



Pastoral Search Process

United States & Canada Protocol

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Introduction

The selection of your next pastor is quite possibly one of the most important decisions your church will make.

If your pastoral selection is a “good match” it will be the beginning of an exciting time of growth and development and effective ministry that will touch the lives of many people.

If the outcome of your pastoral selection is not a “good match” it will be the beginning of a time of great challenge and conflict; a mistake that can negatively impact the effectiveness of your church ministry spiritually, relationally and economically for years to come.

Remember, seeking God’s leading in this process is critically important. 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 successful conclusion.

The key to the success of a pastoral search is a good 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 mistake. Another major mistake many churches make is not hiring a trained Interim Pastor. A professional Interim can help the church in preparation for pastoral search and the arrival of a new pastor.

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. Therefore, a textbook is being recommended to help guide your team:

The Pastoral Search Journey – A Guide To Finding Your Next Pastor by
John Vohnhof, published by The Alban Institute, 2010

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

1. the textbook – available at <http://www.alban.org/>

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

The textbook will give your Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) an overall process and will answer most of the questions your team will have. It contains detailed steps and describes supplemental resources. *The Pastoral Search Journey* was chosen with great care – it is believed that the book will prove an excellent resource for your team **particularly when it used in conjunction this “MCC Pastoral Search Process” as is intended.**

Your local church Bylaws will outline the requirements governing your individual congregation's Pastoral Search. That document 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.

This 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. This document will stand along side the textbook to guide you in the former and help you avoid the latter. The textbook often refers to “denominational requirements or policy;” this document speaks to those issues.

Guiding Principles – refer to the textbook for additional explanation as noted

1. The MCC Office of Church Life and Health will appoint someone to function as your church's Mentor to guide you through the pastoral search process.
2. An Interim Pastor is appointed by the MCC Office of Church Life and Health with input from the local church.
3. The outgoing pastor is generally not to be involved in the process beyond participating in the Exit Interview.
4. A well thought-through process is vital; the PSC needs to be mindful and deliberate in its course of action. The recommended textbook will be very helpful in guiding you through each of these steps and others:
 - a. develop *trust* with each other and your Mentor
 - b. develop a *timeline* of essential steps
 - c. create a *communications plan* to keep the congregation informed of the process
 - d. complete a *congregational study*
 - e. develop criteria for the ideal pastor
 - f. establish a plan of action for the candidate search
 - g. develop an *interview process*
 - h. establish a process for determining the best candidate

- i. create a *plan to present* the candidate to the congregation
 - j. manage the candidating visit
 - k. prepare for the congregational meeting
 - l. prepare for the arrival of the new pastor
5. *The Pastoral Search Journey* includes discussion of church and clergy profiles. Contact your Mentor for specific information.
 6. The PSC must be **unanimous in its commitment to confidentiality** regarding the names and identities of all parties who inquire, submit applications, and/or become candidates – this includes not sharing with spouses. A breach of confidentiality can harm the candidate and the process. Any members of the PSC who cannot agree to complete confidentiality must resign or be removed from the team. (The process of the PSC is not a confidential matter only the names/identities of potential candidates.)
 7. The PSC will work towards a consensus in selecting one candidate to present to the membership of the congregation (see attachment “Consensus Decision-making”). If the team is severely split in choosing one candidate then you are not ready to make a recommendation to the congregation.
 8. The PSC will choose only one (1) candidate to present to the members of the congregation. If the one candidate is not elected the PSC will begin its work again.
 9. Before a candidate may be presented to the congregation, a criminal background and credit check of that individual must be completed. The report must encompass at least the past 5 years and church, not the candidate, assumes the cost of these checks.
 10. The Board of Directors, not the PSC, negotiates all salary & benefits on behalf of the congregation. The Chairperson of the PSC should make sure the Board has the resources that are attached, i.e. Introduction to Contracts and Sample Pastoral Contracts. A tentative agreement is developed prior to the candidating week/weekend. The agreements are noted in the Board meeting minutes and often in a Covenant Agreement, Pastoral Contract or Policy Manual. All covenants, contracts and policies should be reviewed by legal counsel.
 11. All pastors should receive a fair salary/housing allowance and benefits (see attachments “Sample Contracts” and the book review “Compensation of Pastors in the USA”).
 12. All candidates for election must be MCC ordained clergy, who hold or are eligible for MCC Clergy Licensing.
 13. Churches of different sizes function in different ways. Study the attached article “Church Size Theory” and discuss the potential effects of church size on the pastoral search process.
 14. According to MCC Bylaws, pastors within MCC are elected without term limits or specification of length of service.

MCC Protocol

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, whichever comes first. The Office of Church Life & Health will appoint a Mentor.
2. The Mentor 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 Pastor. Refer to pages 23 – 27 in the textbook. This visit by the Mentor may be, and often is, scheduled before the current pastor leaves the church; however, respect should be accorded to the outgoing pastors' wishes.
3. The Board creates a plan for acknowledging the work of the outgoing pastor prior to the pastor leaving.
4. It is recommended that the Board establish a process whereby an Exit Interview with the outgoing pastor can be completed (see attachment "Sample Exit Interview").
5. The Board puts into motion the establishment of the PSC as outlined in the local church Bylaws. It is important to include some of the church's key influencers on the PSC.
6. The Board develops a budget for the pastoral search process (see attachment "Creating a Pastoral Search Budget").

