



**MCC**<sup>®</sup>  
METROPOLITAN  
COMMUNITY CHURCHES

# MCC Pastoral Search Process

---

*Office of Church Life and Health*

The [MCC Pastoral Search Process](#) contains our denominational recommendations and pastoral search protocols.

<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>Steps of the Pastoral Search Committee</b> .....	5
<b>Preparation for Pastoral Search – Board of Directors</b> .....	11
<b>Qualifications of Pastoral Search Committee Members</b> .....	12
<b>Covenant for the Pastoral Search Committee</b> .....	14
<b>Consensus Decision-making</b> .....	17
<b>Letter of Agreement at the Time of Separation(in area)</b> .....	20
<b>Letter of Agreement at the Time of Separation (out of area)</b> .....	21
<b>Creating a Pastoral Search Budget</b> .....	22
<b>Interviewing the Pastoral Candidate</b> .....	24
<b>Communication Plan</b> .....	25
<b>Sample Documents and Resources</b> .....	<i>i</i>
<b>Sample Congregational Survey</b> .....	<i>ii</i>
<b>Sample Application</b> .....	<i>iii</i>
<b>Sample Questions – First Interview</b> .....	<i>xxi</i>
<b>Sample Questions – Interview Two</b> .....	<i>xxiii</i>
<b>Pastoral Contract Introduction</b> .....	<i>xxv</i>
<b>Sample Pastoral Contract Part-Time Pastor</b> .....	<i>xxxiii</i>
<b>Sample Pastoral Contract Full-Time Pastor</b> .....	<i>xli</i>
<b>Church Size Theory</b> .....	<i>xlvi</i>
<b>Compensation of Pastors in the USA</b> .....	<i>l</i>
<b>Sample Exit Interview</b> .....	<i>liii</i>

## Introduction

The calling of your next pastor is quite possibly one of the most important discernment processes your church will undertake.

If your call process results in a “good match” it will be the beginning of an exciting time of growth, development and effective ministry that will touch the lives of many people in your church and your community.

If the outcome of your call process is not a “good match” it can be the beginning of a time of great challenge and conflict; and can negatively impact the effectiveness of your church’s ministry - spiritually, relationally and economically - for years to come.

Remember, this is a spiritual discernment process and seeking God’s leading in this process is critical. Seeking the person God has been preparing for your church is a spiritual matter. It will take spiritual people seeking God’s guidance to lead you to a faithful and fruitful conclusion.

The key to the success of a pastoral search is a good discernment process: a process that is prayerful, well thought-through and follows the protocols of your local church Bylaws, MCC Bylaws and the MCC Pastoral Search Process. Some people will try to define a successful process as one that is quick and inexpensive. Neither great speed nor low cost will help you in being successful; to focus on those criteria constitutes a great mistake. It is important to give your community the time needed to better understand your present challenges and opportunities, to have a sense where God is leading for the next chapter, and to imagine the best pastoral skills and attributes in the leadership needed to help you find your way there. Many pastoral searches will benefit from and happen concurrently in the latter stages of work with a trained professional transitional clergyperson or lay leader during an intentional interim period.

Through the years we in MCC have learned a great deal about what works well and what causes pastoral search disasters. Furthermore, we are not alone in our learning about what makes up effective pastoral search.

It is recommended that each member of the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) read the following:

1. Local church's Bylaws
2. MCC's Bylaws – available on the UFMCC Website
3. This document - MCC Pastoral Search Process – available on the UFMCC Website

Your local church Bylaws will outline the requirements governing your individual congregation's Pastoral Search Committee. Your bylaws will contain information pertinent to the process such as the number of members to comprise the Pastoral Search Committee, whether those committee members are to be elected or appointed, and what percentage of votes is necessary for any candidate to be ultimately elected.

MCC Bylaws will help the committee members to better understand “the big picture” regarding the role of a Pastor and how MCC functions.

The MCC Pastoral Search Process contains our denominational recommendations and pastoral search protocols. Through the years we have learned what has worked and what has caused problems for our churches. Follow these recommendations, principles and steps and follow the direction of your Mentor and it will bring you to a more successful conclusion.

A PSC Mentor will be assigned to your search, from the MCC Office of Church Life and Health (OCLH). The Mentor is there to resource and provide guidance for helping the committee create and maintain a process that is clear, effective and has momentum. The Mentor has been through the PSC process and has had special training in helping churches find the best match for their church. They are there to support you and your team.

## Steps of the Pastoral Search Committee

Be careful to complete each step. They are here for a reason, to make your search successful.

Check off each number when completed.

It is strongly recommended that the PSC begin meeting WEEKLY then determine collectively based on need and action your schedule.

\_\_\_ 1. The PSC meets its OCLH mentor and has an orientation meeting with her/him to talk through the overall search process.

\_\_\_ 2. **Set up a timeline** to begin your Pastoral Search Process.

Many of us are not linear thinkers. We don't think about things from a process flow perspective but we all do well if we know what is expected of us and how much time we have to accomplish the task.

It is an exciting time in the life of your church and everyone is anxiously awaiting you and your team to present a candidate to them. However, it takes time, prayer and thoughtful consideration. It also takes a timeline in which to provide scope and boundaries to work.

Whenever we work on a project we need a beginning and an end date to help us know how much work has to be accomplished and when it needs to be done. So we begin at the end....

1. Set a goal date of when you hope to have a Pastor in place. (There are many factors that impact that date. They can be your Pastor is retiring/leaving or your interim process is nearing its term)
2. Look at the current date and map out month by month (or week by week) what you want to get accomplished. Take into consideration that many things will be happening simultaneously.
  - a. Within each month ensure that you have mapped out your communication plan and when/how that communication will take place.
  - b. Don't forget to add when your committee will be meeting.

Once you have mapped out your process your work begins!

\_\_\_ 3. The PSC needs to **develop a solid foundation** for working together **as a team**. Refer to PSC formation information pp. 11-24.

\_\_\_ 4. The PSC develops a comprehensive **communications plan** (pp. 25-32) to keep the congregation, committee, and applicants fully informed of the search process. Remember, it is important to explain your committee's process, you simply cannot divulge anything relating to applicants, i.e. name, numbers, etc. Over-communicate on where you are in the process and what steps are next. Share something every Sunday. Be creative.

\_\_\_ 5. A **Congregational study** (p. ii) should be completed. The church's history, strengths, weaknesses, community, and congregational needs must be well understood. An Interim Pastor is trained to assist with the studies to be done at this stage.

\_\_\_ 6. Develop a profile of the ideal candidate, include items that are non-negotiable. This could come from a survey and/or the congregational study and discussion of the PSC. This will assist you and your Mentor when it comes time to make decisions.

\_\_\_ 7. A Congregational Packet based on the congregational study about your church along with an application will be sent to all potential candidates. This packet should reflect your church, ministry, leadership and more.

\_\_\_ 8. Develop your **interview plan prior** to releasing the packet through OCLH. It is important you have your questions developed and who/whom will conduct the interviews. (See p. 24 and pp. xxi-xxiv)

\_\_\_ 9. **Standard Pastoral Search** model is used in MCC. When the committee is ready to receive applications, the OCLH is notified and an advertisement is created for the

denominational website (in addition to local advertising at the local church) and social media posting, including a deadline for submission, contact information for the local PSC, and a link for Clergy to access the application packet. All applications are received by the PSC. The OCLH may also recommend clergy for the PSC to invite to apply or encourage clergy who may engage us in discernment conversations to apply. The OCLH will use all of its resources to make available and qualified clergy aware of this ministry opportunity. After the deadline, the PSC will follow their agreed upon process for reviewing, vetting, interviewing, short-listing and ultimately choosing a candidate. As part of the vetting process, the names of applicants will be sent to the OCLH and the OFLD for a confidential eligibility review. The PSC will select only one clergy candidate to be presented to the congregation.

\_\_\_ 10. Determine in advance **what information you want from each applicant** (see “Sample Application” p. iii) – such as: a résumé, answers to a series of questions, references, and a sermon/worship link, etc. Also, remember that some applicants may ask you for information concerning the church, community and your pastoral search process.

\_\_\_ 11. All interviewees must be made aware that completion of a **Due Diligence Application** (see sample documents p. ix) and subsequent submission to criminal background and credit checks (paid for by the church) will be required if they are selected as one of the top two candidates. The PSC must determine who will have access to the background report information, where it will be kept and for how long. This is highly confidential information.

\_\_\_ 12. **As applicants submit material** ensure that all information is kept confidential. As part of the vetting process collectively meet with your committee to:

- a) determine whether they fit your predetermined Clergy Profile and fit with your church’s Values, Vision and Mission;

- b) determine whether they understand how to work effectively with your church's current size as well as the size you hope to grow into (Refer to Church Size Theory p. *xlvi*);

**Do not base any decision solely on a completed application** or someone's education or that they came from a high profile church. Make use of all your resources before making a determination. A prescreening interview will assist in the vetting process.

\_\_\_\_ 13. Depending on the number of applicants applying, the PSC chooses applicant(s) to be interviewed, after vetting applicants for eligibility with the OCLH and OFLD. The **first interview** is normally done via a conference call or video call (using Skype) utilizing a set of standardized questions. *You are encouraged to interview as many applicants as you can within your capacities at this stage.*

\_\_\_\_ 14. The PSC determines what candidate(s) stands out, using all information available and based on the pre-determined criteria.

\_\_\_\_ 15. Send your top 1 or 2 candidates the **Due Diligence Application**. Once the candidates return the completed application proceed with criminal background and credit checks extending back at least five years. Also, finish checking with any and all references; follow-up with additional questions that may have arisen since your first contact.

\_\_\_\_ 16. A **second interview** is typically done with the top candidate(s). When possible, an in-person, off-campus interview is best. Strict confidentiality must remain in effect until the PSC is ready to make the official announcement of their top candidate to the membership of the congregation.

If indeed the PSC is able to make a consensus choice for their **number one candidate**, the candidate:



- a. should be asked to confirm her/his continuing interest. Provided the candidate does wish to be presented to the membership,
- b. the individual should be asked to put any other pastoral searches on hold pending the outcome of your congregation's vote.

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. **Prepare well for the announcement** of your candidate to the congregation. Do not publish or give out the candidate's contact information. Consider putting together a pamphlet sharing why the candidate was selected and facts about the candidate.

