple staffs.
- 4) Is your church planning a building program, or planning to purchase land and relocate? If so, you may want to look for a new pastor with experience in leading a church through a building program; fund raising, meeting with architects, dealing with zoning boards, and other local and state agencies.
- 5) What are the greatest spiritual needs of our church and our community? In what ways will we want our new pastor to help us address these needs?
- 6) How much, if any, previous experience do you feel your new pastor should have as a pastor?
- 7) How old is too old? How young is too young?
- 8) How much formal education should your new pastor have?  
Berean Graduate \_\_\_\_\_ Some Bible College \_\_\_\_\_  
Bible College Graduate \_\_\_\_\_ Masters Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Doctorate \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) On a scale of 1-5, (5 being the most important) how important are the following qualities in a pastoral candidate for your church?  
Preaching Ability \_\_\_ Teaching Ability \_\_\_ Fund Raising \_\_\_  
Leadership Skills \_\_\_ People Skills \_\_\_ Counseling \_\_\_  
Musical Abilities \_\_\_ (In what area? \_\_\_\_\_)

**In certain situations where there are already other ministers on staff at a church, the scenario may arise where either a staff member wants to be considered for the position of senior pastor, or the pulpit committee may want a staff member to consider the position. Please note that these comments are not an endorsement to automatically consider staff members as candidates for senior pastor, but merely a guideline to consider should a circumstance develop.**

1. If the board/pulpit committee decides to consider an existing pastoral staff member, the board should consider him/her exclusively and prior to considering others.
2. A staff minister should not be considered at the same time with other prospective candidates. Prospective candidates will not want to appear to be in competition with a staff minister.
3. If after the board/pulpit committee has chosen not to consider a staff minister and does not secure a new pastor through the process recommended in these guidelines, they may wish to reconsider the staff pastor. If, however, it becomes known that this is a possibility, some members may be tempted to vote “no” on candidates hoping to “force” the board/pulpit committee to consider the staff minister.
4. Even though the individual is already a familiar staff member, a formal interview with the pulpit committee is still appropriate and recommended.
5. After the interview, if both the individual and the pulpit committee are in favor of continuing the process through to candidacy, it is not recommended for the pulpit committee to consider other résumés at that time. Normally, at least three prospects should be interviewed, but in this case, the staff member may be the only candidate the pulpit committee needs to interview.
6. After the interview, if the individual or the pulpit committee decides not to continue the process, the pulpit committee should then consider and interview at least three other prospects.

## As You Receive Résumés

- 1) Make copies of the résumés and distribute them among the Search Committee.  
Do not show the résumés to other members of the church, other than the church board.
- 2) Evaluate the résumés according to what giftings, abilities, education and experience you have determined your church needs in your new pastor.
- 3) As you evaluate the résumés it is wise to notice the applicants' length of tenure at each previous place of ministry. Remember this basic principle, "The best predictor of future performance is past performance." If you are looking for someone who will stay at your church for a long time, you need to see longevity reflected in the résumé, provided the applicant is old enough to have established a pattern of longevity.
- 4) After reviewing the résumés, sort them into two categories;
  - (1) Those you do not want to pursue:  
Send a letter to the candidates you are not going to consider, advising them of your decision. Sample letters are included in this manual.
  - (2) Those you want to pursue:
    - (i) Send a letter to those whom you want to pursue, asking them to complete and return the Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire (pages 16-22), along with a recent cassette, CD, or DVD of their preaching/teaching ministry. A sample letter is included in this manual, on page 37.
    - (ii) Select members of the committee to conduct reference checks on the applicants. You can use the Telephone Reference Check Form that is included in this manual, on page 24. The people making these phone calls should have a good telephone voice and be able to convey warmth and sincerity through their words and voice tone.
    - (iii) You also want to send to these applicants the Church Information Packet about your church. You can see ideas for what to include in your Church Information Packet on page 23, of this manual.

