



New Era Missionary Baptist District Association

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Suggested Strategy for A Local Church Pastoral Search

There is no one correct approach to the pastoral search process of a local Baptist congregation. However, clear and timely communication, adequate congregational input, and congregational decision-making are hallmarks of Baptist polity.

START WITH PRAYER. Establish a Prayer Schedule that involves the entire congregation - perhaps a Pastoral Search Prayer Guide, a Weekly Prayer Meeting, or Special Sunday Prayer Services - for 30 days **BEFORE** anything gets started officially.

James 1:5 (KJV) - "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV) - "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Acts 1:24 (KJV) - "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen."

Guidelines for the Pastoral Search Process

1. Selection of Pastoral Search Committee (Congregation input or Chair of Deacons recommendation)

Who Should Serve?

- Chair of Deacons and Chair of Trustees (or a representative of the two ministries).
- Christian Education personnel.
- An Associate Minister who is not interested in the position and will not submit a resume.
- Youth personnel.
- Music Ministry (President or representative).
- Two at-large members from the congregation.
- An odd number of committee members.

2. Develop a Congregational Survey (written and/or electronic)

- Their expectations for a Pastor as they relate to qualifications.
- Their expectations from a Pastor.
- Scope of Search (Nationwide, Statewide, or local) and Compilation of the survey.
- Presentation of the survey to the body.
- Develop the qualifications in the context of the survey information.

3. Send announcement of qualifications to:

- District Association
- State Convention
- Other (social media, etc)

Guidelines for the Pastoral Search Process – Continued

4. Establish deadlines for resumes.

5. Process all applications with the intent of identifying the top three or four candidates.

6. Send letters to individuals that you choose not to hear as a candidate. The letter should express gratitude for their interest.

7. Send letter(s) to the candidates scheduling dates to be heard.

- The committee should clearly convey to candidates their tasks (teaching, if expected, etc.).
- The committee should ensure that expenses for candidates are handled by the appropriate entities of the church.
- Be prepared to make site visits on the final candidate(s).

8. Encourage the congregation to hear each prospective candidate and to use the evaluation assessment tool.

9. The Search Committee should communicate with the Chair of Deacons and the Trustee leadership, in conjunction with appropriate personnel, to have the compensation package completed in writing by the visit of the last candidate and affirmed by the congregation.

- The Search Committee should also clearly establish the voting process prior to elections.

10. Always seek to have a Presiding Pastor (Moderator) with no vested interest oversee congregational meetings. A respected clergyperson who is non partisan.