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. Basic terms of contract should be negotiated and agreed before the candidate visits. (see Pastoral Contract p. xxv)

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. **Candidating Weekend** - Schedule, at least two weeks in advance, a week or extended weekend for the candidate to meet with the leadership and membership of the church. Offer a number of different activities involving as many of the members as possible. Be creative. The Board will also want to meet with the candidate to discuss any outstanding contractual issues. This will also be a time for the candidate to preach and fully participate in worship. Remember that the candidate will need time to explore the community. Consider adding a day or two on either end of the weekend for the candidate to begin looking for housing options. The candidate may also ask for some specific items for the visit. The church pays for all expenses: travel, housing and food. Do not put a candidate in someone's home; a hotel would be most appropriate. It is wise (and considerate) to invite and cover the expenses of the candidate's partner/spouse (if applicable) whenever possible. Refer to UFMCC Bylaws and the local church Bylaws.

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. A **special congregational voting meeting** should also be scheduled at least two weeks in advance, and held at the end or after the candidating week(end). If the voting meeting is not being held on the Sunday of the candidating week(end), which is the usual practice, it is courteous to the candidate to hold the vote no longer than a week later. The candidate and spouse do not attend the congregational meeting and the only item on the agenda is whether or not to elect Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ as the new Pastor of MCC \_\_\_\_\_. Be certain to have ascertained whether the candidate will accept the call to your church if elected.

- If the vote does not meet the minimum percentage required in your local church Bylaws, notify the candidate and your Mentor without delay.
- If the candidate does not accept the vote or call of the congregation contact your Mentor and congregation without delay.
- If the candidate is elected and accepts the call, negotiate the start date and notify your congregation and your Mentor without delay.

\_\_\_\_ 21. The work of the PSC continues in helping to create a smooth pastoral transition. The work is finally completed at the conclusion of the Installation Service.

\*\*If your church has an assigned mentor utilize them and their knowledge of the process. Each church is unique, however resourcing those that have had the same experience that you are experiencing will allow you to get answers quickly.

## Preparation for Pastoral Search – Board of Directors

1. The Board of Directors (typically the vice moderator) notifies the MCC Office of Church Life and Health as soon as the Pastor shares an intention to resign or a pulpit vacancy occurs.
2. The Office of Church Life and Health may be invited to the church to host a forum (in person, via Skype or video) with the congregation to give an overview of the pastoral search process and discuss the need for an Interim or Gap Pastor. This visit may be, and often is, scheduled before the current Pastor leaves the church; however, respect should be accorded to the outgoing Pastor's wishes.
3. The Board creates a plan for acknowledging the work of the outgoing Pastor prior to the Pastor leaving. (see "Letter of Agreement at Time of Separation" pp. 20-21)
4. It is recommended that the Board establish a process whereby an Exit Interview with the outgoing Pastor can be completed (see "Sample Exit Interview" p. lii).
5. Before the development of the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) the Board develops a budget for the pastoral search process (see attachment "Creating a Pastoral Search Budget" p. 22-23).
6. The Board puts into motion the establishment of the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) mid-way through the work of the Interim Pastor after completion of the Readiness to Enter Pastoral Search Survey.
7. The Board develops the proposed salary/housing, benefits contract **prior to the election of the new Pastor**. Once a candidate is selected by the PSC, preliminary negotiations can begin. It is good to have a shared understanding of the basic terms of employment before the candidate visits so that everyone is on the same page, and there are no surprises which might upset the process at this point. Refer to Pastoral Contracts Introduction and Part/Full Time Pastoral Contract, pp. xxv-xlvi.

## Qualifications of Pastoral Search Committee Members

Each member church in MCC establishes their own Pastoral Search Committee according to their local Bylaws. This is why it is so important to read your local church Bylaws. Some church Bylaws state that the PSC is made up by the members of the Board, others state it is 3 board members and 2 appointed or elected members of the congregations and so forth. When asked about qualifications, it has been difficult to make a general statement because of the different ways we establish our PSC's.

A quote taken from the Pastoral Search Journey, page 8, by John Vonhof

*"A search committee is given the task of finding the person God would have lead the congregation as its pastor. It could be said that your committee needs individuals who are both "head smart" and "heart feeling". For that reason, committee members should rank high in five areas: spiritual maturity and sensitivity, ability to work well in a committee setting, listening and communication skills, discernment, and involvement in the ministries of the church. An understanding of leadership and administrative skills is also helpful. The search team should also understand the church's vision and mission. While search committee members will be at different levels in the five areas, all must have an enthusiasm for their task that will carry them through the long process ahead." Members of the committee should also be selected for those "who are respected, have the time to commit, work well in a group, and are known to keep commitments and assignments."*

Though the BOD is the elected body of your church, determining who will serve on the PSC is vitally important. Whether appointed or elected, you may choose to have an application to determine who should be on the committee to allow a broader range of skills needed for a successful committee structure.

<b>Job Title:</b>	Pastoral Search Committee Chair		
<b>Location:</b>	Local MCC		
<b>Job Description</b>			
<b>Role and Responsibilities</b>			
<p><i>"A search committee is given the task of finding the person God would have lead the congregation as its pastor.</i></p> <p><i>As its chair you would excel with committee members who are both "head smart" and "heart feeling". Committee members should rank high in five areas: spiritual maturity and sensitivity, ability to work well in a committee setting, listening and communication skills, discernment, and involvement in the ministries of the church. An understanding of leadership and administrative skills is also helpful.</i></p> <p><i>The committee should also understand the church's vision and mission. Understanding the different levels your committee will possess the key is all must have an enthusiasm for their task which will carry them through the long process ahead."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Spiritual Maturity</li> <li>• Team Builder</li> <li>• Great Communicator</li> <li>• Discerning</li> <li>• Administrative skills</li> </ul>			
<b>Qualifications and Education Requirements</b>			
Member of their local church.			
<b>Preferred Skills</b>			
Project Management			
<b>Additional Notes</b>			

## Covenant for the Pastoral Search Committee

WHEREAS, members of the Search Committee have been selected to this position of highest trust and responsibility.

WHEREAS, members of the Committee recognize the potential effect of their deliberations and recommendations to the church upon its future mission and ministry.

We solemnly enter the following covenant together before God.

### A COVENANT OF PRAYER

We will uphold one another in prayer and seek together the clear leadership of the Holy Spirit.

### A COVENANT OF RESPECT

We will uphold and respect each other and recognize the many gifts each member brings.

### A COVENANT OF TRUST AND HONEST COMMUNICATION

We will speak openly and honestly with one another without taking offense, realizing that we need the opportunity of “thinking aloud” to help sort out impressions and responses as we study our church’s needs and evaluate potential candidates.

## A COVENANT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

We will treat, with confidentiality, Committee discussions and evaluations regarding specific potential candidates. We will not reveal any information about any candidate to anyone outside of this committee structure. This includes members and non-members of the church and our significant other. We will deal responsibly with privileged information. We will agree as a group on appropriate process and progress reports to the Board and the church. We will not criticize perspectives, decisions or members of the Committee; except face-to-face in Committee sessions.

## A COVENANT OF ACCOUNTABILITY

We will proceed with ethical sensitivity and thoroughness in all investigative and evaluative procedures in the consideration of any pastor. We recognize our accountability to our church and to God for our decisions.

## A COVENANT OF UNITY

We will present to the church for its consideration only such recommendations as we can fully support as a Committee. Where there are honest differences of opinion, we covenant to work these out before making a recommendation to the church.

---

– Chair

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **The Four Agreements**

**Speak with integrity:** Say only what you mean. Avoid using words to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.

**Don't Take Anything Personally:** Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.

**Don't Make Assumptions:** Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness, and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.

**Always Do Your Best:** Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret.

**By Don Miguel Ruiz from his best-selling book *The Four Agreements*.**



# Consensus Decision-making

Elisa Vega-Burns, MCC of the Resurrection

Per our Pastoral Search Process and Timeline ground rules, the decision of \_\_(church name)\_\_\_'s Pastoral Search Committee to select the candidate to be presented to the congregation for election as our next Senior Pastor will require the **consensus** of the Committee members. **Consensus means overwhelming agreement; it does not mean unanimity.** In light of this, consensus decision-making does not mean that all parties are completely satisfied with the final outcome, but that **the decision is acceptable to all parties** because no one feels that the resolution violates his/her vital interests. It is important that consensus be the product of a good-faith effort to meet the interests of all stakeholders.

Working toward consensus means that every group member has an opportunity to influence the final decision. Members of the group reach substantial agreement, not necessarily unanimity, as mentioned previously. Consensus cannot be achieved by majority rule or averaging. Consensus frees the group from “either/or” thinking and emphasizes the possibilities of “both/and” thinking by focusing attention on needs and goals. Consensus decision-making allows for the creation of an outcome that **all members can regard as fair.** When committee members strive for what is **best for all,** rather than trying to triumph over others whose views may be different, they fulfill the highest expectations of the democratic tradition.

The key indicator of whether or not a consensus has been reached is the degree to which **everyone agrees they can live with the final proposal** after every effort has been made to meet any outstanding interests. Thus, consensus requires that someone frame a proposal after listening carefully to everyone's interests, goals and concerns have been considered. Interests, by the way, are not the same as positions or demands. Demands and positions are what people say they must have, but interests are the underlying needs or reasons that explain why they take the positions that they do.

## **Candidate Selection /Consensus Straw-poll**

After the Pastoral Search Committee has had sufficient time for review and discussion of the applicants, the Chair will ask each member to hold up fingers showing where s/he is on the **Levels of Consensus Scale**, shown below, regarding the selection of a particular applicant as the candidate to be presented to the congregation for election.

1. I can say an unqualified “yes” to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision is an expression of the wisdom of the group.
2. I find the decision perfectly acceptable.
3. I can live with the decision, but I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
4. I do not fully agree with the decision and need to register my view about it. However, I do not choose to block the decision. I am willing to support the decision because I trust the wisdom of the group.
5. I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to stand in the way of this decision being accepted.
6. I feel that we have no clear sense of unity in the group. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached.

### **Sample Ground Rules for Consensus Decision-making**

It is important to remember that there is no expectation that all Committee members will agree with every word, statement, or sentence uttered as we strive for consensus regarding a pastoral candidate to be presented for election. Each member of the Pastoral Search Committee needs to focus on the big picture and the good of the congregation, not his/her personal feelings or interests.

The following ground rules will be helpful in our discussions regarding the applicants:

1. Be courteous and listen while others are speaking.
2. Keep remarks brief. As a guideline, keep remarks to one minute per speaker. Time is of the essence.
3. Add new comments only; do not repeat what others have said.
4. Address the Chair of the Pastoral Search Committee rather than other Committee members.
5. Keep an open mind. Listening to differing opinions often affords the greatest opportunity for increased understanding.
6. Be positive. Offer a constructive suggestions rather than criticisms of others’ opinions about a subject.

7. Look for common ground. Do not seek simply to reinforce your own view or position, especially at the expense of another participant.
8. If you have spoken once during a specific round of discussion, allow others to speak before you make further contributions.