## When You Receive the Completed Questionnaires and Sermon Tapes

- 1) Make copies of the questionnaires and sermon tapes and distribute them among the members of the Search Committee. Do not share this information with other members of the church, other than the church board.
- 2) Review the questionnaires and mark in red ink any questions, concerns, positive and negative observations.
- 3) Evaluate the sermon tapes by using the Evaluating a Sermon guide that is included in this manual. Please remember that a recorded message lacks the dynamics of a live presentation.
- 4) As a committee, review the questionnaires and sermon tapes, and then separate the applicants into two categories;
  - (1) Applicants you no longer want to pursue:  
Send them a letter advising them of your decision. Sample letters are included in this manual.
  - (2) Applicants you want to pursue:
    - \* Select the strongest 6 – 8 applicants whom you want to consider further.
    - \* Call these applicants and schedule a telephone interview with the Search Committee. This interview is easy to conduct with the committee meeting at the church, calling the applicants, and placing the phone on the “speaker” option.
    - \* Please refer to The Telephone Interview Guide (pg 24) that is included in this packet.
    - \* Refer to the questions, observations and comments noted on the applicants’ Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire (pg 16-22) to develop a list of questions relevant to each applicant
    - \* Refer to the Sample Questions for the Candidate Pastors (pgs 31-34) for a list of more questions.

## When You Have Finished the Telephone Interviews

- 1) Separate the applicants into two categories.
  - (1) Applicants you no longer want to pursue:  
Send them a letter advising them of your decision.
  - (2) Applicants you want to pursue:  
Select the strongest 2 or 3 applicants.
- 2) If possible, schedule a Sunday for members of the Search Committee to visit each of the remaining applicants' churches, and observe them in ministry first hand. Do not let the applicant, nor members of the church know who you are, or why you are there. Following the visits, the committee members will share their observations with the rest of the committee.
- 3) Schedule the applicants for a personal interview with the Search Committee. This is not a meeting with the entire church. It is exclusive to the Search Committee/Church Board and the applicants. Schedule the applicants at different times.
- 4) During the personal interviews:
  - (1) Ask the candidates as many questions as you feel are relevant. You may want to review the Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire, and the Sample Questions for Candidate Pastors (pg 31-34) to get an idea of questions you will want to ask at this time.
  - (2) Encourage the applicant and spouse to ask you many questions
  - (3) Share more about the history, mission, and vision of your Church
  - (4) Get to know about them as a person, as well as a minister
  - (5) Take the applicant on a brief tour of your community
- 5) The church should cover all of the expenses for the applicants to attend the interview: lodging, meals, and gas expense.

## Following the Personal Interviews

- 1) Select the strongest applicant to candidate for the pastoral position.
- 2) Inform the other two applicants, and let them know you will advise them of any decisions that are made.

## The Candidacy Weekend

It is very important that the candidate and spouse experience the broadest possible exposure to the church. For that reason, the following suggestions are offered, which, hopefully will result in the church and candidate making well informed, Spirit led decisions.

- Friday evening: The candidate and spouse meet with the Board
- Saturday morning: The candidate and spouse meet the Pastoral Staff (if applicable), or The pastoral candidate could meet with the men of the church during a Men's Breakfast.
- Saturday afternoon: The candidate and spouse meet with the Departmental Leaders/Volunteers, or The candidate's wife could meet with the women of the Church during a brunch, or afternoon tea.
- Saturday evening: Get Acquainted Fellowship Meal with the Church during this time, members of the church are encouraged to ask questions of the candidate.
- Sunday School: Have the candidate teach Sunday School
- Sunday Morning: The candidate and spouse (if applicable) minister in the worship service.
- Prior to the Evening Service:

The candidate and the board should meet to confirm the following:

- \* The board's willingness to proceed with a vote following the evening service.
- \* The candidate's willingness to allow the congregation to vote on him/her.
- \* The candidate's willingness to accept the pastorate if he is elected.

Sunday Evening: The candidate and spouse (if applicable) minister in the worship service.

Following the Sunday Evening Service:

1) Conduct the election

- \* If the church is a District Council Church a District Official must Chair the meeting.
- \* The District Superintendent must approve all pastoral elections in District council churches.

- 2) If the candidate receives the election, inform them and give the candidate and spouse time to talk among themselves, and advise you of their response.

If an election is received and accepted, congratulations, you have a new pastor.

If the candidate is not elected, or does not accept the election, the Search Committee can:

- 1) Schedule one of the other two candidates who were interviewed in person to come and candidate, or
- 2) Schedule applicants who were not invited for a personal interview, to come for a personal interview and be considered further, or
- 3) Start the process over and look at new résumés

The outcome of the vote must be communicated to the District Office.

