



**Evangelical Friends Church**  
— EASTERN REGION —

# Guide for Securing a Lead Pastor

## Introduction

Your pastor has just resigned or your congregation voted to make a change in pastoral leadership. What should be done? This document has been prepared to serve as a guide for your church leadership in securing pastoral leadership.

First things:

- 1) Commit to pray for a smooth transition and the right pastor to be called.
- 2) Know that your Church Health Director will walk you through every step of the process of securing new pastoral leadership.
- 3) Take the Church Health Assessment. This tool will guide you with self-knowledge which will best prepare you for your next pastor.
- 4) Consider an interim pastor to allow adequate time for transition.

The following items are included in this packet:

- A checklist to help you work through the process. We encourage you to follow through the checklist one step at a time.
- A Church Information Form (CIF) that should be filled out and copies sent to the Church Health Director.
- Copy of a Pastoral Agreement that might be used by your congregation after the call has been given and approved (and accepted).

Most of the materials enclosed are easily removed for use. Digital copies are also available on our website at [www.efcer.org/churchhealth](http://www.efcer.org/churchhealth). Feel free to copy any of the materials you might need.

You are involved in an important task for Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region. May God give you wisdom and blessing as you fulfill your role in this process.

## Checklist

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Contact the Church Health Director

The Church Health Director will provide your church with a list of candidates available to pastor your church. Knowing the background of your church and the candidates available, the Director will consult with the local church about the individuals on the list and share with you the staff recommendations. He will serve as a counselor to your church as you make this important decision. He will recommend an assessment at this time and perhaps an interim pastor if that is desirable.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Complete the Church Information Form (CIF) ([www.efcer.org/cif](http://www.efcer.org/cif)) and return it to Church Health Director as soon as possible.

The church is responsible to mail or e-mail one copy of the profile to any candidates with whom they are communicating.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ Church leadership or search team will review pastoral profiles and select individuals to be interviewed once they have been vetted by the Leadership Development Team.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Contact your first selected candidate and set dates a date for an interview.

After the top candidate is chosen for an interview, the church search team or person responsible for securing a lead pastor should contact the candidate by telephone and determine if the candidate / candidates are interested in interviewing for the position. A time and date should be determined and this information shared with the Church Health Director. It is suggested that interviews be scheduled within as short a period as possible. Hospitality for candidate and any family members that may come along should be carefully planned. The church is responsible for travel, meals, and lodging expenses for the candidate.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ Conduct the interview

It is suggested that an agenda be prepared prior to the interviews. Be specific about salary and benefits offered. This would include moving expenses, base salary, housing, hospitalization, pension, vacation, business expenses, etc. Here are some topics you may want to explore with a prospective pastor:

- What is the style or emphasis of ministry of the candidate?
- What are the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in professional ministry?
- How does candidate view pastoral visitation?
- What are the candidate's expectations of the congregation?
- What does the candidate see as the purpose of morning worship, evening service, and prayer service?

## Pastoral Interview Samples

- 1) How do you view your role as a pastor?
- 2) What is your philosophy of ministry?
- 3) What are your expectations for the laity?
- 4) How would you describe your preaching style?
- 5) Describe for us a typical worship service as you see it. What are the ingredients?
- 6) What is your concept of pastoral care, calling, counseling?
- 7) How do you approach evangelism and discipleship in the local church.
- 8) What is the best approach to membership training as you see it?
- 9) How do you preach and teach on holiness?
- 10) Give us some idea of how you see the church being administered (financial, managing people, staff relationships and accountability, delegating).
- 11) Where do you see your greatest opportunity for personal growth?
- 12) How do you feel about your family adapting to a new location?
- 13) How does your spouse feel about ministry?
- 14) What have you found to be your greatest strength and weaknesses?
- 15) What do you expect from church board members?
- 16) What are your personal priorities?
- 17) How do you deal with personal devotions?
- 18) What is your philosophy of youth ministry? How do you work with staff?
- 19) How do you perceive the role of missions in the local church?
- 20) Who do you look up to? What Authors and/or ministry leaders mentor you?
- 21) How would you approach Christian Education?
- 22) Describe your prayer life and how it affects you. What role would prayer take in our church?
- 23) What passages of scripture have leapt off the page and enlightened your heart and mind during the last month?
- 24) Describe a time of brokenness in your life. Do you have any experiences of shattered dreams like Joseph? How did God use the “pit” and “prison” to develop you?
- 25) What is it about our church that appeals to you?
- 26) Why do you want to leave your present position?
- 27) How do you describe your leadership style?
- 28) Is there anything else we should know about you?
- 29) Would you accept this position if it were offered to you?

6. \_\_\_\_\_ Make a recommendation to the congregation in a called meeting for a ballot vote.

It is suggested that the candidate be introduced to the congregation. This will allow the congregation time to ask questions and gather data so they can vote intelligently. The one presiding would give the background of the candidate. The candidate could give a synopsis of his/her philosophy of ministry and expectations as pastoral leader. Time should be provided for questions to be asked both by congregation and candidate. The church should recommend the candidate they believe to be best suited for the position. It is preferable to invite one candidate at a time.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ Issue a call

As soon as the congregation reaches a decision, the presiding clerk should inform the Church Health Director and issue a written official call to the prospective pastor. As soon as possible, the presiding clerk should obtain contract forms from the Evangelical Friends Headquarters and fill them out. These forms should be completed and filed as per instructions. Other candidates that were interviewed should be informed of the church's decision.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ Interview Pastor Leaving Congregation Exit Interview

This interview can provide much valuable data for church leadership. Two items are important at this point: 1) do not attempt to get a pastor to reconsider this decision to resign, and 2) do not argue or debate any issues. This is simply to get information.

The interview agenda could include:

- Where are we strong as a congregation?
- Where are we weak?
- How have we changed since you arrived?
- Did you have any dreams for our congregation that were not fulfilled?

It is important to clarify the relationship which the departing pastor will have with the congregation after he or she leaves. It is suggested that a pastor not return for pastoral services except when invited by the incoming pastor.

Also, this would be a good opportunity to discuss:

- All records to be complete and up-to-date.
- A list of perspective members and new contacts to be given to the Elder of the Spiritual Life Commission.
- Any situations listed that need follow-up. Weddings? Revivals? Special events?

9. \_\_\_\_\_After the call is accepted

After the candidate accepts the position, the Church Health Director should be notified. The congregation should be informed of the acceptance as soon as it is received.

Moving arrangements should be carried out as agreed. If you are providing housing, you should make sure everything is ready. This would be completion of any re-decoration and cleaning. Also, you should make sure all utilities are secured.

You should make plans to introduce your new pastor to the community. This would be through newspaper, radio, and other appropriate means.

It is proper for the church leadership to plan a short dedication of the pastor as part of the morning worship service the first Sunday of new pastoral leadership.