### Sample Consensus Straw-poll & Chair's script

Pastoral Search Team	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Has a candidate emerged for you?	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N	Y / N
If Yes, what is his/her name?					

Given your responses (above), I propose that we select \_\_\_\_\_ as the candidate we wish to present to the congregation for election as our next Senior Pastor.

Please indicate your level of consensus by holding up your fingers to show where you are on the Levels of Consensus Scale (recite text below).

- 1 One: I can say an unqualified "yes" to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision is an expression of the wisdom of the group.
- 2 Two: I find the decision perfectly acceptable.
- 3 Three: I can live with the decision, but I am not especially enthusiastic about it.
- 4 Four: I do not fully agree with the decision and need to register my view about it. However, I do not choose to block the decision. I am willing to support the decision because I trust the wisdom of the group.
- 5 Five: I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to stand in the way of this decision being accepted.
- 6 Six: I feel that we have no clear sense of unity in the group. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached.

## Letter of Agreement at the Time of Separation (in area)

This is a letter of agreement at the time of separation between (Pastor) and the Board of Directors of the (Church Name). It is the result of a process of clarification of the former pastor's role as they continue to live in the area.

This letter is to be shared throughout the congregation so that others may understand changes in role and responsibilities and can cooperate together as the congregation and former pastor move into another phase of their respective lives. While the former pastor bears primary responsibility for maintaining healthy boundaries, all will attempt to honor this agreement.

1. The Pastor's resignation, effective (Date), signifies their understanding that all pastoral, sacramental, and administrative duties in this congregation are terminated as of that date. It is agreed that the Board will make provision for other pastoral ministry for the congregation.
2. The former Pastor agrees that they will not attend church events at (church name) for at least a year, unless they are invited to do so in the capacity of a new role with MCC or another organization. They will also not attend social events at which a majority of those present are members of (Church Name).
3. The former Pastor agrees that they will not officiate at any baptism, wedding, funeral, or other rite or sacrament for members of (Church Name). These occasions deepen the relationship between a Pastor and a congregation and rightly belong to future Pastors. This guideline will prevent divided loyalties in the congregation and pressures on future Pastors or Interim Pastors. The former Pastor does expect to exercise their ministry in other congregations as invited.
4. The former Pastor agrees that they will not make or listen to any uncomplimentary or critical remarks concerning the future pastoral leadership of (Church Name), nor will they become the confidant of anyone who wishes to express criticism of future leaders or ministries of (Church Name).
5. In the increasingly virtual world in which we live, the former Pastor will make every effort to maintain appropriate boundaries in online communications. Recognizing that they no longer bear responsibility for pastoral care or leadership of (Church Name), they agree to remove themselves from all church-related email lists and groups. They will not actively initiate public conversations with members of (Church Name) on Facebook or in other social media situations.
6. If, after a suitable period of time, there is a desire on the part of the next settled Pastor to review any of the above items, they may instigate that with the consent of the Board and provided the former Pastor is willing for such review and negotiation to occur.
7. The former Pastor will remove their own vestments, equipment, books, and other possessions by (Date). Items they used, belonging to the congregation, will remain at (Church Name). Keys to the church will be returned by the same date.

---

Date

Vice Moderator

Former Pastor

## Letter of Agreement at the Time of Separation (out of area)

This is a letter of agreement at the time of separation between (Pastor) and the Board of Directors of the (Church Name). It is the result of a process of clarification of the former pastor's new role with respect to (Church Name).

This letter is to be shared throughout the congregation so that others may understand changes in role and responsibilities and can cooperate together as the congregation and former Pastor move into another phase of their respective lives. While the former Pastor bears primary responsibility for maintaining healthy boundaries, all will attempt to honor this agreement.

1. The Pastor's resignation, effective (Date), signifies their understanding that all pastoral, sacramental, and administrative duties in this congregation are terminated as of that date. It is agreed that the Board will make provision for other pastoral ministry for the congregation.
2. The former Pastor agrees that they will not attend church events at (church name) for at least a year, unless they are invited to do so in the capacity of a new role with MCC or another organization. They will also not attend social events at which a majority of those present are members of (Church Name).
3. The former Pastor agrees that they will not officiate at any baptism, wedding, funeral, or other rite or sacrament for members of (Church Name). These occasions deepen the relationship between a Pastor and a congregation and rightly belong to future Pastors. This guideline will prevent divided loyalties in the congregation and pressures on future Pastors or Interim Pastors. The former Pastor does expect to exercise their ministry in other congregations as invited.
4. The former Pastor agrees that they will not make or listen to any uncomplimentary or critical remarks concerning the future pastoral leadership of (Church Name), nor will they become the confidant of anyone who wishes to express criticism of future leaders or ministries of (Church Name).
5. In the increasingly virtual world in which we live, the former Pastor will make every effort to maintain appropriate boundaries in online communications. Recognizing that they no longer bear responsibility for pastoral care or leadership of (Church Name), they agree to remove themselves from all church-related email lists and groups. They will not actively initiate public conversations with members of (Church Name) on Facebook or in other social media situations.
6. If, after a suitable period of time, there is a desire on the part of the next settled Pastor to review any of the above items, they may instigate that with the consent of the Board and provided the former Pastor is willing for such review and negotiation to occur.
7. The former Pastor will remove their own vestments, equipment, books, and other possessions by (Date). Items they have used, belonging to the congregation, will remain at (Church Name). Keys to the church will be returned by the same date.

---

Date

Vice Moderator

Former Pastor

## Creating a Pastoral Search Budget

(It would be helpful for the chair of the Pastoral Search Committee to give this document to the Interim Pastor and the Vice Moderator.)

There are **two specific roles for the Board of Directors** to accomplish during the Pastoral Search Process:

1. Develop a budget for the Pastoral Search Process.
2. When a candidate is chosen, it is the role of the Board to negotiate a contract. Review the sample contracts.

There are a number of costs pertaining to the pastoral search process. It will be helpful for the Board to put together a preliminary budget for the Pastoral Search Process. Once the process is underway the Board and Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) can revisit it to see if it needs to be adjusted.

### Areas of Considerations

**Phone:** You will want to remain in contact with your Mentor, check references, talk with candidates, and so forth. It would be wise to have the members of the PSC all download something like Skype which allows free phone service over your computer. It also features video conferencing (for those who have a camera on their computers) and conference calling. Skype.com

**Onsite Interview of Candidates:** Generally, the first interview of the candidates is done via telephone or video conferencing. It would be wise, if possible, to bring your top one or two candidates in for a face to face interview and to cover their expenses for travel, hotel\* and food. You should also consider the cost of a hotel meeting room as it is best to hold these interviews somewhere other than your church campus in order to maintain complete confidentiality. (Not all churches can afford to do this however it should be considered.)

**Credit and Criminal Background Checks:** Once the PSC has selected your top candidate(s) it is imperative that you pay for the completion of background checks going back a minimum of five years. Refer to the attachment titled Due Diligence.

**Brochures:** Once a candidate is chosen you will want to put together a nice brochure for the congregation containing information about the candidate you are proposing.

**Candidating Week (end):** The PSC will need to determine how long a candidating time to plan for. In small churches an extended weekend generally works well; however, a larger more complex church might want to plan for a visit spanning two consecutive Sundays and utilizing the intervening week for meetings with leadership and community leaders. Plan on budgeting expenses for travel, hotel\* and food and possibly a car for the candidate and her/his spouse.

**New Pastor Moving Expenses:** After the new pastor is elected there will be the cost of moving. These costs – typically an allowance to cover the moving company, travel, hotel and food during the move – should be negotiated with the new pastor.

*\*Hotel: Avoid housing candidates with church members. Using a hotel, a neutral environment, allows for the better preservation of confidentiality and greatly reduces the possibility for unintentionally seeding of future conflict.*

## Interviewing the Pastoral Candidate

If this is your first time or 100<sup>th</sup> time interviewing there are certain things that should be taken into consideration before the interview begins. Recognize both you and the candidate are nervous. This is their first exposure to you and your church (other than what can be gleaned off of social media). This is the first time you are speaking to them whether in person and/or via technology and you are coming into the interview with preconceived notions on who they are! Do your best to rid yourselves on what you believe they are projecting as a person via their resume and listen carefully to how they respond to your questions.

Now is the time for you to stop and consider the environment you are in and recognize that you are in charge of creating a space the will allow for successful relaxed communication.

Whether you are the interviewer or interviewee its stressful. Turn that into your advantage by being prepared! The following tasks need to be assigned and discussed prior to the interview.

1. Decide who will open the interview by telling the candidate about the process? This same person will also try and find some common ground to get the candidate to relax. Ask a sort of ice breaker question. If you ever have gone to a workshop, there are always questions that get asked to allow the instructor to know you better and to allow others to know you as well. (Something simple like favorite movie, are they a picture or word person or favorite hobby) Finding common ground establishes a connection which results in a more relaxed atmosphere for both you and the candidate.
2. Decide who asks the first question.
3. Decide who will time the interview especially if you are doing multiple interview in a short span of time? Let the candidate know the interview is timed and that you will need to end the interview within a prescribed amount of time. This show respect for both their and your time.
4. Decide who will wrap up the interview with next steps.

A relaxed, engaged candidate will give insight into themselves better if you have created an environment where it is safe for them to be expressive. Do not set the tone for them to preach to you but encourage them to reveal who they are.

As the Pastoral Search Committee, a great first interview will help you discern who will progress to the next phase in the process.





# Communication Plan

*This is a tool for you to use as you outline and execute your communication plan. Ensure that you have listed all the ways that you plan to communicate and document to ensure you haven't missed a valuable source of "Getting the Word Out." There are many ways to do so. Take the time to fill out the plan to allow you to keep track more accurately. This is an exciting time and also a very stressful time for both you and the congregation. It is better to over communicate!*

Church Name

**Pastoral Search Communication Plan**

**Date**

## Section I. Strategy Overview

### Communication Objectives

1. Think broad here. Who needs to be in the loop as you work through the Pastoral search process. How often to you need to communicate. Who needs to know what when?
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### Target Audiences

1. Who are you communicating to?

### Positioning Statement (Internal)

Clearly articulate the main benefits of what you are doing and what the outcome will be

### Desired Action

All of the desired actions listed here should be tangible and measurable. Look back at your target audiences

Make sure to also check your website.