The church should pay all expenses incurred by the candidate for the candidacy weekend, whether he/she was elected or not.

### **How to Welcome the New Pastor**

Now that the new pastor has been selected, someone should be appointed to see that he is welcomed to his new church and to the community. Meals could be provided while the pastor and his family are moving in and getting settled. Some of the men could also help move the heavy items if needed.

The new pastor will feel an affirmation of his call as care is taken to make sure that he and his family are settled in their new home.

The church should pay all moving expenses incurred by the new pastor. If the church does not have a parsonage, the church will want to arrange for the rental of an apartment/house that is large enough to accommodate his/her family. The lease should be 6 months to one year. This will provide the pastor a place to live until he/she can find a home of their choosing. The cost for the rental should be taken from the pastor's compensation package.

### **Installation Service**

Many churches are conducting an installation service for the incoming pastor. The board and new pastor should select an appropriate date. Care should be taken to coordinate the date with the district official who will be conducting the installation service. You may desire to invite special guests from the community as well as relatives of the pastor and his wife.

The district superintendent can help you plan this service.

**Open Church Profile**  
Kentucky District Council, Assemblies of God

Church name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Church phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Web address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Times of Services & Average Attendance**

Sunday School (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunday Morning (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunday Evening (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Wednesday (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Ministries that are functioning in the church:**

Praise/Worship Team \_\_\_\_\_  
Choir \_\_\_\_\_  
Youth \_\_\_\_\_  
Children's Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Royal Rangers \_\_\_\_\_  
Missionettes \_\_\_\_\_  
Young Adults \_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Adults \_\_\_\_\_  
Nursery \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the setting that best describes where your church is located:

Rural	Small Town	Town	Small City	City	Large City
Less than 1000	1000 - 2500	2500-10,000	10,000 - 25,000	25,000-100,000	100,000 or more

Please circle the style of music your church prefers for worship.

Traditional   Southern   Country   Contemporary   Bluegrass/Mountain  
Open to change? Yes, immediately \_\_\_ Yes, gradually \_\_\_ No, not at all \_\_\_

Annual Church Income: \_\_\_\_\_ Church Debt: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Annual Salary: \_\_\_\_\_ Church has a parsonage: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Are utilities included with the parsonage? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_

Pastor and/or wife needs music skills: Piano \_\_\_ Lead Worship \_\_\_ Not Needed \_\_\_

Address to send résumés to (if other than church address):

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

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire

**Instructions:** Please complete the questionnaire in its entirety, and return it to the church promptly. If a particular question does not apply to you, or if you do not want to answer, write that in the space provided. If you need more space, you may type your answers on a separate paper using the corresponding question numbers. You don't need to retype the questions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Night Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ St.: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Your signature indicated the information supplied is true and correct, and gives the church permission to contact references, conduct a criminal background check and a credit check.*

1. Why are you leaving your present place of ministry?

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

2. Why did you leave your previous place of ministry?

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

3. Is your present congregation aware you are looking for another opportunity?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

4. Are you a credentialed Assemblies of God minister in good standing with your present District? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Level of Credential Name of District Superintendent or Secretary/Treasurer

5. Briefly describe your vision/philosophy/methods for ministry.

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

6. Do you, or your spouse; have musical gifts, abilities, or training? If so please describe them.

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7. In what areas of church ministry does your wife enjoy being involved in, and what areas would she prefer not to be involved in?

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8. Explain your philosophy regarding pastor-board relations.

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9. Cite recent examples of how you demonstrate leadership in your ministry.

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10. Describe what you believe to be your greatest success in ministry.

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11. Describe what you believe to be your greatest failure in ministry.

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12. What have you always wanted to do in ministry, but have never been able to do? Why have you not been able to?

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13. Ministry is demanding and exhausting. What things do you do that help bring balance to your life and keep you refreshed and full of the joy of the Lord?

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14. Have you ever experienced moral failure, or been under discipline or rehabilitation in ministry? If so, please explain.

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15. What is your philosophy for handling conflict within the church body, staff or board?

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16. What is your conviction regarding women serving on the church board?

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17. What is your conviction regarding divorced and remarried people serving in the church?