Beginning work of the Pastoral Search Committee

7. The PSC meets to develop a solid foundation for working together as a team. Refer to Chapter 1 of the textbook.
8. The PSC develops a communications plan to keep the congregation fully informed of the search process and the committee's progress. Refer to textbook pages 41 – 44.
9. A congregational study should be completed as it is essential to a successful pastoral search. 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.
10. A profile of the ideal candidate, including items that are non-negotiable, should be established.
11. The PSC has a choice about how to seek qualified candidates. Work with your Mentor in determining what process will be most helpful. In some cases the Mentor will recommend a qualified candidate for you to consider; in other situations you will want to do an Executive Search, in a few cases advertising within MCC is the best course.

12. Determine in advance what information – a résumé, answers to a series of questions, references, and a sermon/worship DVD, etc. – you want from each candidate (see attached “Sample Application”). Also, remember that some candidates may ask you for information concerning the church, community and your pastoral search process.
13. All interviewees must be made aware that completion of a Due Diligence Application (see attached sample) 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. Refer to text, page 93.
14. As candidates submit material:
 - a. determine whether they fit your predetermined 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;
 - c. systematically check all references being careful to standardize the questions asked; and
 - d. contact your Mentor and ask them to contact others in the denomination who may know the candidate.

You want as much information as possible to make an informed decision. However, do not go to the candidates Facebook page or other such site without their consent.

Do not base any decision solely on a packet of information or someone’s education or that they came from a high profile church. Make use of all your resources before making a determination. Refer to Chapter 10 in the text.
15. The PSC develops a communication plan to keep all candidates informed regarding your timeline, and how you are progressing and their position within your process.
16. The PSC determines candidate(s) to be interviewed. The first interview is normally done via a conference call or video call utilizing a set of standardized questions.
17. The PSC determines, using all information available and based on the pre-determined criteria, whether one or two candidates stand out.
18. 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.
19. 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 should be asked to confirm her/his continuing interest. Provided the candidate does wish to be presented to the membership, that individual should be asked to put any other pastoral searches on hold pending the outcome your congregation's vote.

20. 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. Refer to the text, Chapter 11.
21. 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. 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, look for possible housing and so forth. 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.
22. A special congregational meeting, also scheduled at least two weeks in advance, should be held at the end or after the candidating week(end). 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 that is 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.
23. 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. Refer to text, Chapter 13.

Attachments

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| 1. Sample Exit Interview | Page 7 |
| 2. Consensus Decision-making | Page 8 |
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10. Book Review, Compensation of Pastors in the USA	Page 42



The Exit Interview & Sample Questions

Rev. Elder Arlene Ackerman
MCC Resource Specialist for Church Development

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 that report.

Should the outgoing pastor choose not to participate in an exit interview, ask her/him to respond in writing to the following questions:

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.



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.



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



Creating a Pastoral Search Budget

Rev. Elder Arlene Ackerman
MCC Resource Specialist for Church Development

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/Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) can revisit it to see if it needs to be adjusted.

Areas of Considerations

Interim Pastor: Plan on covering the cost of bringing in an Interim Pastor to meet with your congregation before the actual appointment by the MCC Office of Church Life and Health. This would include travel, hotel*, and food. Normally the salary/benefits of the outgoing pastor carry over to the Interim Pastor. There will be some cost in helping the Interim move to your area.

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

Brochures: Some churches put together a professional looking brochure to send to potential candidates. Also, 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.

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 meeting room as it is best to hold these interviews somewhere other than your church campus in order to maintain complete confidentiality.

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.

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 complexly organized 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 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: You should avoid housing candidates with church members during the search process (and after the candidate becomes the Pastor-elect). Using a hotel, a neutral environment, allows for the better preservation of confidentiality and greatly reduces the possibility for unintentionally seeding future conflict.*



Sample Application

Dear (candidates name)

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

After we review 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.

Please send your completed application to (insert name and address).

Sincerely,

(signature and typed name)

Chair, Pastoral Search Team on behalf of church name

Application

1. 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.

2. Submit a Worship Service

Include a bulletin or other pertinent information. The service should show you preaching and leading in worship. If the worship service is on a website you can give the link or send a DVD.

3. Personal Information

Name: _____

Present Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address _____

Spiritual Gifts

(1.) _____ (2.) _____ (3.) _____

Spouse's Name _____

What role if any does your spouse have in your ministry or in the church? Describe.

Children

(1.) _____ Age _____ (2.) _____ Age _____

Date of Availability: _____

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

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.



Sample Due Diligence Application

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: _____

If called, would you have a reliable means of transportation? Yes ___ No ___

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 ___ Yea ___

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 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**

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 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 approved September 25, 2009)

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 extends beyond traditional heterosexual responses to embrace 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 could 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
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. Using one's position, whether clergy or lay, for sexual exploitation is sexual misconduct. Sexual exploitation is the development of, or the attempts 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.



Pastoral Contract Introduction

Developed by Rev. Elder Arlene Ackerman, updated 2012
MCC Resource Specialist for Church Development
RevArleneAckerman@MCCchurch.net

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 and signed.

Compensation Information

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* on the MCC Website, Resources

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.

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 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 provides 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 – Church 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 to seven 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), Chrustian 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 21st-Century Church*, Alban Institute
- McMahill, David, *Completing the Circle: Reviewing Ministries in the Congregation*, Alban Institute



Sample Pastoral Contract

For a

Part-Time Pastor

Updated September 2013

(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 By-laws 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 40 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 40 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 40 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 December 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 45 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.

Pastor Date _____

Clerk, on behalf of the Board of Directors of MCC Date _____



Sample Pastoral Contract

For a

Full-Time Pastor

Updated September 2013

(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 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 45 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.

Pastor Date _____

Clerk, on behalf of the Board of Directors of MCC Date _____



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@mcchurch.net