## Section II. Communication Platforms

### Communication Channels, Target Audience & Message Frequency

#### 1. Church

- (see Section III for messaging topics)
- **Target audience** includes:

#### 2. Email Marketing

- E-newsletter once every 1-2 weeks
- **Target audiences**
  - i. X
  - ii. Y
  - iii. Z

#### 3. Facebook

- Multiple updates each week
- **Target audience**
  - i. X
  - ii. Y
  - iii. Z

## **Section III. Messaging**

### **A. Article Topics – To Publish on Your Website (and then sent out via email)**

**Topic 1 – Committee Formation**

**Topic 2 – Survey**

**Topic 3 - Updates**

**Topic 4 – Updates – Candidating weekend etc.**

### **B. Daily/Weekly Messaging Topics for Social Media**

**Tip:** Create “sound bites” from information above and share across social media.

In this section you want to detail some of the topics you know will resonate with your target audiences.





## Section VI. Results & Targets ()

Platform	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
<b>Social Media</b>							
Facebook							
<b>Email Marketing</b>							
<b>Website Traffic</b>							





# Sample Documents and Resources

## Sample Congregational Survey

1. Attendance Length at MCC (give several choices)
2. How often do you attend service? (Weekly, Monthly, etc.)
3. Which Service do you usually attend?
4. Are you a member of (Name of church)? *We asked this question because we have a lot of people who are regular attendee's and we wanted them to be a part of the process.*
5. Age Range
6. Other than Sunday Worship do you participate in any ministries, programs, or activities of the Church? (Yes/No)
7. How important is it to have multiple services on Sunday?
8. Do you contribute financially to the church?(Yes/No)
9. How important is the level of experience of our new Pastor?
10. Household Income Range (we asked them to fill in an amount to give insight to incoming Pastor)
11. I identify as: Gay, Lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer etc
12. I expect our next Pastor to make it a priority to visit the church members. (Important, Very Important, Not sure)
13. I expect our next Pastor to be energetic and charismatic in worship.
14. I expect our next Pastor to focus primarily on the worship service.
15. I expect the next Pastor to work with the Board in setting visionary leadership.
16. I expect the next Pastor to develop a strong outreach into the community.
17. I expect the next Pastor to develop strong board and committee leaders.
18. I expect the next Pastor to develop more programs for members and visitors.
19. Desired Professional Skills of our next Pastor (This was multiple choice where we listed a myriad of skills)
20. How important is the Pastor's personal appearance at church functions or representing the church at community events?
21. Our Congregation (True False)
  - Cares for each other
  - Volunteers for church activities
  - Gives financial support to the church
  - Supports its committees
  - Helps to find resources for those congregants in need
  - Supports the board
  - Uses their talents in worship services
  - Welcomes all to our church
  - Is a very diverse congregation
  - Will support the next Pastor wholeheartedly

## Sample Application

Dear (candidate's name)

Thank you for your interest in (church name) and we look forward to reviewing your application.

After careful review of the applications we will select our top candidates for a phone interview. Once we select our top candidates we will request that they complete a Due Diligence Application which will ask for more personal information and information that is needed to complete the necessary background checks.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and your willingness to apply. Please note that we will keep you abreast where you are in our process but we ask for the grace and gift of time to do our due diligence.

Please send your completed application to \*(insert name and email/physical address).

Sincerely,

(signature and typed name)

# Application

## Submit a Professional Resume

Include education, employment history, personal and professional references including contact information (at least 3 of each) and other information as you wish to share. Include a list of all MCC congregations you have been a member of or served in.

## Submit a Sample of Preaching

Include an audio or video link that will give an example of your preaching. If you would like to send other links of leading worship please feel free to add those.

## Personal Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Spiritual Gifts

(1.) \_\_\_\_\_ (2.) \_\_\_\_\_ (3.) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Availability: \_\_\_\_\_

I am: US Citizen? \_\_\_\_\_ Alien legally authorized to work in US? \_\_\_\_\_

*(This question is for US-Based churches, congregations elsewhere will need to check your country's requirements.)*

In UFMCC, I am: ordained? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

4. **Questions** (Based in part on the book, *Pastoral Search Journey* by John Vonhof)

Feel free to attach additional pages as needed.

**a. Thoughts about ministry**

The areas of ministry I find most challenging are:

---

The areas of ministry I find most satisfying are:

---

The areas in which I most need to grow are:

---

Why are you open to a new call at this time?

---

**b. Describe your thoughts about leadership**

My style of leadership is

---

I hope my relationship to the board will be:

---

I hope my relationship to staff and ministry team leaders will be:

---

Developing and nurturing a vision means:

---

Involving others in lay ministry means:

---

I mentor others by:

---

I foster commitment and accountability by:

---

**c. Describe your thoughts about administration**

I think administration of the church's business is:

---

The board and ministry teams assist in the church's administration by:

---

**d. Describe your thoughts about worship**

The worship style I prefer is:

---

My preaching style is:

---

Lay participation in worship should include:

---

**e. Describe your thoughts about education**

Good children's and youth ministry includes:

---

Good adult education includes:

---

**f. Describe your thoughts about discipleship**

I think good discipleship means:

---

Discipleship training and involvement includes:

---

**g. Describe your thoughts about doing justice ministry**

Doing good justice ministry means:

---

I think being involved in justice ministry is:

---

**h. Describe your thoughts about fellowship**

Good church fellowship is:

---

Caring for one another means:

---

Hospital/home visits:

---

**i. Attach a brief statement of faith.**

**j. References –**

**Two MCC Clergy**

**Phone #**

**Email**

**Church**

1.

2.

**Two MCC Laity**

1.

2.

**Two Optional References**

**Phone #**

**Email**

**Type of Reference**

1.

2.





### **Sample Due Diligence Application**

*This is for US-Based churches, congregations elsewhere will need to check your country's requirements.*

*PSC: This application is much more personal and requires sensitive information from your top candidates. It must be completed in order to complete the criminal background and credit checks. It is critical that this form be completed so that you can hopefully choose your candidate.*

**DO NOT SELECT A CANDIDATE WITHOUT COMPLETING THIS STEP!**

Dear Rev. \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your ongoing interest in our congregation. We have appreciated your candor in our communications and you are now being seriously considered for our position. It is now time to take the next step in our process.

Please complete the following Due Diligence Application. We are aware that we are asking for personal information and we will be respectful in how we handle the information.

Please send your complete Due Diligence Application to \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Chair, Pastoral Search Committee

**1. Personal Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Also, provide the addresses covering the last five years.

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a partner or relative who works for MCC? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, complete this section

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

I am: US Citizen? \_\_\_ Alien legally authorized to work in US? \_\_\_

If called, can you present evidence of your citizenship and/or proof of your legal right to live and work in this country? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Are you able to perform the essential functions of the job for which you are applying, either with or without reasonable accommodation? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If no, describe the functions that you cannot perform: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Do you currently have a valid driver's license? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If no, explain \_\_\_\_\_

---

I am:           ordained?       \_\_\_\_\_ Year of ordination \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of current ordination authorizing body:

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Are you a Transfer Clergy from another denomination? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, which denomination? \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

## Previous Criminal or Civil Liability

*Note: The questions in this section are designed to help the Church make an informed decision concerning an application for a ministerial position. False or incomplete answers will be grounds to remove an applicant from further consideration or to dismiss from employment an applicant who has been hired.*

1. Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or “no contest” to, any felony or misdemeanor other than minor traffic violations?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each conviction or plea, when and where the conviction or plea occurred, and the sentence received).
  
2. Have you ever been found liable, or participated in an out-of-court settlement as a defendant in any civil lawsuit?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each case number, court, when and where each incident occurred, and the verdict rendered or result of the settlement).
  
3. Have you ever been accused of or investigated for sexual misconduct? (Note: The term “sexual misconduct” here refers to the definition of sexual misconduct of clergy stated in the UFMCC Clergy Code of Conduct, and is attached to this application.)  
 Yes  No If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify when and where each accusation was made and how each accusation was resolved).
  
4. Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary action by an employer or licensing organization alleging sexual or ethical misconduct?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet.
  
5. Have you ever been the subject of ecclesiastical discipline by a church or denomination?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet.

6. On a separate sheet, list every previous denomination, including name and address, in which you have held credentials as clergy and explain the reason for each change.

Are you currently employed?  Yes  No

If yes, may we contact your current employer?  Yes  No

**Answer the following questions if you hold or have ever held any type of professional license:**

Are you or have you ever been licensed/certified for any profession:  Yes  No

If yes, name the license/certification for each:

---

---

Issuing State: \_\_\_\_\_

License/Certification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Was any license/certification ever revoked or suspended for any reason?  Yes  No

If yes, state the reason(s), date of revocation or suspension, and date of reinstatement, if any:

---

---

### Employment History

List below all present and past employment starting with your most recent employer (last five years is sufficient). Account for all periods of employment. You must complete this section even if attaching a resume. Attach additional page(s) if necessary.

Name of Employer/Church \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Business

Your Supervisor/Vice Moderator of Board's Name

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address & Street

City / State / Zip

Dates of Employment: From \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Until \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Monthly Pay: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position and duties: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

Reason for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

May we contact this employer for a reference?  Yes  No

**Military Service**

Have you obtained any special skills or abilities as a result of service in the military?

Yes  No

If so, describe: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**Please read carefully, initial each paragraph, and sign below.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby certify that I have not knowingly withheld any information that might adversely affect my chances for employment and that the answers given by me are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that I, the undersigned applicant, have personally completed this application. I understand that any omission or misstatement of material fact on this application or on any document used to secure employment shall be grounds for rejection of this application or for immediate discharge if I am employed, regardless of the time elapsed before discovery.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby authorize this congregation of Metropolitan Community Churches to thoroughly investigate my references, work record, education, and other matters related to my suitability for employment and, further authorize the references I have listed to disclose to the company any and all letters, reports, and other information related to my work records, without giving me prior notice of such disclosure. In addition, I hereby release this Metropolitan Community Church, all former employers, and all other

persons, corporations, partnerships, and associations from any and all claims, demands, or liabilities arising out of or in any way related to such investigation or disclosure.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that nothing contained in this application of employment or in any pre-employment interview is intended to or shall create a contract (expressed or implied) between myself and this congregation, for either employment or the providing of any benefit.

\_\_\_\_\_ Should a search of public records (including records documenting an arrest, indictment, conviction, civil judicial action, tax lien, or outstanding judgment) be conducted by internal personnel on behalf of Metropolitan Community Church, I am entitled to copies of any such public records obtained by Metropolitan Community Church unless I mark the check box below. If I am not hired as a result of such information, I am entitled to a copy of any such records even though I have checked the box below.

I waive receipt of a copy of any public record described in the paragraph above.