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18. What is your conviction regarding church members and the consumption of alcoholic beverages? – Church leaders?

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19. What, if any, convictions do you have regarding the entertainment/recreational choices of church members? – Church leaders? (movies, swimming, dancing, etc.)

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20. What convictions/preference do you have regarding how people dress/facial jewelry/body piercing/etc. at church (leaders, ushers, those on the platform)?

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21. Have you ever held a sectional or district position of ministry? What is your philosophy regarding cooperation with section, district, national events/ministries? - Local churches who are not A/G/Ministerial Association?

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22. How would you describe yourself as a money manager? Do you have any outstanding delinquent accounts/collections/repossessions/bankruptcies/etc?

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23. Describe your thoughts on "pastoral care."

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24. Do you practice tithing to your church and district? If not, why not?

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25. How would you describe your management style with the pastoral staff/  
church leadership/volunteers?

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26. Do you keep regular office hours at the church? Describe your typical work  
day/week.

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27. Fundraising is an integral part of a growing congregation. Give some  
examples of how you have successfully raised money for ministry expansion.

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28. What steps do you take to make yourself accessible to the congregation?

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29. What is your philosophy regarding hospital visitation?

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30. Would you be open to retaining the current pastoral staff, or would you be more inclined to make changes? Why?

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31. How do you see yourself responding to memories of, affection for, or references to our previous pastor?

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32. How do you avoid temptation in these areas – counseling the opposite sex, visitation, cable television, and the Internet?

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33. Do you give the church permission to conduct a criminal background check?  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

34. Do you give the church permission to conduct a credit check? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

35. Have you ever been in a position where you had to terminate the employment of a staff member? How would you approach this issue if it became necessary?

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## THE CHURCH INFORMATION PACKET

A church information packet contains everything an interested applicant needs to know about your community and church. It will help him connect with your church.

The following should be included if you are to present a complete picture of who you are as a church:

- Provide a brief but concise church history.
- Define your vision, mission and goals. Include a statement of your core values and other statements that guide ministries.
- Provide a copy of your most recent annual report and ACMR.
- Describe your worship style.
- Identify the demographics of your congregation.
- Include copies of your By-laws, governmental structure and ministry organizational chart.
- Identify the church's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Describe your church facilities.
- Provide an assessment of your church finances.
- Include a Chamber of Commerce package about your community.

## Telephone Reference Check Form

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Reference has known applicant for \_\_\_\_\_ Years    \_\_\_\_\_ Months

Has known applicant in following capacity: \_\_\_\_\_

Know applicant: Slightly \_\_\_\_\_    Moderately \_\_\_\_\_    Very Well \_\_\_\_\_

Exceptional—5,    Above Average—4,    Average—3,    Average—2,  
Serious Deficiency—1,    Do Not Know—0

Circle reference's answers:

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Preaching ability  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Worship – Leading ability  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Teaching ability   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Ability to develop a vision for a church                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Ability to communicate that vision to congregation so it becomes theirs also | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Ability to motivate others in healthy ways                                   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Ability to translate vision into concrete plans                              | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Ability as a church administrator  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Ability to encourage others to develop their gifts                           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Earns loyalty of staff and congregation                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Cares deeply about congregation   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Is available and visible to staff and congregation                          | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Works comfortably with church board and denominational officials            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

14. Can supervise others effectively	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. Gentleness	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Dignified, good self-control	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Hospitable	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Ability to work without supervision	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. Open-minded, tolerant of reasonable differences of opinion	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Capacity for objective evaluation of his own strengths and weakness	0	1	2	3	4	5

Specific strengths?

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Specific weakness?

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### Other areas

Do you know of any difficulties in the following areas?

1. Unfaithfulness or any questionable behavior with opposite sex? Unhappy marriage for either partner?
2. Failure to discipline children?
3. Difficultly handling anger or frustration?
4. Any evidence of alcohol or drug abuse by pastor or spouse?
5. Failure of self-discipline in any area that significantly hinders role as pastor?
6. Spending beyond one's means in either personal or church situations?
7. Low energy level?
8. Anxious, fearful?
9. Dependent?
10. Low self-esteem? Unusual need for approval?
11. Manipulative?
12. Hostile, angry?
13. Tends to get into power struggles?
14. Shy, overly sensitive to criticism?
15. Pushy, aggressive?
16. Impulsive, hasty?
17. Is there anything else in this person's history or personality that might affect his ability to pastor?