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature



**DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION TO OBTAIN  
INVESTIGATIVE CONSUMER REPORT**

*This is for US-Based churches, congregations elsewhere will need to check your country's requirements.*

In connection with my application for employment or promotion or other job change, I understand that Metropolitan Community Churches may obtain an INVESTIGATIVE CONSUMER REPORT that will include information as to my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living. This report may reveal information about work habits, including oral assessments of my job performance, experiences, and abilities, along with reasons for termination of past employment. Such a report may be requested by Metropolitan Community Church. Further, I understand and agree that Metropolitan Community Church may request information from various federal, state, and other agencies, including public and private sources which maintain records concerning my past activities relating to my driving record, credit history, criminal record, civil matters, previous employment, educational background, and professional licensing if any.

Report will be ordered from: [www.screennow.com](http://www.screennow.com) or any other consumer reporting agency.

I have the right, upon written request made within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 30 days) after receipt of this notice to receive a written disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigation.

If a consumer investigative report is obtained and an adverse decision is made affecting my employment, Metropolitan Community Church will provide to me, before making the adverse decision, a copy of the investigative consumer report and a description in writing of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

I acknowledge that a fax or copy of this Disclosure and Authorization bearing my signature shall be as valid as the original. This authorization is valid for any consumer report requested at any time during the tenure of my employment. This release is valid for all federal, state, county, and local agencies and authorities.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License No.: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DEFINITION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT FOR CHURCH WORKERS

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy** (UFMCC Clergy Manual 2014)

Since its founding, UFMCC has offered a counter voice to the sex negativity of Judeo Christian culture. Therefore, the UFMCC Sexual Misconduct Policy must, on the one hand, acknowledge the risk of sexual misconduct, while on the other hand avoid the risk of the disembodiment of leaders who are called to model health and wholeness, including sexual wholeness.

Let it be affirmed that sex is a gift from God. The divine value of sex includes but is not limited to pleasure, procreation, intimate communications, grace, and love. God's gift of sexuality is to be responsibly embraced by all people, whether partnered or single, lay or clergy. A complete and responsible sexual ethic embraces the beauty of relationships among people of many sexual orientations and gender identities.

A positive sexual ethic balances desire within the embodied framework of our emotional, physical, sexual and spiritual selves, while preserving and honoring mutuality and consent.

Following are some examples of certain behaviors that constitute a sexual misconduct:

1. Sexual contact with a minor is sexual misconduct; or
2. Sexual abuse or sexual molestation of any person, including but not limited to any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is legally incompetent or in any other way a vulnerable adult; or
3. Sexual harassment of any person, including those in relationships in which there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between the persons involved, including but not limited to sexually oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements; or
4. Whether clergy or lay, using one's position of privilege for sexual exploitation is sexual misconduct. A perpetrator, who induces another person to undertake or endure a

sexual act by serious abuse of that person's position of dependency on the perpetrator, shall be guilty of sexual exploitation.

5. The attempt to develop a sexual relationship with a person with whom s/he has a pastoral or supervisory relationship.

A "pastoral relationship" is defined as a relationship between a clergy person, employee or volunteer and person receiving direct supervision, individual spiritual and/or pastoral counseling and providing confidential and/or privileged information to the clergy person, employee or volunteer.

At times, a clergy person, employee, or pastoral leader may develop an appropriate sexual relationship within the context of UFMCC ministry, including the congregation in which a person is serving, if there has been no direct supervision or individual spiritual counseling. Such relationships are to be entered into with extreme caution and a spirit of discernment.

## Sample Questions – First Interview

- 1) **Why are you looking for a new job and what attracted you about the position at XXX Church?** *This is an open-ended question that leaves room for you to interpret motivation and underlying personality traits.*
- 2) **How would your friends describe you?** *After hearing their answer, take the question a little deeper. “May I call one of your friends?” Depending on the response you get, you will be able to tell if your candidate provided you a truthful response or just one he or she wanted you to hear. By asking this question early on, you’ll let the interviewee know you’re looking for honest answers.*
- 3) **What are your two greatest weaknesses?** *Instead of asking about one, which they’ve likely already rehearsed an answer, this will allow you to see how self-aware the candidate is, and if they are able to demonstrate an opportunity for growth in their weaknesses.*
- 4) **How do you cope with stress?** *Each job has stress and how a candidate handles that stress is vital to your organization. Denial is the worst. Watch out for interviewees who say stress is not an issue.*
- 5) **What goals do you have?** *This question will help you determine if your interviewee plans ahead. If he or she doesn’t have a direct answer (at least one!) chances are making plans is a difficult task. Also ask about previous plans they have set and accomplished (or not) and why for additional insight.*
- 6) **Are you good at delegating? If so describe what that means and give examples where/when you have done that.** *Employees typically have a preference for what kind of work environment helps them be productive. Some prefer professional and quiet environments while others like more open, flexible spaces. If you hire an introvert and your organization is loud and constantly bustling, tension may present.*
- 7) **How do you handle conflict?** *Conflict is another issue that is certain to come up in someone’s work. Ask for an example of how a candidate has handled conflict in the past or present a hypothetical and relevant scenario.*
- 8) **How do you stay organized?** *This open-ended question will show you how a person organizes, rather than allowing them to hand you a positive answer. Although that system may vary, organized people always have a system.*
- 9) **What do you do for self-care?** *This gives a candidate the freedom to brag a little bit without feeling out of place while you can measure what the person considers “the extra mile” and determine if it fits well in your context.*
- 10) **How do you develop team members and volunteers?** *Another open-ended question will demonstrate the interviewee’s ideas on delegation and building team members and volunteers. Especially in ministry environments, a holistic approach to growing people is important to not only the organization, but the people it serves.*
- 11) **Describe your leadership style.**

- 12) What do you know about our church XXXX?
- 13) What is critically important that we should know about you that we have not asked you about?
- 14) Do you have any questions for us?

## Sample Questions – Interview Two

- 1) Walk us through all of your work history and explain how it prepares you to be a Senior Pastor?
- 2) Describe your experience as a Pastor and what did that entail.
- 3) If a problem occurred between several members with opposing issues and it was beginning to cause conflict between the congregants, map out for us how you would assist the members and the congregation into finding a long term resolution to this problem?
- 4) Can you and how do you handle constructive criticism?
- 5) Do you have any involvements beyond the local church? (Secular, ecumenically, within MCC, UFMCC or other Faith Denominations and/or secular organizations?)
- 6) Who is the most important member of worship?
- 7) How do you determine your topic to preach and what is your style of preaching?
- 8) How would you connect XXXX church to the rest of the community?
- 9) What issues or concerns in a local community are important to you and are they transferrable to (this city/town), why or why not?
- 10) What are some of the most important ideas and practices that you think cultivate health and growth in a local church?
- 11) Currently XXXX is at a "pastor-sized" church. What steps and/or ideas would you have to move it into a program-sized church?
- 12) Do you offer counseling to congregation members, or do you refer them to professional counselors or therapists?
- 13) Are you a hands-on person when it comes to visitations of persons in the hospital or at home when they are ill, or would you recruit and train lay people for this type of ministry?
- 14) At the current time, this church does not have a children or youth ministry? How would you get one started?
- 15) Do you feel it is important to concentrate on having inclusive language in the church?
- 16) How do you involve others in worship services?
- 17) How do you or would you allocate your time as a full-time pastor? What takes priority?

- 18) How would you deal with persons who fail to complete tasks or responsibilities they have accepted? (Volunteers and/or paid staff?)
- 19) Our church has attempted to maintain a sense of open and honest communication with the congregation in all of our board decisions and meetings. We want to keep things transparent on areas of processes and ministry opportunities. Is this a value that you share and would continue as pastor?
- 20) Who ministers to your needs? How do you tend to your spiritual life?
- 21) How does your partner feel about being a pastor's spouse? If you have a partner/spouse, do they assist or support you in your ministry? Do they complement your ministry or are they more of a 'silent partner'?
- 22) Would you consider yourself more "task-oriented" or "people-oriented"? How does this translate into "getting things done" for you?



# Pastoral Contract Introduction

The following information is based on requirements of clergy in the USA.

A church and Pastor would do well to have, in writing, those agreements that they have covenanted to and reviewed by legal counsel. A detailed description of key elements will make working together much easier and will help to build a trusting and lasting relationship. This document and the attached *Sample Contract* will give you a starting point in developing a written agreement.

## **Putting your agreements into writing and reviewed by legal counsel is critically important.**

Whether a church and pastor have a contract or have all of the information within a Policy Manual or Covenant is not what is important. What is important is that it be in writing, reviewed by legal counsel, dated and signed. The Board of Director minutes should show the motion and vote of such document and/or changes.

## **Compensation Information**

When you go on a job interview one of the reasons you apply for a position is not to work out of the goodness of your heart but to work at a job you love and to be compensated fairly for the work you do. As a committee your candidates will want to know what the compensation range is for the work you are requesting of them. This is a board discussion and the BOD should give you the range prior to interviewing.

Studies have been conducted on fair and equitable wages for a Pastor. There are many factors that impact these studies and one of them is the location of where your church is geographically. The studies take in to consideration the median income, cost of living and various other factors.

Doing your homework is critical! Compensation for a Pastor is a sensitive subject. Do not offer a salary your church cannot afford. Your secret will be revealed sooner versus later. Be creative if you believe your salary is low by offering additional time off, flexible work schedules, continuing education and a sabbatical. As a member of the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC)

what you need to recognize is the right candidate will work for the wage your church can afford.

Prayerfully consider your options, do your homework and a clear equitable compensation package can be achieved.

1. Contact US Labor Statistic for the salary levels in your local area. Go to <http://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>, click on METROPOLITAN AREA WAGE DATA. This site can give you both the mean wage for All Occupations and you can narrow the search for clergy.
2. Contact churches of similar size in the area where your church is located.
3. Contact Salary.com
4. Book Review: *Compensation of Pastors in the USA* p. liii.

### **Pastor as Employee**

While the Internal Revenue Service considers most pastors to be employees for federal income tax reporting, all pastors are considered self-employed by the Social Security Administration with respect to services performed in the exercise of ministry.

1. Voluntary Withholding – A church and its pastor, who reports his or her income taxes as an employee, can voluntarily agree to subject his or her compensation to income tax withholding. Some pastors find voluntary withholding helpful because it avoids the additional work and discipline associated with the estimated tax payment procedure. Pastors who elect to enter into a voluntary withholding arrangement with their church need only file an IRS Form W-4 (Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate) with the church. The filing of the form is considered a request for voluntary withholding, an arrangement that may be terminated at any time by either the church or pastor, or by mutual consent. Of course, a voluntary withholding arrangement will affect the church's quarterly IRS Form 941.
2. Estimated Tax Payments – Unless electing voluntary withholding. Pastors must prepay their income and self-employment taxes using IRS estimated tax procedures.

**Note:** It is advisable for all churches to **utilize a bookkeeping or payroll service** to handle all payroll and tax issues.

## COMPENSATION

### Salary

1. Senior Pastors – The basic cash salary is the amount of actual dollars paid to the Pastor. Cash salary does not include housing utilities, allowances, benefits, Social Security, or reimbursable expenses.
2. Associate Pastors – The basic cash salary for associate pastors should be equal to at least 80% of the salary for senior pastors with equivalent experience.
3. Part-time Senior and Associate Pastors – The basic cash salary for part-time pastors should be determined by the applicable percentage of the full-time package.

### Housing Allowance

Several factors must be taken into consideration, both by pastor and congregation, when a housing allowance is provided.

- To the extent that such an allowance is spent, it is excluded from taxable income.
- For the actual amount of the housing allowance to qualify by IRS standards as tax-free income, it must be clearly designated by Board vote as housing allowance and be formally approved annually by the Board of Directors prior to the beginning of payments.
- Any amount of the allowance that is not actually spent on housing is taxable to the pastor.
- A housing allowance is fully taxable for Social security purposes.
- A housing allowance can be spent on any items required to provide a home, such as the monthly rent or mortgage payment (interest and principle), taxes, insurance, furniture, furnishings, home repairs, new appliances, yard care, snow removal, and all utilities.

## BENEFITS

1. Retirement Contribution – A quarterly contribution to an IRA or 401 Retirement Account. IRS 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity, which means payment to fund are not taxable until the benefits are received after retirement. The recommended formula for calculating the annual church contribution to a pastor's annuity is an amount equal to 10% to 14% of the cash salary plus housing allowance. In some specific situations, however, where a pastor's compensation package is heavily weighted toward a housing allowance, a tax accountant should be consulted to assure that the annuity payment does not exceed the maximum percent of taxable compensation allowed by the IRS for contribution to a 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity. A percentage higher than 14% may be agreed upon by the church and the pastor within IRS limits.

2. Annual Clergy Renewal Status Fee – Most churches pay the annual fee for all clergy on paid staff.

It should be noted that the Retirement Contribution is not the same as what the local church (USA) pays to UFMCC every quarter. The quarterly payment made to the MCC Pension Fund is set up to help create a pension fund for all MCC vested clergy and not specifically for your church's clergy.

3. Health, Dental and Vision Insurance – These plans provide basic coverage for health, dental and vision coverage. The church generally pays for the cost of these comprehensive plans.
4. Life Insurance and Disability Income Plan – These plans provide vitally important coverage that protects the pastor and church by providing disability income and life insurance for the pastor. Generally these plans have three parts:
  - a. Life insurance program
  - b. Short-term disability program that can replace a portion of income for up to five months
  - c. Long-term disability program that can replace a portion of income when a disability continues beyond six months
5. Medicare – It is recommended that when a pastor reaches the age of 65 and is not retired, the church assumes the cost of the Medicare Supplement Plan.
6. Social Security – Clergy, considered as self-employed for Social Security purposes, must pay the current 15.3% (Schedule SE) on the cash salary plus housing allowance or fair market rental value of a parsonage. Because this is not matched by any employer, churches are urged to contribute 7.65% of the pastor's salary plus housing allowance (or 7.65% of 130% of base salary if a parsonage is provided) for social security, as it must do for regular FICA employees. The difference is that this is paid directly to the pastor and considered as a Social Security Allowance or Offset. This is taxable income which must be included with taxable wages on the pastor's W-2 form and reported on the pastor's tax return.
7. Worker's Compensation – Churches are required by law to provide worker's compensation coverage for all employees, including clergy.

8. Malpractice Insurance – Each church should maintain malpractice insurance as part of their church’s insurance program.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

Churches must decide what professional activities support their ministry and how such expenses will be funded and reimbursed. These activities under gird the pastoral leadership offered and the related expenses are considered costs of the church, not part of the pastor’s compensation.

Churches are urged to adopt an “Accountable Reimbursement Plan” (acceptable to the IRS – see IRS publication 1828, “Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations,” available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf> as a means of reimbursing pastors for professional expenses incurred on behalf of the congregation. These expenses may be for transportation, overnight travel (including lodging and meals), professional entertainment, books, subscription, education, vestments, and professional dues. The adoption of such a plan relieves the pastor of complicated tax reporting.

Under the Accountable Reimbursement Plan, the pastor must provide the church with detailed documentation of the above items. Assuming that the nature and level of expenses falls within IRS guideline, reimbursement is not included as taxable income. The church must retain the documentation for seven years for audit purposes.

1. Travel – Reimbursement for automobile travel should be at the rate allowable by the IRS. It is necessary that the minister provide to the church a daily record of trips taken, briefly noting the purpose, distance traveled and the expenses incurred, including tolls and parking fees. Expense vouchers should be submitted on a weekly or monthly basis. The church budget can set the limits on reimbursable amounts.

A church may provide the pastor with an automobile for which the church pays all expenses and for which the pastor would then record and compensate the church for

personal miles traveled. Reimbursement for other church-related travel (air, train, etc.) should be reimbursed upon receipt of vouchers submitted by the pastor per budget.

2. Church-related Meetings – To maintain ministerial standing, pastors are expected to attend General Conference and other MCC meetings. They are also expected to serve in wider ministry, such as community meetings, conferences, and ecumenical settings. Such service should be considered part of the congregation's ministry, not as time off or vacation for the pastor.
3. Other Professional Expenses – The church should budget an amount for annual professional expenses including items such as
  - a. Professional journals, books and periodicals
  - b. Hosting or entertaining church leaders, members, or guests
  - c. Dues to professional organizations

## VACATIONS AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. Days off – Churches should give, and pastors should take, two days off each week.
2. Vacations – Pastors should be given at least one month paid vacation each year, with freedom from all parish responsibility during that time. After ten years of service an additional week should be granted.
3. Continuing Education – Churches are encouraged to grant their pastors two weeks study leave, including weekends, each year. An allowance should be budgeted to cover continuing education expenses. Continuing education time should not be considered vacation.
4. Sabbatical Leave – Sabbatical leave for study, travel or personal renewal is an important part of a pastor's continued development. Sabbaticals are normally three months at full compensation given every five years, exclusive of vacations. Congregations are encouraged to also set aside funds each year in anticipation of the cost for services during the absence of their pastor. The value of a sabbatical, both to pastor and to congregation, is significant.

5. Emergency Leave – Allowance should be made for the pastor to be with his or her immediate family at times of death. Paid emergency leave would normally be limited to a period of 5 – 7 days per year, except where compassion dictates further extension.
  
6. Sick Leave – Churches are encouraged to give their pastors sick leave accumulated at the rate of one day per month up to thirty days. In cases of prolonged illness or disability, the church should continue to provide pastoral compensation and all benefits for thirty days, after which the Short Term Disability Income Plan takes effect. Short Term Disability will continue for 22 weeks, at which time, if the pastor is still disabled, he or she will be eligible for Long Term Disability. During the 30-day waiting period and the 22 weeks of Short Term Disability, the church would be expected to continue to pay Health, Dental, Annuity, and Insurance compensation.
  
7. Death – In case of clergy death, churches should provide salary, housing and all benefits to the spouse and/or family for two months.

*Adapted in part from the Compensation Guidelines for Authorized  
Ordained Ministers in the United Church of Christ, 2007*

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- Hammar, Richard R., Church and Clergy Tax Guide (updated annually), Christian Ministries Publications, Greensboro, NC
  
- Worth, B.J., Income Tax Guide for Ministers and Religious Workers, World Publishing, Iowa Falls, IA
  
- Holk, Manfred, Handbook of Personal Finance for Ministers, Church Management, Inc., Austin, TX

- Internal Revenue Service, Publication 517, Social Security for Clergy and Religious Workers, <http://www.irs.gov/>
- Parish Life and Leadership in Local Church Ministries, UCC: The Pastoral Relations Committee
- Darnley, Carol, Clergy Taxes and Compensation
- Alban Institute, Sabbatical Planning
- Hudson, Jill, When Better Isn't Enough: Evaluation Tools for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Church, Alban Institute
- McMahon, David, Completing the Circle: Reviewing Ministries in the Congregation, Alban Institute



# Sample Pastoral Contract Part-Time Pastor

Updated September 2015

*(Note – Always seek legal advice before signing a contract. Optionally, these agreements could be listed as a Covenant or contained in a Policy Manual.)*

The parties to this agreement are Metropolitan Community church (MCC) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ herein referred to as church and Pastor.

MCC \_\_\_\_\_ is a church in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church (UFMCC) and therefore this agreement is subject to the Bylaws of the UFMCC as well as the local church.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The church hereby covenants that the Pastor will perform the usual pastoral duties and responsibilities including, but not limited to the following:

1. The Pastor is being initially hired for \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week for the performance of Pastoral duties and responsibilities. Work hours include sermon preparation and Sunday worship. It is understood that while the position is part-time many of the tasks written below will be done in a limited capacity. Both the Pastor and Board commit to working towards making this a full-time position as the church grows.
2. The Pastor shall direct the ordering of all worship services of the church as set forth in the Bylaws of the UFMCC. The Pastor shall officiate and participate in the regularly scheduled weekly Sunday worship service, except when on vacation or authorized leave.

If there are planned worship services or events the Pastor shall not ordinarily take the following as time off: Christmas Eve or Day, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, and Thanksgiving.

3. The Pastor shall direct the performance of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, as set forth in the Bylaws of UFMCC.

4. The Pastor shall perform, at her/his discretion, the rites of Holy Union or Holy Matrimony.

5. The Pastor shall direct the performance of the rite of attaining membership as set forth in the Bylaws of UFMCC.

6. The Pastor shall perform, at his/her discretion, the rite of Funeral or Memorial Service, the rite of Laying on of Hands, and the rite of Blessing, as set forth in the UFMCC Bylaws.

7. The Pastor shall be the spiritual and administrative leader of the church and shall work in a spirit of cooperation with the Board of Directors and collaboration with lay leaders.

8. The Pastor shall direct the spiritual education program of the church and shall provide leadership for the ongoing development of all church programs through delegation, training and coordination.

9. After the Pastor's weekly work hours have increased to a minimum of 20 hours per week the church will actively support the Pastor in serving the UFMCC. The Pastor may then accept one (1) denominational office or task at any one time without the affirmation of the Board of Directors provided that the responsibility can be performed within the confines of this contract, and will not require the Pastor to miss more than five work days from the church per year. Any time, including travel time, spent away from this church on UFMCC activities shall be

considered normal time worked. Prior to working twenty hours per week any denominational work would be considered volunteer time and not paid by the church.