Please indicate the strength of your overall endorsement of this person for pastor:

Highly recommend \_\_\_\_\_ Recommend \_\_\_\_\_

Recommend with some reservations \_\_\_\_\_ Do not recommend \_\_\_\_\_

Reference feedback for the first half of this interview can be qualified in the following way. Add up all the numerical ratings. Divide by 20 minus the number of items that the reference marked zero. The result will be the average score. The higher the average is, the more positive it is.

If the applicant has a significant problem in any area listed in the second half of the interview, and if this is confirmed by other sources, you may decide to disqualify the candidate no matter how good his score on the first part of the interview.



## Evaluating a Sermon

Use the following scale, comparing the applicant's message with the average sermon you are used to hearing in a local church (not on television):

Excellent—5, Above Average—4, Average—3, Below Average—2, Seriously Deficient—1, Compute average at bottom of page.

1. Introduction: Captured my attention and interest
2. Use of Scripture: Used Scripture to make, clarify and illuminate points. Seemed to be used in context
3. Logical Continuity: Points of the sermon logically built on and followed on another.
4. Clarity: The points of the sermon were clear.
5. Relevance: The sermon topic was developed in a way that made me see the relevance for myself today.
6. Use of humor: Humor if used, was appropriated to the setting and points of sermon.
7. Use of self-disclosure: If speaker used himself as an illustration, it helped make the sermon more meaningful.
8. Use of vocal inflection: Added appropriate emphasis and interest to the sermon. Did not scream or scold audience.
9. Use of illustrations: Were used to clarify or deepen the impact of a point but not to prove points.
10. Interest level: I wanted to hear more sermons from this pastor.

Total:

Average: (The average would be the total divided by 10)

## The Telephone Interview Guide

### The Conference Call

The Search Committee chairperson must phone the applicant to arrange an interview at a time that is convenient for all parties. During the conference call one person should be in charge of the conversation, however, the committee should be present at all interviews and all members of the committee are encouraged to ask questions and to be a part of the process. You should, however, prepare and coordinate your questions with one another before hand. Make certain that topic transitions are smooth and final. Occasionally, one interviewer will insert a second line of questions while someone else will want to go back to a previously discussed topic. The applicant will view such interviews as disorganized. To avoid these difficulties develop an organized plan for how the group will ask questions and use a prepared list of questions (See the sample questions, per candidates, page 31).

Each person who volunteers for a question is responsible for asking that question and any follow-up questions necessary to clarify the applicant's answer. Others may also ask follow-up questions on the same topic. Before starting on a new topic the chairperson should check to see if there are any further questions on that topic, if not then a new line of questioning can be pursued. In this way the team will conduct an organized discussion.

The questions should be organized so that the early ones touch upon topics emphasizing the applicant's strengths and successes. After the applicant and the group have built rapport and feel more comfortable with each other the discussion can move into areas that may be more troubling for the applicant, i.e. difficulties that he has experienced. Be sensitive to his spouse. It is not easy to talk about personal failures with a group of strangers, particularly when they do not know how the group will respond to their honesty and vulnerability. Deal with each applicant with the same kind of gentleness you would want to be dealt with if you were the interviewee.

If married, invite the spouse to join in part of the conversation.

Committee members should take good notes during the telephone interview.

## Dealing With Red Flags

From time to time members of the committee may feel uncertainty towards a particular applicant. These “red flags” must be addressed and discussed with the committee. Remember not every applicant will be a good match for your church. Red flags may take many forms. It may be as simple as personal preferences that a committee member may have. It may be because of the applicant’s view on a particular topic, or you might sense that he may not relate to a specific age group in your church. It may be about worship style, sermon delivery, or even control issues. If the red flag is about relationships, probe deeply, contact people who can help clarify your questions. Whatever the issue the committee needs to talk it through and make a decision. Remember that there are two sides to every issue, so take the time to respectfully explore both sides.

Applicants who are eliminated at this point must be sent a letter informing them they did not meet the selection criteria.