10. The Pastor shall attend church social events as part of his/her work schedule. All fees charged by the church for the event shall be waived for the Pastor, their spouse and children. (ie. entry fee, food)

11. The Pastor shall organize and supervise a congregational care program to see to the needs of the congregation.

12. The Pastor shall serve as personnel director of all paid and volunteer staff.

13. The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Directors (unless local church bylaws state otherwise.)

14. The Pastor shall be responsible for the performance of such other duties and responsibilities as may be set forth and agreed to between the Pastor and church.

15. The Pastor will schedule regular hours of availability and/or office hours.

16. The Pastor agrees that she/he will at all times faithfully and to the best of her/his ability perform all the duties herein described.

17. The Pastor agrees to serve in accordance with the UFMCC Clergy Code of Conduct.

18. Primarily the Pastor shall work diligently “to equip the people of God for works of service, so the body of Christ may be built up until we all become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ,” (Eph. 4:11-13)

## TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. In order to balance the needs of the congregation and the needs of the Pastor, the Pastor shall be entitled to the following leave:

a. One Sunday off from preaching every quarter, this allows for others to preach and for the Pastor to work other hours from time to time. The Pastor will ensure that the pulpit is filled during any absence.

b. Two weeks paid vacation annually (for Pastors working less than full-time) and four weeks' vacation annually (when paid 35+ hours), dates to be affirmed by the Board of Directors. (A week is based on the current number of contracted hours per week.) Five weeks' vacation annually beginning with the tenth year of full time service. No more than one week may be carried over to the next year.

c. The Pastor shall accrue one health day every two months, one per month when hours are increased to 35 or more per week. Said time shall be accrued and be accumulative for the duration of this contract but shall not exceed thirty days. Furthermore, such time shall not be reimbursed at termination of employment.

d. Holidays: After the Pastor's hours are increased to 35 or more per week the following holidays will be given: All federal holidays, Good Friday, Easter, and the day after Christmas and Easter. Should the holiday fall on a church function day or a scheduled day off, the pastor shall receive another day off in its place.

e. After each five years of service the Pastor will be given a paid sabbatical of two months. This time is for reflection, education, writing, and renewal.

f. In the event the Pastor shall become totally disabled, which is expected to last for a period of at least six months, either party shall have the option to terminate this contract, after consultation with the MCC Office of Church Life and Health. Such option shall be exercised by either party giving written notice to the other party of at least thirty days.

For the purposes of this contract, the Pastor shall be deemed to have become totally disabled if, in the opinion of two or more physicians who have examined the Pastor, she/he is not able to perform her/his duties by virtue of illness or injury, and such inability is expected by said physicians to last for six months or more. The opinion of the physicians shall be presented to the Board of Directors in writing. During any such period of disability, the Board of Directors may request the MCC Office of Church Life and Health consult with them regarding an appointment of an Interim Pastor.

g. The Pastor shall be entitled to 5 days for emergency leave in the event of a death occurring within her/his or her/his spouse's immediate family. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused.

h. After the Pastor's hours have been increased to 20 or more per week the Pastor shall be entitled to five days annually to pursue continuing education. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused. A stipend as set forth in the budget will be given the Pastor for expenses incurred for continuing education.

i. After the Pastors hours have increased to 20 or more per week the Pastor may have 3 personal business days annually. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused.

2. Review - It is understood that open and honest feedback will be shared with the Pastor within the monthly Board of Directors meetings. The Board of Directors will conduct a written annual Board performance review; this will include a review of all Board positions.

3. Compensation and Benefits - The Pastor's compensation shall be established through the church's budgetary process and will be negotiated between the Pastor and the Board of Directors.

a. The Pastor shall be paid every two weeks. (It is strongly recommended that the church utilize a professional payroll service.)

b. When the Pastor's hours reach twenty or more per week the church shall pay the Pastor's health insurance at a fair and negotiable rate if the Pastor is not currently insured through other employment.

c. After the Pastor's hours reach 20 per week the Church shall pay the Pastor's continuing professional education expenses up to the amount set forth in the budget.

d. Ideally, the Church would pay all normal and reasonable conference expenses incurred by the Pastor for attendance at authorized UFMCC conferences. These expenses would include the following: transportation, lodging, meals, registration fees and incidentals. The dollar amount will be established in the budgetary process.

e. The Pastor shall be reimbursed for all professional expenses up to the dollar limit set during budgetary process. Receipts and verification shall be submitted prior to reimbursement for each expense.

f. Annual Clergy Renewal Status Fee – shall be paid in November of each year on behalf of the Pastor at the Early Renewal rate.

g. Health Insurance & Dental Insurance shall be paid for at a rate established in the budget. Any additional funds needed will be paid by the Pastor.

h. It is understood that the church will provide Worker Compensation required by law.

4. Resignation - Should the Pastor resign from her/his duties she/he shall give a minimum of 30 days written notice to both the Board of Directors and the MCC Office of Church Life and Health.

5. Termination - In the event that the UFMCC removes the Pastor pursuant to the Bylaws of UFMCC, employment may be terminated without notice.

6. Any dispute regarding this agreement will be heard by the MCC Office of Church Life and Health or their designee who will make final determination.

## **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The hours, salary, benefits will be negotiated by the Board of Directors as part of the budgetary process of the church. All salary and benefits are to be paid by the church.

This contract shall remain in effect until the pastor resigns or is removed from office. The contract should be reviewed annually to see if any changes are needed. A failure to renew the contract does not constitute the dismissal of the pastor.

On this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_ all parties, in Christian love and mutual respect, set forth their signatures as acceptance of the above terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk, on behalf of the Board of Directors of MCC \_\_\_\_\_



# Sample Pastoral Contract Full-Time Pastor

Updated 2015

*(Note – Always seek legal advice before signing a contract. Optionally, these agreements could be listed as a Covenant or contained in a Policy Manual.)*

The parties to this agreement are Metropolitan Community church (MCC) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ herein referred to as church and Pastor.

MCC \_\_\_\_\_ is a church in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church (UFMCC) and therefore this agreement is subject to the Bylaws of the UFMCC as well as the local church.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

MCC \_\_\_\_\_ hereby covenants with \_\_\_\_\_, Pastor, to perform the usual pastoral duties and responsibilities including, but not limited to the following:

1. The Pastor is being contracted for full-time work, 40 hours per week, for the performance of Pastoral duties and responsibilities. Work hours include sermon preparation and Sunday worship.
2. The Pastor shall direct the ordering of all worship services of the church as set forth in the Bylaws of the UFMCC. The Pastor shall officiate and participate in the regularly scheduled weekly Sunday worship service, except when on vacation or authorized leave.
3. The Pastor shall direct the performance of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, as set forth in the Bylaws of UFMCC.

4. The Pastor shall perform, at her/his discretion, the rites of Holy Union or Holy Matrimony.
  
5. The Pastor shall direct the performance of the rite of attaining membership as set forth in the Bylaws of UFMCC.
  
6. The Pastor shall perform, at his/her discretion, the rite of Funeral or Memorial Service, the rite of Laying on of Hands, and the rite of Blessing, as set forth in the UFMCC Bylaws.
  
7. The Pastor shall be the spiritual and administrative leader of the church and shall work in a spirit of cooperation with the Board of Directors and collaboration with lay leaders.
  
8. The Pastor shall direct the spiritual education program of the church and shall provide leadership for the ongoing development of all church programs through delegation, training and coordination.
  
9. The church actively supports the Pastor in serving the UFMCC. The Pastor may accept one (1) denominational office or task at any one time without the affirmation of the Board of Directors provided that the responsibility can be performed within the confines of this contract, and will not require the Pastor to miss more than ten work days from the church per year. Any time, including travel time, spent away from this church on UFMCC activities shall be considered normal time worked.
  
10. The Pastor shall attend church social events as part of his/her work schedule. All fees charged by the church for the event shall be waived for the Pastor and their spouse. (I.e. entry fee, food, etc.)
  
11. The Pastor will personally perform very few hospital and home visitations. The Pastor shall organize and supervise a congregational care program to see to the needs of the congregation.

12. The Pastor shall serve as personnel director of all paid and volunteer staff.

13. The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Directors (unless local church bylaws state otherwise.)

14. The Pastor shall be responsible for the performance of such other duties and responsibilities as may be set forth and agreed to between the Pastor and the church.

15. The Pastor agrees that she/he will at all times faithfully and to the best of her/his ability perform all the duties herein described.

16. The Pastor agrees to serve in accordance with the UFMCC Clergy Code of Conduct.

17. Primarily the Pastor shall work diligently **“to equip the people of God** for works of service, so the body of Christ may be built up until we all become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ,” (Eph. 4:11-13)

## **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

1. In order to balance the needs of the congregation and the needs of the Pastor, the Pastor shall be entitled to the following:

a. One Sunday off every quarter, this allows for others to preach and for the Pastor to work other hours from time to time. The Pastor will ensure that the pulpit is filled during any absence.

b. Four weeks paid vacation annually, dates to be affirmed by the Board of Directors. Five weeks' vacation to be paid annually beginning with the tenth year of full time service. No more than one week may be carried over to the next year.

c. The Pastor shall accrue one health day every month. Said time shall be accrued and be accumulative for the duration of this contract, or any extension, but shall not exceed sixty days. (Said time may not be used in conjunction with vacation time. Further, such time shall not be reimbursed at termination of employment.)

d. The following holidays will be given: All federal holidays, Good Friday, Easter, and the day after Christmas and Easter. Should the holiday fall on a church function day or a scheduled day off, the pastor shall receive another day off in its place. (If there are planned worship services or events the Pastor shall not ordinarily take the following as time off: Christmas Eve or Day, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, and Thanksgiving.)

e. After each five years of service the Pastor will be given a paid sabbatical of three months. This time is for reflection, education, writing, and renewal.

f. In the event the Pastor shall, during the term of this contract, become totally disabled, which disability lasts or is expected to last, for a period of at least six months, either party shall have the option to terminate this contract, after consultation with the MCC Office of Church Life and Health. Such option shall be exercised by either party giving written notice to the other party of at least forty-five days.

For the purposes of this contract, the Pastor shall be deemed to have become totally disabled if, in the opinion of two or more physicians who have examined the Pastor, she/he is not able to perform her/his duties by virtue of illness or injury, and such inability is expected by said physicians to last for six months. The opinion of the physicians shall be presented to the Board of Directors in writing. During any such period of disability, the Board of Directors may, at its discretion, appoint another person as interim pastor.

g. The Pastor shall be entitled to 5 days for emergency leave in the event of a death occurring within her/his or her/his spouse's immediate family. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused.

h. The Pastor shall be entitled to \_\_\_\_\_days annually to pursue continuing education. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused. A stipend as set forth in the budget will be given the Pastor for expenses incurred for continuing education.

i. The Pastor shall be entitled to have 3 personal business days annually. This time shall not be charged against vacation time and shall not be carried over to the next year if unused.