## Sample Questions for Candidate Pastors

### Personal/Background

1. When did you first hear God's call on your life? How did you decide to enter the ministry?
2. When did you realize God wanted you to move from your current position? How many positions have you applied to?
3. How do you handle your personal financial obligations?
4. What strengths do you bring?
5. What are your long-range goals (personal and ministry)?

### Philosophy of Ministry

1. Describe your past ministry.
2. What is your personal philosophy of ministry?
3. How do you define growth? How have you seen this demonstrated in your ministry?
4. What is the most important role and task of a pastor?
5. Do you consider your type of ministry as being evangelistic of pastoral?

### Spiritual

1. Describe the role of prayer in your personal life. In the life of the church.
2. How do you prepare for preaching and teaching?
3. What results have you seen in ministry in the last three years? (Conversions, baptisms in the Holy Spirit, spiritual growth, healings, etc).
4. Describe your personal devotional life.
5. State the type of mid-week service you conduct.
6. Which of the following organizations are active in your pastorate? WM's, Youth, Missionettes, Royal Rangers, Men's Ministries. Name any others not mentioned.

### **Outreach and Evangelism**

1. What forms of evangelism outreach would you involve the church in?
2. What are you doing in your present assignment to reach the unchurched in your community? What results have you had?
3. How do you see the role of the evangelist?
4. How do you promote a church's world missions and home missions program?

### **Pastoral Care**

1. Describe your visitation program for church members and adherents?
2. How do you follow up with visitors and new prospects?
3. How do you train others in ministry?
4. How responsive are you to sick calls in homes and hospitals?
5. Do you spend a great deal of time counseling on a one-to-one basis? Do you make yourself available to counseling outside the church, as well as inside the church?

### **Developing Local Church Ministries**

1. How would you involve the church board in the needs of the church?
2. What provision would you make for developing Sunday School teachers and other ministries?
3. How would you seek to develop the musical talents of the church?
4. How would you seek to develop classes in Sunday School for new converts, new members, water baptismal candidates and potential teachers?
5. What program would you follow to develop the spiritual life of the youth?
6. Describe your worship style in services?
7. What approach to financial stewardship do you prefer? How have you appealed to your congregation in regard to giving?

## Leadership

1. Describe your style of leadership? Describe what you believe to be a healthy relationship between a pastor and his board, his congregation and the fellowship of ministers and churches with whom he works.
2. What are the three most recent books you have read? (Titles and Authors)
3. Have you worked with budgets? Describe the process?

## Pastor and Family

1. How does your wife share the call of ministry?
2. What involvement in the local church does your wife anticipate, if any?
3. How do you prioritize the ministry demands and family needs?
4. Do you have any outstanding debts or financial pressures that would hinder your ministry here?
5. What do you and your family enjoy as diversion?
6. How does your spouse feel about your ministry?
7. How would the move affect your family?

## Current Issues

1. What is your opinion on the “Kingdom Now Theory” which states there will be no rapture and the world will just get better and better until Jesus comes?
2. Where do you stand from the pulpit on the issues of:
  - a. Adultery
  - b. Homosexuality
  - c. Social drinking
  - d. Social dancing
  - e. Humanist doctrine
  - f. Abortion
  - g. Evolution vs. Creation
  - h. Gambling/Lottery

3. How do you feel about choreographed dancing in the worship service? (This is the orchestrated rehearsed ballet-type dancing used by some in worship services)
4. What are your views on the “New Age Movement”?
5. How do you feel about “Possibility Thinking”? (The power of the human mind being substituted for the power of the Holy Ghost)
6. How do you feel about these musical styles of religious music:
  - a. Contemporary Worship Choruses
  - b. Traditional Hymns
  - c. Christian Rock
  - d. Christian Rap
  - e. Southern Gospel
  - f. Contemporary Gospel
  - g. Instrumental Numbers
7. Please comment on the various translations and paraphrases of the Bible available today? Do you prefer any for sermon texts over any others?
8. What is your feeling concerning “Prophetic Ministry” used to give personal direction to individuals?

### **Spouse**

1. In what ways would you like to be involved in ministry, if any?
2. What is your attitude towards your husband’s vocation?
3. Tell us about your children? What is each one’s spiritual experience?
4. What are your concerns about a possible move?
5. Are there any things about our church or community that would cause you apprehension if you were called to serve here?

First Assembly of God  
1234 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Rev. John Applicant  
5678 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Dear Rev. Applicant,

Christian greetings!

As you are aware, we have been in search of a senior pastor for (Name of Church). You and your family have been a part of our consideration.

After careful and prayerful review and our awareness of our particular needs, we do not feel God is directing us to invite you to our church. This is not to say that we question your ability to have an effective ministry in another location.

We want to thank you for allowing your name to be considered. Our prayers are with you as you seek God's perfect will for your life and ministry.

Yours truly,

Search Committee  
First Assembly

First Assembly of God  
1234 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Rev. John Applicant  
5678 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Dear Rev. Applicant,

Christian greetings!

As you are aware, we have been in search of a senior pastor for (Name of Church). You and your family have been a part of our consideration.

After careful and prayerful review, we do not feel God is directing us to invite you to a personal interview with our Pulpit Committee at this time. This is not to say that God may not direct you to our church at another time.

We want to thank you for allowing your name to be considered. Our prayers are that God will give us both direction as to His perfect will in this matter.

In Him,

Search Committee  
First Assembly of God

First Assembly of God  
1234 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Rev. John Applicant  
5678 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Dear Rev. Applicant,

Christian greetings!

Thank you for your interest in the pastoral position at (name of church).

After prayerful consideration, we feel led to learn more about your ministry. Please complete the enclosed **Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire** and return it to the address below no later than (date). Along with the questionnaire, please include a cassette, CD, DVD, or VHS recording of your preaching ministry from (date) and another recording of your choice.

Send the questionnaire and recording to:

Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip

We will communicate with you again, after we have had time to review the information you send us.

Thank you for your cooperation as we seek God's will for our church.

May God bless you abundantly,

Sincerely,

Search Committee  
First Assembly of God

First Assembly of God  
1234 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Rev. John Applicant  
5678 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Dear Rev. Applicant,

Christian greetings!

As you are aware, we have been in search of a senior pastor for (Name of Church). You and your family have been a part of our consideration.

After careful and prayerful review and our awareness of our particular needs, we feel God is directing us to invite you to a personal interview with our Pulpit Committee. If we have not already done so, someone will be contacting you to schedule the interview.

We want to thank you for allowing your name to be considered. Our prayers are that God will give us both direction as to His perfect will in this matter.

In Him,

Search Committee  
First Assembly of God

Rev. John Applicant  
5678 Main Street  
Anywhere, KY 00000

Dear Rev. Applicant,

Christian greetings!

On behalf of (Name of Church), I am delighted to extend to you an official invitation to become our senior pastor. The vote of the congregation was overwhelmingly positive. We believe God has clearly spoken to us that you are to lead us in the coming years, and we look forward to many years of your ministry with us under God's blessing.

The compensation offer we discussed is as follows:

Salary:

Housing Allowance:

Car Allowance:

Book Allowance:

Study Leave Allowance:

Vacation: \_\_\_\_\_ weeks per year not including conventions, seminars, etc. To encourage you to use your vacation annually, it does not accrue from year to year.

Medication/Hospitalization: Fully paid for the entire family

Life Insurance:

Sick Leave:

Retirement: The church will deposit \_\_\_% of your base salary monthly into an MBA for your retirement.

Moving Expense: (Explain up-front what the church will cover in this area.)

It is normal practice for a minister to receive honorariums for weddings, funerals, etc. Such income is in addition to your salary. Pulpit supply will be worked out with the board concerning your absences from the pulpit for vacations, outside preaching, and for fulfilling responsibilities of serving on district committees.

Please let me know of any questions you may have on any of these points. Let me assure you of our sense of expectancy and excitement as we anticipate where God can lead us with you as our pastor.

We look forward to your arrival.

In Him,

Church Board Secretary

## Pastor Expectations and Compensation

The following is a list of issues the board will want to address with the pastoral candidate. These things need to be discussed candidly. The best time for these discussions is early in the candidate weekend, in the meeting with the board.

### Compensation:

- 1) Salary
- 2) Parsonage or housing allowance
- 3) Insurance benefits: health, dental, vision, life, etc.
- 4) Retirement benefits
- 5) Utility payments
- 6) Auto expenses
- 7) Moving expenses

The church should pay all expenses incurred in moving the new pastor.