2. Review - It is understood that open and honest feedback will be shared with the Pastor within the monthly Board of Directors meetings. The Board of Directors will conduct a written Annual Board Performance Review; this will include a review of all Board positions.

3. Compensation and Benefits - The Pastor's compensation shall be established through the church's budgetary process and will be negotiated between the Pastor and the Board of Directors.

a. The Pastor shall be paid every two weeks. (It is strongly recommended that the church utilize a professional payroll service.)

b. The church shall pay the Pastor's health insurance at a fair and negotiable rate.

c. The church shall pay all normal and reasonable conference expenses incurred by the Pastor for attendance at authorized UFMCC conferences. These expenses shall include

the following: transportation, lodging, meals, registration fees and incidentals. The dollar amount will be established in the budgetary process.

e. The Pastor shall be reimbursed for professional expenses at the amount set forth in the budget. All reimbursements must be verified and have a receipt to be reimbursed.

f. The church will establish a retirement plan to the amount set forth in the budget.

g. The church shall also provide life, dental and vision insurance.

4. Resignation - Should the Pastor resign from her/his duties she/he shall give a minimum of 30 days written notice to both the Board of Directors and the MCC Office of Church Life and Health.

5. Termination - In the event that the UFMCC removes the Pastor pursuant to the Bylaws of UFMCC, employment may be terminated without notice.

6. Any dispute regarding this agreement will be heard by the MCC Office of Church Life and Health or their designee who will make final determination.

#### **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The hours, salary and benefits will be negotiated and modified as part of the budgetary process of the church. All salary and benefits are to be paid by MCC\_\_\_\_\_.

This contract shall remain in effect until the pastor resigns or is removed from office. The contract should be reviewed annually to see if any changes are needed. A failure to renew the contract does not constitute the dismissal of the pastor.

On this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_ all parties, in Christian love and mutual respect, set forth their signatures as acceptance of the above terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk, on behalf of the Board of Directors of MCC

# Church Size Theory

Reverend Elder Ken Martin

Church Size Theory begins with the simple observation that every aspect of a church's life changes according to its size. In order for a church to be healthy and grow—not just numerically but in its service to the larger community, its own infrastructure and the spiritual vitality of its members—the church's leaders, both professional and lay, must be aware of how church size affects the role of the pastor, the role of the board of directors, the style and content of worship, the amount and focus of programming, the adequacy of its facilities and the composition of its staff.

None of these is more important than the role of the pastor, which changes dramatically through the four size and culture categories used in Church Size Theory: the “family church” with average weekly attendance up to 50, the “pastor-centered church” from 50-150, the “program size church” 150-350, and the “corporate church” with average weekly attendance above 350.

Gary McIntosh, a respected pioneer in this new field, summarizes the changing role of the pastor by saying that the small church needs a “lover”; the medium size church needs an “administrator”; the large church needs a “leader”. Some pastors are able to and enjoy leading churches through the different size transitions and are able to adjust to the different demands made on them as the church grows. Others find themselves much more comfortable and competent in one or two size categories. Unfortunately, the different requirements of the different cultures that accompany size transitions are not well understood by the majority, and this causes frustration on the part of the pastor, dissatisfaction in the congregation, and may lead to an unhappy ending of the relationship between the two.

**One of the great advantages of understanding the role of the pastor in terms of the congregation's size is that it allows the pastoral search process the opportunity to better match the needs and expectations of the church with the skills and interests of the pastor.**



- In a **family church** (up to 50), the pastor is usually part time or retired and functions as a chaplain.
- In a **pastor-centered church** (50-150), the pastor is the hub of the wheel. Everything centers around the pastor who coordinates all activities.
- By the time a church reaches **program size** (150-350), the pastor's primary emphases shift from interpersonal relationships to planning, recruiting, training, supervising and evaluating—from creating and nurturing personal relationships to creating and nurturing leaders who can sustain successful programs.
- The pastors of a **corporate churches** (above 350), must be comfortable with no longer being available to the congregation in any of the traditional pastoral roles. They must focus narrowly on the activities where their influence will have the greatest impact: worship planning and sermon preparation, visioning, developing a high functioning staff and working with the governing board. Many experts say that up to 80% of the pastors' influence in corporate churches is in worship and so up to 80% of their time must be spent in worship preparation and preaching! They must have the personal charisma and *gravitas* to hold the respect and trust of staff and lay leaders, inspire the loyalty of the congregation, embody the church's vision for the congregation and the larger community and generate and sustain the energy and momentum for the church constantly to be moving forward.

A pastoral search process prayerfully committed to finding the person rightly suited and skilled for the job goes a long way toward providing the church with the extended and stable pastorate needed in churches of all sizes.

### **Additional Resources**

*One Size Doesn't Fit All* by Gary L. McIntosh

Fleming H. Revell

*Size Transitions in Congregations* by Beth Ann Gaede, editor

The Alban Institute

**Book Review**

**By Rev. Elder Don Eastman**

**Compensation of Pastors in the USA  
From Christianity Today International**

***2010-2011 Compensation Handbook for Church Staff***

**By Richard R. Hammar, J.D., LL.M., CPA**

One of the best resources for informing the compensation levels of local church workers is the annual *Compensation Handbook for Church Staff* published by Your Church Resources at Christianity Today International. The 2010-2011 edition reflects a study of 4,998 churches in the USA for the year 2009. While this helpful study covers church workers in thirteen categories, here I will focus on some key points for senior and solo pastors serving full-time. Solo pastors in this study are the “only ministerial staff serving their congregation”. Data is included for pastors who serve full-time and those who serve part-time.

Whatever the size of your congregation, this handbook has relevant information that will be useful to the Board of Directors in its role of determining annual compensation for church workers. You can order this handbook via phone, 1-800-222-1840, or through the website, <http://www.churchlawtoday.com/>.

Annual compensation includes base salary and housing or parsonage allowance; benefits include health, life and disability insurance as well as church contributions for retirement and continuing education. Auto allowance is not included as a benefit although most churches in this study cover some level of auto expenses.

This study looks at the compensation of pastors in light of eight variables: church size as measured by average weekend worship attendance, annual budget of the church, size of the

larger community within which the church is situated, multi-state geographical region in which the church is located, level of the pastor's education, the pastor's tenure in years in the current position, denominational affiliation (six are noted in the study), and gender of the pastor.

The two variables most strongly influencing the level of pastors' compensation are the size of average worship attendance and the total annual church budget. Keep in mind that the annual budget includes not only contributions but other revenue such as rental income, sales of merchandise, gate income from ticketed events, and interest from investments. For instance, it is not uncommon for some churches in older mainline denominations to have significant endowment funds. The average income, given by this study to be total budget versus average weekly church attendance, was \$30.69 per capita (per person, per week) for 2009.

The tables presenting data on compensation of senior pastors and solo pastors by church income (budget) include quartile divisions – highest 25% and lowest 25% – as well as the median and average levels of compensation and benefits. The lower quartile ranges reflect the smaller churches and budgets within the size category and higher quartile ranges reflect the larger churches. With the information in these tables I found it easy to use the specific attendance and budget information of a given congregation to determine a reasonable range of compensation and benefits for a pastor or senior pastor.

What I found least helpful in this study was the comparison data based upon churches in various geographic regions of the USA. This is true because of the great disparity in the economic situations of states grouped within a given region. For example, the South Atlantic Region includes the District of Columbia with a 2008 median household income average of \$58,553; Florida with \$47,802 and West Virginia with \$37,528. The USA national average was \$52,029.

The most striking disparity revealed in this study is seen in the comparison considering gender as a variable in the compensation of senior pastors. For starters, the study involved very few women serving as senior or solo pastors. For full-time senior pastors there were 1863 males and 41 females. For full-time solo pastors there were 1204 males and 98 females. The greatest inequity was in the compensation of senior pastors: Males had an average annual compensation of \$68,333 versus an average of \$50,667 for females. One factor in this difference

was the size of congregations served; the average worship attendance of congregations served by males was 415, for females it was 173. For solo pastors the compensation was more similar; \$46,648 for males and \$43,962 for females. Not surprisingly, again church size was a factor; 114 average attendance for males and 95 average attendance for females.

There is a definite difference in average annual compensation based on level of a pastor's education. Senior pastors with a Bachelor's degree earn approximately 21% more in average annual compensation than those with no degree. Senior pastors with a Master's degree earn approximately 16% more than those with a Bachelor degree. And senior pastors possessing a Doctorate earn approximately 15% more than those with Master's degrees. Pastors with advanced degrees tend to earn more mostly because they are more likely to be serving in larger churches with bigger budgets.

Despite the limitations noted above, I found that this study presented information useful to the determination of what constitutes a reasonable level of compensation for your pastor or senior pastor, as well as other church workers.

I have also developed a model with a rationale and method for applying the above data in making those determinations. To obtain a copy, please send me an email request.

If you have comments or questions I would be happy to hear from you. You can contact me at [revdoneastman@mccchurch.net](mailto:revdoneastman@mccchurch.net)

## Sample Exit Interview

An Exit Interview is a helpful tool for both the exiting Pastor and the church. For the Pastor, it can be a formal time to review positive outcomes of his/her ministry and to give input to the Board about issues of concern. For the Board, it can be a helpful to hear the perspective of the outgoing Pastor with regard to both issues and accomplishments. All of this information will help inform the congregational profile.

The Exit Interview should take no more than 60 to 90 minutes and should be conducted by either a single individual, or by at most two persons, who the outgoing Pastor views as neutral. The interviewer(s) is(are) to be appointed by the Board but need not be selected *from* the Board's membership. After the interview is completed, a written report of the questions, responses and any pertinent discussion should be prepared, signed by the outgoing Pastor and the interviewer(s), and be submitted to the Board within seven days. It is appropriate for the outgoing pastor to receive a copy of the report.

Should the outgoing Pastor choose not to participate in an Exit Interview, ask them to respond in writing to the following questions and mail the answers to the Board.

### Interview Questions

1. What did you hope to accomplish when you first came to Pastor this church? What are your perceptions regarding the achievement of those goals?
2. For what accomplishments of the church do you feel the greatest pride?
3. What have been the most challenging issues that you have faced as Pastor here?
4. What important lessons have you learned about this church that you want to pass on to the Board?
5. How would you describe the state of our church? What do you believe are our current strengths and challenges?
6. Who do you see as the developing and future leaders of this congregation? Who are the individuals whose leadership skills we should continue to cultivate?

7. What qualities do you believe we should look for in the person who is to become our next Pastor? Why?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Thank you for participating in this exit interview. Your feedback is very important.