- 8) Travel expenses to District/General Council events
- 9) Continuing education expenses

### Vacation

### Outside Employment

### Outside Ministry Opportunities

### Spouse's Ministry

## There are Several Factors that Determine the Pastor's Compensation, Such as:

- 1) Affordability: While every church wants to do the best they can for their pastor, the church can afford to pay only what they can afford to pay.
- 2) Needs: The church needs to consider the needs of the pastor and his family, and do all they can do to meet those needs.
- 3) Comparisons: It is helpful for churches to know what other churches of similar size, income, etc., pay their pastors. It is recommended that the church obtain a current copy of the Church Compensation Guide from: Christian Ministry Resources, PO Box 1098, Matthews, NC 28106 (704) 821-3845, Fax (704) 821-3872, [www.churchlawtoday.com](http://www.churchlawtoday.com)  
This will be a very helpful tool in determining what you should pay your pastor.
- 4) Job Description and Expectations: The more a pastor is expected to do, and the more responsibilities he has, the more he should be paid. For example, the Senior Pastor should always be paid more than any Staff Pastor, even if the Staff Pastor has been at the church longer, or is older.

## Recording the Pastor's Approved Compensation

IRS regulations require that amount approved for the pastor's compensation be recorded in the minutes of the meeting in which such compensation was approved. Below are examples of how motions can be worded regarding specific components of the pastor's compensation. These regulations apply to all credentialed ministers who are on the paid staff of a church.

### Housing Allowance Helps

### Salary Resolution

#### Housing Allowance:

The chairman informed the meeting that under the law, a minister of the Gospel is not subject to federal income tax on "housing allowance paid to him as part of his compensation to the extent used by him to rent or provide a home."

After considering the estimate of Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ of his home expenses, a motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and passed to adopt the following resolution.

Resolved that of the total cash salary for the year 2\_\_\_\_, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby designated as housing allowance.

#### Reimbursement Agreement:

Resolved that Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ be reimbursed for his automobile and professional expenses to the extent used by him to perform his ministry for the year 2\_\_\_\_, and the total cash salary be adjusted accordingly.

## Compensation Resolution

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2\_\_\_\_

### **Total Compensation:**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and carried that the total compensation to be expended for the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ for the calendar year of 2\_\_ is \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Housing:**

The Chairman informed the meeting that under the law, a minister of the Gospel is not subject to federal income tax on "housing allowance paid to him as part of his compensation to the extent used by him to rent or provide a home."

After considering the estimate of Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ of his home expenses, a motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and carried that.

Resolved that of the total compensation for the year 2\_\_, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby designated as "housing allowance."

### **Automobile Reimbursement:**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and carried that a further amount of total compensation be reimbursement for Reverend \_\_\_\_\_'s auto expenses to the extent used by him for pastoral and other ministerial duties. Estimated reimbursement for his auto expenses shall be & \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Professional Expenses Reimbursement:**

A motion was made by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and carried that all professional expenses be reimbursed to Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ from total compensation. Estimated professional expenses for 2\_\_ shall be \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Recording Secretary)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Reverend)

## Parsonage Allowance Designation

The board of Directors approved the following resolution on \_\_\_\_\_, 2\_\_\_\_.

*Whereas*, Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ is compensated by \_\_\_\_\_ exclusively for services as a minister of the Gospel, and

*Whereas*, Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ has rent free use of a church owned parsonage as compensation for services that he renders to the church in the exercise of his ministry, and

*Whereas*, as additional compensation paid to Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ for services that he renders to the church in the exercise of his ministry, \_\_\_\_\_ also desires to pay Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ for expenses that he incurs in maintaining the parsonage: therefore,

*Resolved*, that of the total compensation paid to Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby designated to be parsonage allowance pursuant to Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code, and it is further

*Resolved*, that the designation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a parsonage allowance shall apply to the calendar year of 2\_\_\_\_ and all future years unless otherwise provided by this board, and it is further

*Resolved*, that additional compensation to Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ for the calendar year 2\_\_\_\_, and for all future years unless otherwise provided by this board, Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ shall be permitted to live in the church-owned parsonage located at \_\_\_\_\_ and that no rent or other fee shall be payable to Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ for such occupancy and use.